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Editorials

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EDITORIALS

TWO JOURNALS NOW COMBINED

The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology presents to its readers for the first time in this issue a new section, edited by Lt. Col. Calvin Goddard, Professor of Police Science, Law Faculty, Northwestern University. Here will appear material of interest to all persons engaged in law enforcement and allied activities.

This step is taken as the result of a fusion of the American Journal of Police Science, heretofore published by the Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory of Northwestern University, with the Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology. Colonel Goddard, Director of the Laboratory, and formerly Managing Editor of its Journal, will remain in charge of its interests under the new plan of consolidation.

Those who are familiar with the two journals will readily see the wisdom of a combination such as has been effected. Their fields, while not identical, have been so closely allied that each has often published material which might well have appeared in the other: indeed their mailing lists include many names of persons who are subscribers to both.

The American Journal of Police Science was established in the beginning of 1930 coincident with the launching of the Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory. Conceived by Colonel John H. Wigmore, Dean Emeritus of Northwestern University Law School, and made possible through the munificence of Burt A. Masee, founder, and for a long period sole financial supporter of the Laboratory, it immediately attracted the attention of persons interested in the application of science to the detection of crime. Prior to its inception, no publication had attempted to exploit the field to which it was devoted. As a result it immediately gained a host of friends among experts in criminal identification, State's Attorneys, Coroners, Sheriffs, practitioners of legal medicine, and all other persons alive to the importance of applying science to criminal investigations. Foreign Medico-Legal and Criminalistic Journals welcomed this new-comer in their fields with gracious editorial comments. Scientific police workers in far corners, in Japan, in Sumatra, and in Siam added this Journal to those already in their files. And so, within a space of but little over two years, it has made a very distinct place for itself at a period when this could not be accomplished save upon intrinsic merit.

The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, now in its twenty-third volume, welcomes its younger brother into the fold. It feels that the union now effected cannot but result in mutual advantage and looks forward, on behalf of both itself and its new partner, to a broader field of usefulness in the years to come.

CALVIN GODDARD

HASTINGS HORNELL HART

December 14, 1851—May 9, 1932

One of the Nestors of American penology departed, when Hastings Hart died on May 9, 1932, after a long illness. His death closed a long life of unusual devotion and earnest labor in behalf of modern penal treatment. To the very end, as long as his untiring energy could carry him, he remained at his post as consultant in penology for the Russell Sage Foundation. Few men in the social service field in this country were better known and none more admired and respected.

Like many of the social workers of his day, he received training for the ministry, being graduated from Andover Theological Seminary in 1880. From the pastorate at Worthington, Minnesota, where he served for three years, he went in 1883 to the secretaryship of the Minnesota State Board of Charities and Correction, in which capacity he remained until 1898 when he became Superintendent of the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society. While in Chicago he was secretary of the committee which drafted the Illinois juvenile court law, one of the first in the world. Since 1909 he had been a member of the staff of the Russell Sage Foundation, first as director of the child-helping department, and later as consultant in delinquency and penology. The esteem in which he was held by his fellow social workers and penologists may be gathered from the fact that he served as president of the National Conference of Charities and Correction and the American Prison Association in 1893 and 1922 respectively and that in 1925 he was American vice-president of the International Prison Congress in London.

THORSTEN SELLIN.

THE CASE OF VIOLET SHARPE

On June 10, 1932, Violet Sharpe, a waitress in the Dwight Morrow home in Englewood, New Jersey, committed suicide by

drinking poison. Since the kidnapping of the Lindbergh baby, Miss Sharpe had been known as "the only servant in the Lindbergh-Morrow homes who could not furnish a suitable alibi." She had been "under constant suspicion and investigation" by the authorities since she was first questioned early in the search for the child. Colonel Schwarzkopf, the head of the New Jersey State Police, declared she gave "conflicting statements as to her whereabouts" on the night of the kidnapping, and she refused to reveal the identity of her companion on that night. She was *interviewed* a number of times, and while she was being *questioned* at Hopewell, all her personal effects were confiscated during a search of her room. After constant questioning, she became "highly nervous," according to newspaper accounts of the affair. When the authorities returned to the Morrow home to take her for a fourth questioning by detectives and state troopers, rather than face her tormentors again, she poisoned herself.

The authorities immediately issued a bulletin which declared that her act "confirmed the suspicion of the investigating authorities concerning her guilty knowledge of the crime against Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr."

The next day, however, the case against Miss Sharpe was beginning to break down. Her story began to assume truthfulness. Her statements checked. She had been riding with one "Ernie," as she had stated.

Parts of the New York *Times* account of the case reads as follows:

"I cannot understand," said Inspector Walsh, "why this girl (Miss Sharpe), if she had nothing to do with the kidnapping, preferred death to revealing Miller's name. I cannot understand it at all."

"Miller, too, said he did not know why the Morrow servant had refused to tell the New Jersey police, that he was the man who took her for a motor trip to Orangeburg the night of the kidnapping. He said there was nothing about the ride that should have been concealed. He seemed as much mystified over the girl's act as were the police.

"Despite the queer turn in the case, Inspector Walsh clung to the belief, apparently, that there might have been some connection between Miss Sharpe and the kidnapping, either direct or indirect. He repeated a point previously emphasized that Emily Sharpe, also known as Edna, a sister of the dead girl, applied for a visa at Washington on March 1, the day of the kidnapping, to return to England.

He recalled that she sailed four days after the Lindbergh kidnapers got \$50,000 from Dr. John F. Condon on April 2.

"Miller's story and the confirmation by Miss Minners, it was pointed out last night, tended to confirm the belief that Miss Sharpe might have taken the poison because she had developed an overwhelming fear of further questioning by the police, even though she may have had no guilty knowledge of the kidnapping and murder of the Lindbergh baby. It is understood that in all her statements to the police she referred to her companion of the night of March 1 only as 'Ernie,' without ever mentioning his second name."

It seems that this was a case made to order for Mr. Leonarde Keeler and his method of detecting deception, commonly known as the "lie detector." By the use of scientific methods, the New Jersey police might have failed to learn the real cause of Miss Sharpe's dread of police *questioning*, but they could have learned *immediately* and *easily* whether or not she was *connected with those involved in the kidnapping*. And that is what they wanted to know. Probably they were entirely unconcerned with the past of Miss Sharpe and her misdemeanors, if any. The lie detector has been proving of value in prosecution, but its greatest value is in protecting the innocent.

Perhaps it would be appropriate to quote from the study of "The Third Degree," made by the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement (p. 130):

"One counteractive force which may prove of benefit is the Scientific Crime Detection Laboratory of Chicago. * * * Its services are open to all police departments. The directors believe that scientific methods are the best remedies for the third degree and other brutal practices. * * * The directors suggested to the Chicago police department that they try out the 'lie detector,' but a leading official, said, 'Here's the best lie detector,' and extended his clenched fist. The presence of this laboratory, with its many scientific facilities, ought in time to stimulate the local prosecuting attorneys and detectives to place an increasing reliance on the investigation of outside evidence of crimes instead of the extortion of confessions by brutal methods."

It is only fair to add that the Chicago region is making constant use of the "lie detector." Two men are kept busy using it in banks, stores, and offices. Why is it that it is easier to "sell" a method of ascertaining the truth to business men than to the police?

NEWMAN F. BAKER.