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# A PRACTICAL STUDY OF SOME ETIOLOGICAL FACTORS IN THEFT BEHAVIOR

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FRED BROWN\*

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Strangely enough, little attention has been paid in the past to the crime of theft altho passing allusion to it has been made in extensive studies of crime in general. Recent contributions of psychoanalysis and psychology indicate that a generalized treatment of so complex a problem as crime can only prove sterile. The term "Crime" covers a multitude of misdemeanors; but the sharp scalpel of scientific research has failed to dissect out the constituent parts of the whole. Crimes are committed by human beings; the acts themselves are overt and classifiable; finally, it is generally acknowledged that the average law-breaker persists in practicing that form of behavior which repeatedly sends him to the penitentiary. Here, then, we are confronted with three definite variables which invariably operate in the crime of theft. The antecedents of these variables must be assiduously sought for. It is quite obvious that the determining elements in the theft configuration will differ from those of murder, robbery or arson. Therefore, any attempt to posit general causes of crime must be regarded as an illogical attempt to measure widely different phenomena with one yardstick. Sweeping generalizations on crime neglect wide differences between types of anti-social conduct. Of greater importance is the neglect of individual psycho-sociological differences between the individual offenders within the differentiated group.

We are slowly approaching the time when study of the criminal will be wholly individualized. Before this point is reached, crime itself must be divided into separate behavior categories and investigated, not as a legal abstraction, but as a behavior mode.

It is the purpose of the present investigator to study theft as a type of behavior which presupposes a psycho-social background exhibiting a syndrome that is different from other anti-social acts.

In the present study an attempt was made to determine what factors operated in the formation and composition of the criminal personality which ultimately led to the commission of the criminal act. For this purpose, a study was made of 40 inmates of the Ohio State

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Penitentiary who were apprehended and convicted on the charge of both grand and petty larceny, (i. e. the appropriation of another's property without consent of the owner and without the use of force or arms). This offense was selected rather than another because (1) of its very great prevalence, (2) the fact that it generally marks the first step in the commencement of a criminal career and (3) it rules out to a great extent the possibilities of grave abnormalities such as we might expect to find in cases of arson, murder, rape, incest, etc. Robbery<sup>1</sup> was ruled out because it was felt that the psychological constitution of the robber differed from that of the thief, the act of robbery generally demanding greater aggressiveness.

The group studied ranged in age from 20 to 30 years. It was decided to remain within this limit for various reasons; among them the fact that very often the offender is convicted for a first offence and is past the age for a reformatory commitment. It was thought that a study of such types might prove valuable. Again, individuals between these ages are more cooperative and plastic than older offenders, thus affording a greater possibility of obtaining data. There is also the factor of memory, which is more reliable in the formative years.

The tests employed comprised (1) the Morgan intelligence test, which tests verbal intelligence and is self-administering. The whole test consumes 40 minutes. (2) The Myers Mental Measure, a non-verbal test which tests memory and ability to comprehend abstract relationships. (3) The Ohio Literacy Test, which provides a means of determining the school grade reading level of the individual tested and is, in addition, a fairly good test of intelligence.

For the purpose of discovering any indications of psychopathy, the Ohio State Revision of the Woodworth-Wells Psychoneurotic Inventory was utilized. This form consists of 75 instead of 115 questions. All those of a redundant or too general nature are omitted.

In order to facilitate the gathering of data relative to education, marital status, economic status or parents and offender, occupation of parent and offender, vocational training, family relations, religious training, recreational preferences, etc., a questionnaire was employed, this being used merely as a means of ready classification and uniformity in obtaining information.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>We define "robbery" as follows: "The felonious and forcible taking from the person of another goods or money of any value; from the person of another by violence or putting him in fear. (Bouvier's Law Dictionary.)

<sup>2</sup>In most cases the questions served as detonators for volunteered information. Often the reply would impart detailed information of great value.

The present research was begun with a careful analysis of the case-record folders in the record office of the penitentiary. These were found without exception to contain a copy of the indictment, a record of the physical examination at time of admission, the result of a Wasserman test, the physician's estimate of the prisoner's mentality,<sup>3</sup> a history of the crime for which the prisoner had been immured, the prisoner's own statement of same, the opinion of the judge and prosecuting attorney and a record of previous commitments. Very often letters from the parent of the prisoner to the Warden were found which contained statements concerning the prisoner's character and previous behavior.<sup>4</sup> Letters from the prisoner to the Warden, Governor, and members of the family or relatives were carefully examined for significant details. A record of the prisoner's conduct while in the institution was also included and served as an indication of adaptability.

A specially prepared questionnaire was sent to those institutions mentioned in the criminal record. This questionnaire bore upon behavior while in a previous prison or reformatory. Items on the medical examination record were interpreted with the aid of the prison physician and Dr. Henry H. Goddard. This interpretation was made for the purpose of ascertaining the rôle played by any specific physical disorder in the life history of the individual.

After the records in the folders had been carefully examined and all important details noted, the prisoners to whom they referred were sent for. This was made possible by the excellent cooperation of the men in the Deputy's office, who traced the prisoner to his company and brought him to the office without delay. Two men were generally called in at the same time. The writer was permitted to interview the men at any time until 4:30 P. M., and was allowed to remain with them unmolested for as long as three and one-half hours at a time.

As soon as the men were brought in they were turned over to the writer. At first the Deputy's private office was used for conferences. Later this was discontinued and the court-room was substituted. This room is well-lighted and ventilated, contains a long table and three comfortable chairs and is perfectly free from distractions in any form. The men were referred to by name and invited to make them-

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<sup>3</sup>No mental tests are given prisoners, either upon entrance or during stay in the institution.

<sup>4</sup>Too much faith was not placed in these letters, inasmuch as the emotional element, which in these cases tends to condone and forget previous waywardness, seemed to predominate.

selves as comfortable as possible. The writer then introduced himself and stated as briefly as possible the nature of his mission and stressed the necessity for honest cooperation. The men were assured that any disclosures made would be treated confidentially, and that no names would be mentioned at any time. One point was strongly emphasized; that in any case where the individual wished to withhold information he was to do so without substituting pseudo facts for the benefit of the investigator. Another item always insisted upon was that the whole procedure was to be considered as purely voluntary. This was done in order to eliminate those who might regard the interview as a hardship and consequently mislead the examiner. Of the total number interviewed, five chose to leave. These were characterized by those who had accompanied them as persons who had very little to do with the rest of the men.

The tests were not begun at once. An acquaintance period of from ten minutes to a half hour, in which rapport was established, was first allowed to elapse. During this period, the prison in general, with reference to discipline, cuisine, etc., was discussed. Unobtrusive questions were asked concerning the prisoner's attitude toward his confinement, his hopes and plans for the future and his impressions of institutional life.

One of the men was then given a Morgan test to work on while the other was taken into an adjoining room and there interviewed at length. Before commencing, however, he was again warned against imparting fictitious data. In no case was the questionnaire filled out by the men. It was employed rather as a census, the interlocutor questioning the prisoner and the prisoner replying. Each individual conferred with was encouraged to elucidate in detail, the interviewer speaking as little as possible.<sup>5</sup>

At the expiration of forty minutes, the other prisoner, who by this time had completed the Morgan, was interviewed, while the latter was given the test. Following this, both were given the Myers and the Ohio Literacy. These were followed by the Woodworth-Wells, which was preceded by an offer to explain any question not clear. After this procedure had been completed, the interview was concluded unless more explicit knowledge was required. In such cases one or both of the men were retained and additional information sought.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup>A useful device in the case of Catholic prisoners was to liken the interview to a confession, the comparison being made that all information would be as confidential as if spoken in a confessional. Strange as it may seem, this device served to melt the strongest reticences.

<sup>6</sup>The inactive prisoner was either asked to rest or given popular magazines which the interviewer carried with him for this purpose.

In the second conference, which was held with more than half of the cases, the individuals were called in singly. In this interview the rapport established in the previous meeting was found invaluable. No notes were taken in most instances, the data being jotted down immediately afterwards. This gave the meeting an informal air which encouraged greater confidences. Much was often discovered in these second meetings which had been withheld in the first.

In some instances it was necessary to convince the men that they were not being tested for an insane asylum. Another factor often met with was the fear of newspaper publicity. The usual objection to such publicity was that "They had had enough." Others feared it might interfere with their chances for parole or endanger the possibility of procuring work after discharge.

The following cases constitute a fair representation of all those studied. As complete an account of the individual's life history, in all its various aspects and phases as it has been possible to obtain, has been presented in each case. A diagnosis and prognosis of each case is also appended. The writer intends to make a follow-up study of the same individuals after their parole or release.

#### CASE I.

Frank—Age 27.

Frank's parents were French Canadians who owned a small farm in Maine. The produce from the farm sufficed to provide the family with food. Frank was the only child. His mother died when he was very young but he learned from his grandmother that she was a quiet woman, of frail constitution physically. When Frank was four years old his father remarried. The second wife, according to Frank's description, was "as wide as she was long", highly nervous and subject to hysterical seizures during which she would scream and hurl at him anything she could lay hold of. This woman seems to have developed an intense hatred against the child and sought on every occasion to injure him. Frank claims that he regards his three foster brothers and one step-sister as total strangers, no friendship having ever developed between him and them. He expressed himself with intense feeling as he recounted the earlier years of his life which appear to have been considerably embittered by his step-mother, who vented her sadistic impulses upon him.

His father, who had never gone to school, was an alcohol addict. Frank was never sent to school. Instead, at the age of 10 he rose at 4:00 A. M., did chores about the house, then went off to a neighboring

lumber camp and worked "on the other end of a saw" until night-fall. He did not mind this so much although he claims he would have liked to have gone to school. His father frequently boasted of his son's strength, evidently regarding its possession as far superior to that of brains. Frank states he was whipped very frequently with a horse-whip, generally because of fancied or justifiable rebellion against his step-mother. At times neighbors, stirred by the cruelty of these punishments, interceded for him.

He was given no religious education, although prayers were offered morning and evening at home. At the age of eleven he received his first communion, which he did not understand and which seemed "crazy" to him.

His first misdemeanor occurred at the age of ten. He tells that his father was away from home for about a week. During this time he was forced by his stepmother to live in the barn. He went without food for two whole days and finally, to relieve his hunger, removed the putty from a grocery store window, entered and stole two sacks of candy. His stepmother discovered the theft and threatened him with dire punishment upon his father's return.

Frank fled but was apprehended forty miles from home. His father called for him and brought him back. Seven miles from home, he states, his father turned to him, cursed vilely and promised to teach him a lesson. Frank claims he was then tied to the sled and dragged the remaining distance. Upon arrival he was soundly thrashed with a whip made of baling wire. His second flight from home followed an altercation with his stepmother wherein she hurled a pitchfork at him and pierced his ankle.

For the next few years, up to the age of 20, he worked on farms and in lumber camps. In all this time he never conflicted with the law (and indeed, he has no criminal record at the penitentiary). He later drifted to Chicago where he bootlegged for a few weeks, finally giving it up because he had to carry a gun and feared that its use might cause trouble. During this period he also picked up some knowledge of automobile engines and worked in a garage, where he claims to have earned \$125.00 a month. He worked at this trade for two years.

In 1925 he met his present wife. She was working in a restaurant at the time, earning \$20.00 per week. He describes her as plain in feature but good-hearted. He courted her one year and finally married her, although he was a Catholic and she a Protestant. Due to her, however, he changed his religious affiliation, rationalizing his transfer by claiming that "he couldn't see how a priest could forgive."

His intention at this time was to return to Maine and settle down. He claims to have bought a second-hand car and a camping outfit with which to travel to Maine, combining business with pleasure. On the way, he states, his car and equipment caught fire and was totally consumed. With what money he had both he and his wife went to Ashtabula and were stranded there. He found work in a garage and stayed for two weeks. Then he appropriated a Ford car and left town with his wife, intending, he claims, to leave the car in a garage at his destination and notify the owner. He was apprehended in Pittsfield, Mass., and sentenced to the Ohio State Penitentiary for from 3 to 15 years. After being sent to the prison camp he walked away, but was caught in 12 hours, and assessed two years. His minimum is nearly up but he must serve two more years in consequence of his escape. He explained this escape as due to an uncontrollable desire to be with his wife who was ill in a Detroit hospital at the time with no one to help her. He showed the writer the letters he received at the time. In the circumstances he cannot be blamed for his conduct.

A physical examination upon entering the penitentiary showed hardening of the spermatic cord, left side; acne vulgaris on the back;<sup>7</sup> broken arches in both feet and reflexes sluggish. He also stated that his right eye was congenitally weak. The Wasserman indicated a 4 plus reaction. Frank denies ever having had a venereal disease. He may have contracted syphilis during his stay in Chicago, where he attended public dances and went joyriding. He claims never to have frequented poolrooms. There is also the possibility of congenital syphilis.

He expresses himself quite clearly and speaks with a forceful intensity. His choice of language is fair when one considers that he spoke only French up to the age of 12. He states he never read until he came to the penitentiary, where he gradually learned.

The mental examinations, which he appeared to enjoy, showed a mental age of 11.3 on the Morgan, 16 on the Myers, and 11 on the Ohio Literacy. There were 23 atypical answers on the Woodworth-Wells, however.<sup>8</sup> At the time these tests were administered he was deeply dejected over his extended sentence and constantly worried over his wife's condition. When interviewed two months later he

<sup>7</sup>The appearance of welt scars and Acne vulgaris is very similar. See "Diseases of the Skin," R. L. Sutton, M. D. Mosby, 1917. P. 828-832.

<sup>8</sup>A very recent re-test on the Woodworth-Wells finds this number reduced to eight.

appeared altogether different and would, no doubt, score higher if re-tested.

A letter from his wife to the warden states, "I kept company with him one year before I was married to him, and think of it, only three months till this trouble came over him. As I knew him he was a good hard-working husband, did not drink, and as for him being a thief at heart, I know he was not."

Frank also showed the investigator numerous letters from his wife wherein she encourages him and holds out the hope of a new life after release. This factor makes his present situation bearable. He remarked that the time he took the car he told her it was loaned to him by his friend under whom he worked at the garage. He did not want her to know he took it.

The prosecuting attorneys says, "Man is a 'bad actor' generally. Stole Dort Touring car before stealing Ford. Found guilty of theft various other times. Had in his possession at time of arrest master keys and large assortment of auto keys. An habitual auto thief."

Frank emphatically denies the accusation. The keys, he says, were taken from the garage where he worked at the time he took the car. Such keys were always kept about in order to move cars and make room for others.

His conduct in prison has been fairly satisfactory. In three years he has been guilty of only six violations which are as follows: (1) Disobedience-talking; (2) Sleeping in church; (3) Talking; (4) Smoking; (5) Escape; (which cost him two years), and (6) disobedience to orders. On one occasion he fought with his cell mate because, he claims, that individual expectorated indiscriminately in the cell.

As he looks back upon the theft of the car he realizes the unhappiness it has brought him and his wife. He admits it was an exhibition of poor judgment but no other alternative seemed possible at the time.

His attitude toward life is a mixture of cynicism and tolerance. He admits being swayed by two impulses; one, to build a shack in the woods and live as a recluse, another, to buy a small farm and raise a family. Asked if he would give them a good education, replied, "If I had gotten an education instead of being kicked around, I wouldn't be here now." Asked about his two year extension he reflected, "It's like letting apples lay on the ground after they drop from ripeness . . . they get rotten."

It appears from our study of this case that Frank has led an unfortunate life. His intelligence, as tested by the Myers Mental Measure, is good. It is very probably true that the lower scores on the other two tests are attributable to his reading deficiency and will increase commensurately with improvement along this line. He is strongly attached to his wife and with such a guiding influence should be able to maintain himself on a farm and stay out of trouble. What two more years in a penitentiary will do to him is conjectural. One may hazard a guess, however, that no benefits will result therefrom. He has shown ambitious tendencies in the past three years by learning to read. At the present time he is learning to figure. This ambition, if given an opportunity might flower in society and make Frank a law-abiding citizen. Under the present circumstances, especially if his incarceration should deprive him of a wife, society may be breeding a dangerous enemy.

## CASE II

Charles—Age 26.

Charles was born in Philo, Ohio, eight miles below Zanesville. His parents were native born Americans. Charles was the fourth in a family of six; there having been four males and two females. The family lived in a five-room company house rented from the company in whose mine the father labored. His income ranged from thirty to thirty-five dollars per week. Charles could not tell whether either of his parents had ever attended school.

The mother is at the present time in a home for the feeble-minded at Orient, Ohio. Two brothers are in institutions for the insane. No information concerning the rest of the family is available.

In school Charles attained to the third grade by the age of 15. He then quit because of poor eyesight, his right eye barely being able to distinguish between night and day. There is strong reason to believe that he became discouraged over his lack of progress. His religious training was entirely neglected. He states that his parents never went to church as far as he knows nor were there ever any religious observances in the home such as grace, prayer, etc. He also asserts that the nearest church was situated approximately 6 miles from his home.

After leaving school, Charles procured work on a neighbor's farm, where he stayed until the age of 17. He then worked in the coal mine and did other labor, especially railroad construction work. In common with other boys of his own age in such communities he went joy-

riding every Saturday night. It was on such an occasion that he contracted syphilis. He was 19 years old at the time. He confided the matter to his father who advised him to "do something for it." Charles forgets whether something was done or not.

When Charles was 23 years old his father was killed in a mine explosion, a calamity which disintegrated the family. Charles went to Zanesville and procured work in a power plant where he earned from fifteen to eighteen dollars a week. After staying on this job for seven months, he returned to Philo and resumed mine work. Industrial conditions were very poor at the time, and therefore mine labor was so distributed as to give each worker at least two days of work a week. Charles fell behind in his board bill and was considerably worried. He tried to borrow money but to no avail.

One day, as he was walking along the river on company property (although he says he was unaware of this), he noticed a drill, covered with mud and water, laying on the river bank. He claims to have seen it there before and thought no one wanted it. He therefore appropriated it and sold it for junk, together with other iron he had previously collected.

He was arrested at his home the following day and immediately confessed the theft, even offering to give part of his wage in payment thereof. He was promised immunity. This promise, however, failed to materialize and he was sentenced to the Ohio State Penitentiary on a charge of grand larceny with a sentence of from one to seven years.

The physical examination revealed palpable cervical glands, genitals microphallus, varicocele left, reflexes exaggerated (a result of his syphilitic infection). The Wasserman gave a 4 plus reaction.

He admitted gonorrhea twice in 1928 and syphilitic chancre in 1925. His test scores showed a low mental level, with a mental age of 10.7 on the Morgan; 10.8 on the Myers, and 12 on the Literacy. The Psychoneurotic Inventory results were insignificant. Throughout the interview he was pathetically eager to comply with all requests.

The prosecuting attorney says of him, "I do not believe the man to be criminally inclined, but I believe that careful observation of him may be beneficial to the man after he is set at liberty from the institution." It is difficult to understand in what manner such observation, especially under the eye of a guard, might be of benefit to Charles.

Charles is somewhat puzzled over the whole matter. He feels that some mighty power has changed the course of his existence but

is not altogether clear about the process. He is still willing to give half his earnings to the company if they will set him free. He plans to work on a farm after the expiration of his sentence, and leave mines alone. Big money is not his aim; a living will satisfy him.

It is evident that prison is no place for Charles. He should be installed on a good farm under kindly supervision, where he would be assured of food and lodging plus a small wage in return for his services. Men of his type become dangerous to society only when thrown in contact with vicious individuals in prison idle houses. There is only one thing the penitentiary can do in this particular case; check the syphilitic infection and rehabilitate the man physically. Unfortunately, Charles will emerge from his incarceration a well-observed man, probably more diseased than at present and with a strong feeling that he has been unjustly treated.

### CASE III.

Thomas—Age 30.

Thomas, born in a small Pennsylvania town, was the fifth of seven children, three male and four female. The sisters, three of whom were nurses, are all in good health and happily married. One brother is route manager for a baking company. The other has recently been honorably discharged from the navy.

The father, who immigrated to America from Sweden after marriage, was a blacksmith and earned a comfortable livelihood. He owned the ten room house in which the family lived and made no demands upon the earnings of his children. Payment for board was purely optional. The mother also worked, acting as cook for a wealthy family.

Both parents were in the habit of losing their tempers, but on the whole, family life, as Thomas looks back upon it, was very pleasant.

Religious training was not neglected. The family was of Catholic persuasion and emphasized the value of church and prayer. Thomas' church affiliation lasted until the age of 19, when his attendance became irregular. In addition to religious observances he also belonged to a church Young Peoples' group, which he attended irregularly.

He attended both a parochial and public school. His school career was normal enough except that he truanted often and was frequently involved in "Squabbles" with other children. After reaching the eighth grade, he terminated his education. His recreations were not especially anti-social, consisting of baseball, football, and boxing. He played

regularly on the Sunday School team as third baseman. Three nights each week were spent in pool-rooms, movies were visited once each week while joy-riding was indulged in once or twice a week. Thomas states that he was restrained from more frequent excesses by the fear of wasting his energy. At this time he commenced to gamble occasionally with both dice and cards, learned to drink and chew, and caused his parents much unhappiness by evidences of wayward conduct. He tells of early irritability which later became so accentuated that he was regarded as the incorrigible member of the family, the black sheep. Every thing, he says, made him "grouchy" and pugnacious. He wanted to fight the world. Everything seemed evil to him and everyone appeared to pick on him. He sought an escape in questionable companionship, frequented pool-rooms more often and resented all attempts at correction. He claims to have been the favorite of the family, however, a fact which might have been due to his strange behavior and the concern manifested by his parents in regard to it. During this time he was also a prey to gloomy moods. When informed about the characteristic changes in behavior during adolescence he claimed to know about these but added that in his case the change was very grave and lasted until very recently.

He earned money during this period by running errands, and doing odd jobs. At 17 he found work in a restaurant kitchen where he learned to cook. He stayed on this job until the following year, when his mother died. His father followed three years later, at which time the children separated. The next few years were spent in wandering around the country. He worked on a Michigan Central dining car for a while but lost his place through drinking. After this he drifted from one thing to another, working on steamships, in shipyards and lumber camps. He claims to have worked at all times, sometimes earning as high as \$45.00 a week. None of this money, however was saved. Most of it was spent for expensive clothing and good times. He claims never to have been jailed in all this time although he drank to excess and was very frequently involved in fights. As he expressed it, "I was a pretty dangerous man to tamper with; one word, and my fist flew in the other fellow's face."

On April 10, 1926, he was arrested and sentenced to Western State Penitentiary in Pittsburgh on a charge of robbery for a term of from 2½ to 5 years. He explains this act as a "misinterpretation" of the law. After picking up a watch from the street it was claimed by another person. Refusal to surrender it precipitated a fight. The claimant charged robbery.

At the penitentiary he was given intelligence tests which showed a mental age of 14.3 years with an I. Q. of 89 on the Binet; Stanford revision. The Illinois General Intelligence Test gave an I. Q. of 83 with a mental age of 12.6. He was given employment in the penitentiary kitchen where his work record was excellent. No attempts at escape were made nor was he ever reported for any infraction of discipline.

On September 8, 1926, he was admitted to the prison hospital and an operation performed for strangulated inguinal hernia; he was discharged from the hospital on October 4, 1926. On August 18, 1928, he was paroled.

While in the penitentiary he discovered that he had thyroid trouble. Interested in the subject, he borrowed books from the prison doctor and informed himself thoroughly as to the effects of the disorder. He also complained of kidney and stomach trouble at the time but took no action in regard to these. After release he wandered about for a time, worked at construction temporarily but suffered from fatigue. He felt that his eyes were glassy, his blood sluggish and his general condition one of great irritability. It occurred to him to have his thyroid removed but he lacked money. There was, according to his story, only one way out of the predicament.

On January 7, 1929, he was arrested at Massillon, Ohio, on a charge of grand larceny. The theft had been perpetrated in the company of another man and had consisted of stealing merchandise and material from the Massillon Provision Company. His reason for committing this crime, he confided, was to be sentenced to the Ohio State Penitentiary where he could be operated on gratis.

At the Ohio Penitentiary a physical examination showed sluggish and protruding eyes and an enlarged thyroid. An operation performed on him was successful and the thyroid was excised. When interviewed by the writer he was pleasant in demeanor and cooperated willingly. His test achievements are as follows: Morgan Mental Test, M. A. 14.0; Myers, 12.4; Ohio Literacy 13.0. These scores correlate well with the Binet and Illinois test scores made at Western Penitentiary. The Woodworth-Wells indicated nothing. His conduct since sentenced is exemplary.

Thomas is employed in the prison kitchen at the present time. He remarked that since the operation he has had no recurrence of irritability or sluggishness. He now understands his youthful incorrigibility and ascribes it to both the hernia and thyroid disorder. The kidney and stomach ailments have also left him.

He has begun to read, his favorite magazines being the American, Cosmopolitan, Colliers, Liberty, and Saturday Evening Post. (These were given in order of preference.) Cooking recipes interest him most in newspapers.

After release he hopes to work steadily, saying that anyone can work but few people can work continuously. He has, however, the remainder of his previous sentence still to serve as a result of breaking parole.

The case of Thomas appears to have its roots in an abnormal organic condition. It is well known that a toxic thyroid is conducive to restlessness and irritability and is generally detrimental to stability. Now that the condition is removed, he should become an adapted member of society. His further history after release will be carefully noted in order to ascertain whether the operation was really beneficial.

#### CASE IV.

Raymond—Age 23.

Raymond began life with two great handicaps; a low mentality and a very pronounced speech defect. To what extent the former was influenced by the latter we do not know. We can only surmise that some relationship existed between them.

He was born in a small Virginia country town, the fifth of six children. Of the four older children, two, a male and female, are dead. The others have drifted to parts unknown.

When Raymond was three years old, his father, who eked out a living by farming, died. Family cares devolving upon the mother and older children left no time for individual care so little attention was paid him beyond satisfying his physical needs.

He began school at the age of eight but made little progress. Two years were spent in the first grade and two in the third. He finally left while in the sixth grade, at the age of 15. He remarked how unhappy his school years were because of his stammering speech. The other children mimicked and ridiculed him until he was "afraid to say anything", this was especially the case in recitations. At the age of 8 he commenced Sunday School attendance regularly at the Baptist church which was situated one mile from his home. The mother and other members of the family attended church regularly.

His cessation of school and church attendance as well as flight from home was synchronous with his mother's second venture into matrimony. The second husband, a policeman, failed to develop any affection for his acquired family.

Raymond, always sensitive, ran away from home in order to "make his way for himself." He was well built and looked much older than his age indicated. He arrived in Akron, Ohio, and found work in a tire factory. Here he met other young men who took an interest in him and included him in their group. For 7 months life was made up of work during the day, and shows and poolrooms in the evening. He was extremely unstable and could not remain long in one place. The longest job he ever held was in the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, where he remained one month. He guessed that he had held approximately 15 jobs while in Akron. He learned to play poker and dice, gambling heavily for the excitement he derived therefrom. He also developed the habit of drinking frequently "ad stultum". Girls, he claims, did not enter into his existence nor did he ever frequent dance halls.

In 1921 he was sentenced to the Boys Industrial School at Lancaster, Ohio, for stealing \$60.00 from a restaurant. He had lost his job the previous week and claims he needed the money badly in order to "keep up with the bunch." He also states that he was intoxicated at the time. After being released in 1922, he again committed the same crime under similar circumstances and was sentenced to the Boys Industrial School for an indeterminate period. This was on March 19, 1923. He was 16 years old at the time, and, according to a report from the reformatory, was 5 feet 8 inches in height, weighed 147½ pounds, and except for an erupted skin, was in good health. He was considered as cooperative, made no attempts at escape and exhibited a fair attitude toward his work in the Lawn and Poultry Department (4th grade).

Upon being paroled (February 2, 1924) he broke into a small hotel in South Akron and stole a small amount of money. This cost him five days in city jail. We may surmise, although Raymond does not admit it, that he was given his choice between the reformatory and the army. The latter was chosen and four days after parole (2-6-24) he enlisted in the United States Army and served for fourteen months until discharged, June 9, 1925, at Fort Hays, Columbus. In the Army he learned to cook and at the present time regards it as his trade.

The next four years were spent in trying one job after another, drinking excessively and serving short jail sentences on charges of suspicion and intoxication.

His next major offense took place in January, 1929, when he stole money and various articles to the value of \$90.00 from an East Akron restaurant while working for the owner. He left Akron

shortly after the theft and went to West Virginia where he stayed for approximately two weeks and then returned to Akron where he was promptly arrested. At the time of arrest he had with him a diagram of the places in Akron where he intended to blow safes. Among these were two jewelry stores. He was to cut the windows with a glass cutter and two companions were to blow the safes.

Physical examination at Ohio State Penitentiary, where he was sent to serve from 2 to 5 years, revealed an infantile right testicle. It was also discovered that he had had measles at 12 and chickenpox at an earlier age. Wasserman test gave negative results.

Our mental tests show him to be definitely defective mentally. His scores are as follows: Morgan mental test, 10.2 M. A.; Myers mental measure, 7.8 M. A.; Ohio Literacy test, 10.6. The psychoneurotic inventory indicates a high probability of psychopathy with 30 atypical replies.<sup>9</sup>

He explains his present and past predicaments as results of drinking, saying he never found it absolutely necessary to steal otherwise. It is only under the influence of liquor that he is unable to resist thievery. He also blames gang affiliations for his drinking habits and vows never again to associate with his old cronies after parole. He plans to work on an uncle's farm where "he can behave himself and straighten out." Two subsequent interviews with this man explained his case, which is more in the domain of the psychologist and psychiatrist than in that of the law.

We have previously mentioned Raymond's speech defect, which is so serious that at times he stops in sheer helplessness and fears to continue his conversation. The defect manifests itself in stuttering and stammering of an aggravated type which demands great patience on the part of the auditor.

In school days, the constant ridicule which attended his efforts at expression developed him into an introvert, at the same time giving him a strong feeling of inferiority. He was of no importance, people refused to listen to him. The origin of his defect was finally traced to the practice, on the part of his brothers, of tickling him. This was often done in his earliest years and sometimes rendered him speechless.

His flight from school and home was an escape from surroundings which constantly reminded him of his inferiority. Later, he resorted to drink in order to bolster up his ego and while intoxicated and

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<sup>9</sup>It is noteworthy, that among all 40 cases, this is the only one where the 62nd question, "Do you ever feel a strong desire to go steal things", is answered in the affirmative.

uninhibited, he gave free play to a "wish-for-power" which manifested itself in the aggressive behavior of theft. The deed was usually done quite openly, with no attempt made at concealment.

His inferiority is further evidenced by various phobias, especially the feeling that people are watching him wherever he goes.

His infantile testicle may be another source of inferiority with reference to organs. This condition, a congenital one, is usually linked up with thyroid hypo-function. There is some possibility of a ligation between the stammer, defective gland, and low mentality.

The speech condition, if remedied, might alter Raymond's career. Otherwise, our prognosis for his behavior after parole, is not hopeful.

#### CASE V.

James—Age 24.

James is the son of native-born protestant parents. His father, a farmer in a small Virginia country town, reached seventh grade in public school while the mother attained to the sixth. The family consisted of eight children; five male and three female. James ranked second in age. None of the sisters is married to date, all are still living at home. The youngest, aged 13, attends public school. Both parents are in good health.

Although the church was situated only two miles from where he lived, he never attended services. As he remarked, "I never had nothing to do with church, no one else in the family did either." From his account there were no prayers or religious practices of any sort in the home.

The father was an easy-going individual whose main concern centered on crops and the state of the weather. He also played the violin at times. The mother ruled the family, frequently applying "a good whip" to the errant members of the household.

James attended grade school intermittently, truanted often and made very little progress in his studies. In the seventh grade he surrendered the battle for knowledge and left school forever. His age at the time was 17.

Up to this time his amusements were simple enough, consisting mainly of baseball, checkers, and a movie once a month. There were no dances, joyrides or poolrooms. He played with the children of other farmers and was pleased with life. Altho there was also a great deal of work to be done he did not mind this. Boys, he com-

mented, are used to hard work on a farm. At the age of 13, he boasted, he had plowed with three horses.

At 19, while working on a farm in his home town, he appropriated an automobile, and drove off in no particular direction. He had a few dollars in his pocket at the time, the remainder of his month's pay. At that time he was earning \$30.00 a month and keep. He cannot understand why he took the car—"he just took it."

He was arrested in Washington, D. C. June 13, 1925, on a charge of joyriding and grand larceny and was sentenced to two years in the federal penitentiary. He served his sentence, was released and went back to farm work. He procured a job which paid him \$60.00 a month instead of the \$30.00 previously received. With his savings he made a down payment on a Pontiac coupe and was supremely happy until it was taken from him for payment lapses.

Two weeks later, for no other reason than that he saw it unoccupied along a curb, he drove away in a strange car and was arrested in Pittsburgh (12-7-28), charged with violation of the National Theft Act (Transporting a stolen car from one state to another) and sentenced to Atlanta Prison for one year and a day. He was released at the expiration of his sentence, (9-5-29).

He returned to Ravenna, Ohio, and worked on a dairy farm for one month, then stole a car and drove it to Alliance, Ohio, left it there and stole another which he drove to Pittsburgh. There he was arrested and returned to Atlanta. Extradition followed and he was sentenced to serve from 1 to 7 years in the Ohio State Penitentiary.

His physical examination notes; eyes: sluggish; tonsils: hypertrophied. Neck: slightly enlarged thyroid. Wasserman: negative. In the interview he told of influenza in 1922.

James is a rather sluggish individual. His facial expression is particularly vacuous, its monotony occassionally relieved by a silly smile. He shrugs his shoulders when asked his reason for stealing cars and replies that he does not know why. He sees a car, steps into it and drives away.

His mental test scores are illuminating: Morgan test, 9.5 M. A.; Myers Mental Measure, 9.9 M. A.; Ohio Literacy, 8.2 M. A. His replies on the Woodworth-Wells indicate that he suffers bad pains in his head, is shy with girls and sometimes loses track of what he is doing. Of particular significance is the fact that although he was admitted to the institution on September 21, 1929, he gave September 16, 1928, as the date in the interview. He loves to drive a car, he ad-

mitted, but cannot afford to own one. His conduct, both while here and in other institutions, is model in every way.

James is certainly out of place in a penitentiary. He belongs more properly in an institution for the feeble-minded, where this thyroid condition could be attended to. He has no purpose in view when stealing a car except to drive it and enjoy the sensation. There is no doubt that if he had a car he would cease being a public charge. Unfortunately, his mentality is such that he cannot command the necessary income required both for purchase and upkeep. We predict that he will continue his previous career after being set at liberty, even though he tells us of plans to return to the farm.

#### CASE VI.

##### A Comparison of Accomplices in the Same Crime.

William—Age 25 (22 at Commitment).

William was born in Roumania. His father made a fair living as a carpenter although he was generally in poor health and rather irritable at times. From William's description he was a chronic fault-finder and had frequent altercations with his wife, who left him when William was 10 years old. There were two younger children in the family, one male and one female. All lived in a three room dwelling which the family owned.

William attended school in Roumania but only attained to our equivalent of the sixth grade. He was 12 years old at the time he had attended school under compulsion only. After leaving school he was apprenticed to a blacksmith who taught him the trade he now claims as his own. He worked at it for two years and admitted a high degree of proficiency for which there is no demand in America. His father remarried immediately after separation but the second wife quickly adjusted herself to the family group. The church, located  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles from home was attended every Sunday by all members of the family, who were Greek Orthodox in faith.

When he was thirteen years old his father died and the following year he migrated to America where he hoped to find work and make much money. He stayed with a relative in Detroit for the next four years and claims he never appeared in a jail or courtroom in that whole period. The jobs he held in this interval included that of delivery boy, elevator operator, janitor's helper and waiter in a restaurant. He found his own trade useless in America.

He never attended church after leaving home. His recreations consisted of frequent "girl-chasing" rides, movies once or twice each

week, gambling and a regular poolroom patronage. He admits having been under the influence of liquor a number of times, especially when in the company of girls.

At the age of 19 he "got tired of being told not to do this and not to do that" by his relatives so he left them and roomed elsewhere. At this time he met Arnold, also a Roumanian, in the poolroom where he spent many of his evenings and was introduced, so he says, to ways other than legitimate of earning money. Together they perpetrated many petty and grand larcenies and were successful until 1925, when William was arrested and sentenced to Bridewell House of Correction for stealing a sample case of silks, clothing, a typewriter, etc.

After release, he and his accomplice stole a raccoon coat and a suitcase, both valued at \$250.00, from a parked car. The following day (3-5-27) police found the suitcase, bearing the victim's name, at a second hand store. The same day both were arrested while together. William had on a suit which was in the suitcase when it was stolen. He told police that they had opened the car door with a piece of pipe and pawned the stolen goods. He was received at Ohio State Penitentiary on March 22, 1927, on a sentence of 3 to 7 years for grand larceny.

Physical examination revealed an hypertrophied left testicle and hyper-active reflexes. Wasserman reaction negative. He admitted having had syphilis in 1922, which accounts for the hypertrophied testicles and may also be related to the hyper-active reflexes. His general physical condition was good. On August 26, 1928, he walked away from the Roseville Brick plant where he had been sent, but returned voluntarily on September 4, 1928.

When given a detailed questioning by the writer in a second interview, he admitted having been in jail on numerous occasions for "strong arm stuff", i. e., robbing inebriates.

His mental test scores are as follows: Morgan test, M. A. 9.5; Myers Mental Measure, M. A. 7.9; Ohio Literacy, M. A. 12.0. He gave 18 typical replies on the Woodworth-Wells test which indicate that he feels he has been discriminated against both in school and at work, that a certain detective is out to "get" him and always follows him about and that people always blame him for everything that happens. He answers the question, "Do you usually know just what to do next?" in the negative.

His conduct record in the institution is poor. He has been in close confinement more than once for fighting. His other violations have included being out of place, fighting in cell, talking in line, gam-

bling, and smoking. He complains of poor health since incarceration.

He is slated for deportation after release but does not seem to mind much, saying that if he had stayed in Europe he would never have seen the inside of a penitentiary. If deported he hopes to resume his old trade and live a normal existence.

He cannot ascribe a reason for his thefts. He always had enough money for food, shelter and clothing, he says, and did not have to steal. According to his account he made as high as \$35.00 per week but in the year previous to commitment he worked only 3 months, holding three jobs in that period. For the remainder of the time he subsisted on the proceeds of gambling, theft, and "strong arm" stuff.

In William's case, low intelligence and lack of a restraining force were influential in determining his conduct. He is a highly suggestible individual and is unable to resist what looks like "easy money". His desires are not commensurate with his intelligence and consequently he pursues the path of least resistance, unable to visualize the ill effects of his conduct. His total inability to foresee the consequences of his acts is well demonstrated by his wearing a stolen suit the day after the theft. In addition, he is somewhat psychopathic. Deportation may benefit him. It will certainly benefit America.

We will now examine and compare his accomplice, Case X.

#### CASE VII.

Arnold—Age 25 (22 at Commitment).

Arnold came to America at the age of two years. He was the oldest of four children, two boys and two girls. He never felt economic pressure while at home although he was never given enough to spend for amusements. His father generally told him to "go out and earn his own money if he wanted good times." His father is a business man who owns a hardware store at the present time and makes a comfortable livelihood. His temperament was quite stable, though sometimes losing his temper when business worries made him nervous.

The mother was irregularly employed in the capacity of cook. Discipline was maintained in the home, his father sometimes resorting to the strap as a means of inflicting punishment. It appears that Arnold's parents were incompatible but lived together for the sake of their children. They were divorced in 1921 and have since remarried.

When Arnold was one year old he was stricken with scarlet fever,

a disease which accounts for his present imperfect audition. Otherwise there were no observable ill effects.

The family were Catholic, but attended church services irregularly. Arnold became a Sunday School pupil at the age of six and continued irregularly until he was 15 years old, when he ceased altogether. His first confession, confirmation, and first communion took place in prison. There were no religious observances of any sort in the home.

He began public school at the age of seven, skipped a whole year and completed at the age of 13. He continued to high school and graduated at the age of 17. While in high school he had taken a commercial course and had specialized in business management. His scholastic record was good.

While in school he was third basemen on the baseball team, end on the football squad and forward on the basketball team. He played regularly on the school teams. Other recreations included dances monthly, movies weekly, poolrooms and joyrides seldom and a little gambling now and then. He smokes a little but does not chew or drink.

Up to the age of 13 he had earned part time money by selling papers. After graduation he worked for a year in his father's store but shortly afterwards found a good position in an office where he did clerical work. At this time he was still living at home and paid 30% of his income for board and room.

His first offence took place soon after graduation when he was charged with larceny and sentenced to 30 days in the work house. This was on January 30, 1922. He claims he needed money and could procure none from his parents. His next offence was in 1924, when he was arrested on a charge of disorderly conduct exhibited in a street brawl.

The following year a number of things happened which may, to a certain extent, have been related to each other. He met William and exerted his influence upon him. This had two consequences; it fed his ego by supplying him with a worshipper and gave him courage to perpetrate other crimes, now that he had found an accomplice. He was picked up in Toledo on a charge of being a suspicious person and sentenced to six months in the Toledo work-house. At the expiration of his sentence, which was reduced to four months for good conduct, he returned to Detroit and on November 11, 1925, was arrested on a charge of robbery by arms. In each of these cases he served a short jail sentence and was then released, probably because of his youth and intelligence.

In 1926 his parents were divorced. As he remarked, "They just couldn't get along together." Arnold left home and married a girl whom he had known in high school. She was earning \$18.00 per week in a department store at the time but relinquished her job in order to care for a home. Arnold evidently desired to turn over a new leaf. He found a position in an advertising concern, liked the work and intended to make advertising his profession. He earned \$35.00 a week.

His married life, however, was not successful. There were many arguments over trifles and Arnold was soon considering divorce as an antidote. In the same year he was arrested twice; once in Flint, Michigan, on a charge of grand larceny, where he was fined \$150.00 and costs, and again, six months later in Detroit, charged with tampering with an automobile.

His fortunes were now going from bad to worse. Home life was galling to him, a child had been born (in the latter part of 1926), he had lost his job and was five months without work. He claims to have needed money badly and saw no other means of obtaining it except through theft. Accordingly, he and William left for Cleveland where they perpetrated the larceny described in Case VII. Both were arrested and given 3 to 7 years in Ohio State Penitentiary. His wife divorced him immediately and has gone back to her previous job.

Arnold's physical condition showed chronic ceruminosis in both ears, partial atrophy of the left testicle, chronic epididymitis and absence of patellar response. Wasserman test proved negative. Absence of the patellar response may be indicative of a lesion in the reflex level of the cord.

His test record shows superior intelligence. On the Morgan he scores 172 out of a possible 190 points; on the Myers a mental age of 16 and a perfect score on the Ohio Literacy. The prison physician credited him with inferior intelligence. At the Cleveland Clinic, where he was examined before imprisonment the report states, "From a physical standpoint, aside from an old fracture of the nose, this patient is in good health. Psychological level is decidedly superior with an I. Q. of 110. There is no evidence of psychosis." This diagnosis was, as far as the psychological aspect is concerned, entirely substantiated by our results. The psychoneurotic inventory showed only 3 atypical replies.

Arnold exhibited an excellent fund of general information, was well oriented and seems to be free from nervous or mental diseases.

Of his last crime he says, "I consider it a youthful foolish act that might not have happened had I been more schooled in life and its



One fact is noteworthy. In this case we have the combination of a good intellect and leadership with a low mentality and psychopathy. The alliance is a dangerous one to society in every case.

Both William and Arnold are being held for deportation after the expiration of their respective sentences.

### CONCLUSIONS

These conclusions are based upon an individual study of 40 men between the ages of 20 and 30 who at the present time are serving sentences at the Ohio State Penitentiary on the charge of petty or grand larceny. This group, with the exception of five who were unwilling to meet the investigator, comprises practically the entire population between the above mentioned ages who were, at the time this study was made, serving sentences for the crime of theft. Any conclusions made therefore, may be accepted as indicative of perhaps the major portion of those who are charged with larceny; particularly if our results are to be accepted at their full worth.

Assuming a high truth-value for our data, we may safely say that in virtually all our cases, with the exception of one or two, the circumstances leading up to the present incarceration were of such a nature as to preclude the possibility of control. Broadly speaking, our cases are victims of adverse social or organic conditions over which they were able to exercise only the slightest influence.

Proceeding on a strictly scientific basis, a procedure which demands a thorough knowledge of the antecedent causes of any particular phenomenon, we have discovered a highly complex constellation of events in the early lives of our cases which at once eliminate the hypothesis of deliberate choice on the part of any single individual. We must, if our data are at all reliable, rule out any non-causative explanation of theft. We are willing to assert that in almost every one of our cases, proper measures, employed at some stage in the life history of that individual, might have reclaimed him for society. The present status of our subjects stands as concrete evidence of what social neglect, physical and mental inferiority, reformatories and prisons make of those who at one time, certainly, stood at the parting of the ways. We must bear in mind that the "common thief" is so through preventable circumstances; that he represents, not an individual who has chosen a life of theft in preference to one of honesty but rather one who has been forced into his present mode of life because of many highly complex adverse circumstances, some of them operative before powers of discrimination had been fully developed.

In the following tables and comments we will attempt, as concisely as possible, to present our evidence and show the elements which compose the criminal diathesis.

TABLE I  
EDUCATION OF PARENTS  
Grade Reached

Grade	?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Grad.	Bus. Col.	Teacher	Total
Father	17	7	.	.	.	.	.	6	5	2	1	.	1	.	1	.	.	40
Mother	18	7	.	1	1	.	.	3	.	4	.	.	.	.	4	1	1	40

It is evident from this table that more than half of the parents of our prisoners had either no education or a very elementary one at most. The education of the fathers is slightly better than that of the mothers. The factor of poor education of the parents assumes great significance when we consider the possible causes influencing such low educational attainments. In addition to penury, which sometimes necessitates leaving school, we must also include as a possible factor the element of low intelligence. Children reared in an illiterate environment, deprived of that supervision exercised by intelligent parents, are handicapped from the day of birth.

TABLE II  
GRADE PRISONER LEFT SCHOOL

Grade	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Grad.
Number	1	2	1	2	3	6	6	10	3	2	1	2	..	1

This table indicates that 20 of our cases, (50% of the total) reached sixth grade or less in public school; 1 never attended school; 25% reached 7th grade; 6 attended high school. Some relationship may exist between education of parents and offspring in these cases. This much we may deduce; majority of the parents, of low educational level, require the aid of their children almost as soon as they are able to work. Again, poor home supervision, incompatibility of the parents or other disruptive causes may terminate the educational career of the child. To what extent this is true will be illustrated in the next table.

TABLE III  
AGE AT WHICH HOME WAS BROKEN (BEFORE 15)

Age of prisoner at time	2	3	4	6	7	9	10	12	13	14	15	Total
Number of cases	2	2	5	1	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	22

Of 40 cases of larceny, 22 of those committed lacked normal home care before the age of 15. Sixteen of these were deprived of parental

care before the age of ten. By the term "broken home" we include those homes in which either of the parents died, separated, were divorced or had remarried before our subject was 15. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon the ill-effects of poor home life. There are however, a few outstanding results which it will be well to mention; these are, (1) the effect upon the child, psychologically, of family inferiority. (2) The effect of altercations which sometimes precede divorce, these altercations being caused by inebriation and other factors. (3) Lack of discipline and guidance in the child's life, thus permitting it to grow up without any definite standards or values. (4) Lack of adjustment to the new home condition following death or re-marriage of the parent. This condition is very often a proximate cause of Nomadism and truancy. Our next question is, "What percentage of our cases left home before the age of 15?"

TABLE IV

## AGE PRISONER LEFT HOME (To 15)

Age at leaving .....	11	12	13	14	15	Total
Number of cases .....	1	2	1	3	2	9

Out of 40 cases, nine had left home before the age of 15. In the main, this was due to either a reformatory sentence or deliberate flight from a home where life was unbearable. Only in one case does hyperkinesis appear to be a determining cause, i. e., where the individual expressed no other reason for his flight than that "he wanted to see the world."

The number of children in a family and the offenders place therein is sometimes viewed with interest and regarded as highly important in an understanding of subsequent behavior. Our findings on this point are as follows:

TABLE V

## SIZE OF FAMILY

Number of children in family.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Number of cases .....	5	5	8	7	5	5	7	2	1	40

TABLE VI

## PLACE IN FAMILY

Place in family .....	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Number of cases .....	14	11	7	5	2	1	40

From these two tables we learn that in 15 of our cases the number of children in the family was six or more. It is probably true that

in some of these cases the present offender was given inadequate attention. An important and highly significant fact is brought out in table VI; here we note that 25 of our cases, more than 60% of the total, were either first or second in order of birth. The significance of this factor is twofold: (1) The eldest son, especially in those cases where the family is disrupted, must rely mainly upon his own judgment for guidance. In the present cases it appears that such judgment was perverted by many distracting factors, these to be noted later. (2) Where we find large families (15 cases in this study) associated with primacy of birth we may have a condition where care is concentrated upon the younger members of the family while the older are left to their own resources.

Distribution in regard to locale of our men was as follows:

Country	Village	Town	City
10	3	11	16

While many of our cases were reared in the city, the difference between this group and the other two is too small to warrant inference.

The matter of occupation is of paramount importance. It is unlikely that the individual who is employed in a lucrative trade will steal for a livelihood. It becomes evident, therefore, that theft will sometimes provide an avenue of escape from monotonous and underpaid work. A survey of occupations among our cases yielded the following information:

TABLE VII  
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF CASES

<i>Skilled</i>		<i>Unskilled</i>	
Occupation	Cases	Occupation	Cases
Advertising .....	1	Cook .....	4
Blacksmith .....	1	Hardware clerk.....	1
Carpenter .....	4	Farmer .....	7
Electrician .....	1	Coal Miner.....	1
Interior decorator.....	1	Salesman .....	1
Mechanic .....	1	Truck driver.....	7
Steam engineer.....	1	Taxi driver.....	1
Tailor .....	1	Hospital orderly.....	1
Tinsmith .....	1	Laborer .....	5
Total .....	12	Total .....	28

Analyzing the above table, we find that of 18 occupations listed, 9 are classifiable as unskilled. The total number of individuals enrolled in the unskilled occupations amounts to 28, or 70% of all our cases.

Considering the high percentage of broken homes and poor education in our group, we may regard the above figure as a natural outcome of such adverse circumstances.

We will next consider the habits of our men. That there is a strong correlation between intelligence, home environment, education and amusements, is fairly well substantiated. In our investigation it was found that where the individual read often and well, antisocial recreations were less often resorted to. In the following tables a practice was designated as indulged in often if the individual admitted excesses to the extent of four or more lapses per week. "Sometimes" is taken to mean twice per week or less.

TABLE VIII

———Gambling———			———Liquor———			———Pool-room———		
Often	Sometimes	Never	Often	Sometimes	Never	Often	Sometimes	Never
5	11	24	8	7	25	9	11	20

Reducing these figures to temperate and intemperate we find that 16 gambled; 15 drank; while 50% frequented pool-rooms. We are inclined to regard the pool-room as an important factor in the genesis of crime, especially the crime of theft. The offender meets here a social group of his own level and perhaps for the first time feels he "belongs". From the pool-room the path to liquor, gambling, and illicit sexual intercourse is a short one. A type of behavior is developed which makes the acquisition of ready money requisite. The meager incomes of our cases are insufficient to maintain them in their new-found group. Theft is sometimes resorted to as an escape from this dilemma.

We found no evidence to show that religious training was of any special benefit as a crime deterrent. If we consider that religious principles are learned, if at all, before the age of adolescence, before the stage where the ability to generalize is reached, we will find these and similar results normal. When confronted with the necessity of maintaining themselves, rote lessons learned in Sunday School were automatically cast aside and those of our cases who had received a religious education acted in accordance with the demands of their constitution and environment. Religious teachings must have fertile soil in which to grow, a soil lacking in the early environments of our cases. Our figures on this score are:

TABLE IX  
RELIGIOUS TRAINING

Good	Poor	Absent
25	12	3

Of the total number of our cases, 17 had married. Seven of these are divorced at the present time, giving as reasons infidelity, mother-in-law, and prison sentence.

We find a relatively high percentage of disease in our group. Selecting only those diseases which may have a direct bearing on the behavior of our subjects we find:

Glandular Disorders	Syphilis	Gonorrhea
8	11	13

In cases of venereal diseases we sometimes find both syphilis and gonorrhea in the recent history of the case. In all, there were 15 cases of venereal disease in the group studied. The prevalence of this disease among the prison population is another indication of lack of proper inhibitions. We are inclined to attribute this lack of inhibition to poorly integrated nervous structures, rendered so by absence of proper developmental training or poor physical heredity.

An outstanding factor in our results is the high percentage of sub-normal intelligence discovered in our cases. While low intelligence does not entirely explain crime as such, there is a great probability that it is a highly significant variable in the crime of theft. In most cases of our investigation the larceny was perpetrated either to procure necessities or else the means of purchasing those things which raise the possessor in the esteem of his companions. For most of the group, attainment of these substances is possible through the medium of wage earning; where they are inaccessible, well-oiled inhibitions forestall anti-social means of acquisition.

When, however, we have individuals endowed with low or educationally undeveloped mentalities, who share the desires of others in the environment but are limited in adapted acquisition techniques, we will find and *have* found, many illegitimate and socially unacceptable devices employed. As an evidence of the type of mentality back of the deed we have only to examine it cursorily—the lack of ingenuity, the transparent simplicity, the almost primitive directness which characterizes most larceny crimes, is almost irrefutable evidence of its essential nature. The mentally and constitutionally inferior organisms, hampered by an adverse social environment, which includes lack of training in social norms of behavior and the significance of these norms, must of necessity prey upon the strong in order to survive.

TABLE X

TABLE OF MENTAL TEST SCORES IN TERMS OF MENTAL AGE TOGETHER WITH  
NUMBER OF ATYPICAL RESPONSES ON THE WOODWORTH-WELLS PSYCHO-  
NEUROTIC INVENTORY OF 40 PRISONERS SERVING SENTENCES AT THE  
OHIO STATE PENITENTIARY ON THE CHARGE OF PETTY OR  
GRAND LARCENY

(Morgan scores arranged in ascending order.)

Case No.	Morgan	Myers	Ohio Lit.	Woodworth- Wells
1	7.8	10.0	8.2	20
2	7.8	8.6	9.4	4
3	8.5	6.9	9.6	14
4	8.8	10.9	9.5	5
5	8.8	10.9	9.5	5
6	9.2	10.6	9.5	18
7	9.2	9.9	10.0	13
8	9.2	10.0	12.0	9
9	9.5	7.9	12.0	18
10	9.5	11.6	11.0	1
11	9.5	9.9	8.2	12
12	10.2	7.8	10.6	30
13	10.2	10.3	11.8	1
14	10.2	10.5	9.8	2
15	10.7	10.8	12.0	12
16	10.7	12.0	8.4	17
17	10.7	11.0	15.0	1
18	10.7	16.0	14.4	5
19	11.3	9.2	14.8	12
20	11.3	11.9	9.5	2
21	11.3	16.0	11.0	23
22	11.6	12.0	13.0	6
23	11.8	9.9	9.5	2
24	11.8	9.9	15.0	2
25	11.8	12.0	16.0	2
26	12.4	11.6	13.6	15
27	12.4	13.0	14.0	11
28	12.4	14.0	11.0	2
29	12.9	8.4	11.8	5
30	14.0	12.4	13.0	3
31	14.0	16.0	18.0	6
32	14.0	16.0	17.8	14
33	14.6	12.9	11.8	10
34	15.1	12.8	18.0plus	7
35	15.7	11.5	16.0	0
36	15.7	11.5	14.0	15
37	15.7	16.0	14.6	3
38	16.2	16.0	11.5	9
39	17.3	16.0	17.4	4
40	19.0plus	16.0	18.0plus	8

Morgan Mental Test Quartiles.			
I.	II.	III.	IV.
7.8-9.5	9.5-11.3	11.3-14.0	14.0-19.0plus
Myers Mental Measure Quartiles.			
6.9-9.9	10.0-11.5	11.5-12.9	13.0-16.0
Ohio Literacy Test Quartiles.			
8.2-9.6	9.8-11.8	12.0-14.6	14.8-18.0plus

Woodworth-Wells Test Quartiles			
0-2	3-6	7-13	14-30

In Table X we note that more than half of the cases are mentally sub-normal, the mental age remaining at 11.3 on the Morgan until case 22 is reached. An examination of the quartiles of the three tests will show that the variations between them is sufficiently small to warrant the generalization that in the present group slightly more than 50% of those examined may be regarded as mentally sub-normal. The findings on the Woodworth-Wells were, with one exception, entirely negative.

In conclusion, it may be of interest to list the rationalizations given by the men themselves.

Rationalization	Frequency
1. Liquor .....	7
2. Innocent .....	7
3. Evil companions .....	3
4. Out of work.....	2
5. Needed tools for work.....	2
6. Thrill .....	2
7. Women .....	1
8. No reason (could not explain).....	3
9. Money for marriage.....	1
10. Stealing in order to supply brother with funds.....	1
11. Irresistible compulsion .....	2
12. Joyriding .....	1
13. Gambling debts .....	3
14. Foolishness .....	1
15. Trying to live beyond means.....	2
16. Absolute need for transportation, stole auto.....	1
17. Crime in order to receive surgical attention.....	1
Total .....	40

This study confirms a rapidly growing point-of-view; namely, the necessity for more individualized study of the offender. The general labels of "Thief", "Crook", etc., are meaningless terms in the light of modern criminal psychology and psychiatry. We have found cases neither of deliberate and willful theft nor any others in which no demonstrable causative factor was apparent. Again, while there appears to be a certain similarity in the histories of our cases, no two are alike in every respect. A careful study of our material reveals one salient fact; that adjustment at the proper time in perhaps each of these lives might have saved the state much money, society as a whole much annoyance, and the prisoner himself much unhappiness. The problem is by no means solved. There is still ample room for objective research and preventive measures.

*Recommendations*

A few recommendations will be stated here which, it is hoped, will point the way to a preventive program. Inasmuch as theft is generally the stepping stone to further crime, our efforts should be concentrated upon this particular aspect of criminality. The following recommendations are suggested:

1. A careful investigation of all cases where a pupil has dropped out of school in order to work.
2. Careful supervision of rural schools, with frequent studies, both social and psychological, of the families of pupils and home conditions.
3. Frequent physical examinations in both rural and public schools; not the cursory type generally made but special attention given to the endocrine system.
4. The teaching of a useful trade in every public school.
5. Periodic investigation of pool-room clientele, with a view to discovering unhealthy circumstances of any sort which are responsible for excessive patronage.
6. The power to be given the court of turning over all cases of crime and delinquency to a psychological and psychiatric clinic before pronouncing sentence.
7. The dissemination of birth control information among the laboring classes.
8. The establishment of a psychiatric clinic, state owned, and made as available to the people as the present medical clinics.
9. Mental hygiene propaganda; the purpose of which would be to acquaint the general populace with the aims and methods of this science.
10. Careful and sympathetic conferences with the men while in the penitentiary, aiding them in reaching an understanding of themselves. In other words, an attempt to understand the prisoner while he is accessible rather than permitting him to fester for the duration of his confinement.
11. A job-placement bureau in the penitentiary to place the paroled or released prisoner in case no such provision has been previously made by outside agencies.