

1943

## Current Notes

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## CURRENT NOTES

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**Psychiatry in the Army**—Dr. Edward A. Strecker of Philadelphia, president of the American Psychiatric Association, has been named Special Consultant to the Secretary of War for the Air Forces of the United States Army, according to the Committee on Public Education of the American Psychiatric Association. In this capacity, Dr. Strecker will act as advisor to War Secretary Henry L. Stimson on all questions relating to psychiatry in the Air Forces.

A month earlier Dr. Strecker was named Consultant in Psychiatry to the Surgeon General of the U. S. Navy, in which capacity he acts as advisor in psychiatry to the Navy's Bureau of Medicine and Surgery.

Dr. Strecker recently established the first intensive training school for naval medical officers in Philadelphia. All of the medical and hospital facilities throughout the city are cooperating in this program, three months in length, which has already graduated more than a score of officers. A third class is in training. In World War I he held the rank of Major in the Army Medical Corps, as division neuro-psychiatrist for the 28th Division in France. He became known as an authority on the military psychiatric disability formerly known as "shell shock."

Dr. Strecker is professor and head of the department of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School in Philadelphia, and the Medical School of the same university. In 1939 he delivered the Salmon Lectures on Psychiatry and Mental Hygiene. He served as clinical professor of psychiatry and mental hygiene at Yale University in New Haven, Conn., from 1926 to 1932.

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**Criminal Justice in England and Wales**—The magistrates, or justices of the peace—to use their other name, try the vast majority of the criminal cases. Their history goes back to the year 1360. At first their duty was to arrest malefactors and to examine them, but they were soon given power to try minor offences. Today there are nearly 25,000 justices, about 1,000 of whom are women.

Despite the importance of their work, these unpaid justices are not required to know any law and only a few of them are trained lawyers. The clerk to the magistrates is, however, always a solicitor, and it is his duty to advise them on legal questions. Although it has been frequently suggested that trained lawyers should take the place of the untrained justices, this has always been opposed on the ground that the present system more nearly represents the popular feeling of what is fair and just. London, as usual, is an exception, the police courts there being staffed by 28 salaried magistrates who have been barristers. One or two other cities have adopted professional magistrates, but most of them prefer lay justices.

The jurisdiction of the magistrates is large and varied. A single lay justice cannot award punishment exceeding 14 days or a fine of 20 shillings, but two or more justices sitting as a Petty Sessional Court can deal with all non-indictable offences and certain indictable ones, if the prisoner agrees to be tried summarily. Thus in 1938 of the 78,463 persons found guilty of indictable offence 69,851 were tried by the summary courts. The punishments inflicted on a conviction are either fines or imprisonments up to a limit which can rarely exceed six months, so most prisoners accused of serious crimes welcome a summary trial. A person found guilty at Petty Sessions

can appeal to Quarter Sessions, but only a small number of appeals are taken.

### *The Higher Criminal Courts*

Quarter Sessions, as their name indicates, are held four times a year. Their composition is complicated, for in the boroughs the Court consists of a Recorder, who is a barrister, sitting with a jury, while in the counties the presiding officer is the Chairman of Quarter Sessions, all the magistrates have a right to act as judges, and there is also a jury. The jurisdiction of Quarter Sessions is limited both in the nature of the crimes that can be tried there (e.g. treason and murder cannot) and in the amount of the sentence that can be given.

The Assize Courts, which are held 3 or 4 times a year in the counties, and monthly in London at the "Old Bailey" are the highest criminal courts, their jurisdiction being unlimited. Here the judge is usually one of the judges of the High Court of Justice wearing the red robes of criminal justice. If he sentences a prisoner to be hanged he places the black cap on his wig. The judge sits with a jury of twelve who must be unanimous in their verdict. Unlike the rule in most of the American States, the English judge, in charging the jury, may express his own view concerning the facts. This requires some tact, for too strong an expression of opinion may induce the jury to take a contrary view.

Since 1907 appeals can be taken to the Court of Criminal Appeal, but only a limited number are brought because if the appeal is refused the Court may increase the sentence or it may refuse to count the period during which the appeal was pending as part of the term of imprisonment. In practice bail is rarely allowed after a prisoner has been convicted.

Perhaps the most striking thing about British criminal justice is its speed. The time between arrest and trial rarely exceeds three months and may be much less. The trial itself, even in a difficult murder case, hardly ever lasts more than a few days. If an appeal is taken this will be heard within a few weeks, and only in cases of peculiar difficulty will the argument take more than a few hours. As a result it may be said that British justice in most instances is both swift and sure.

### *The Prosecutor*

There is no official in England similar to the American district attorney. Any person who has been injured, or who is acquainted with the facts, can bring a prosecution, but in most cases the prosecution is now brought by the police. In less important cases a police officer conducts the prosecution himself, but in the more important ones solicitors (in the lower courts) and barristers (in the higher courts) may represent the prosecution.

In 1879 the office of Director of Public Prosecutions was established so that he might conduct cases of special importance and difficulty. He is now responsible for all prosecutions in murder cases, and others which cannot be handled in the usual way. In 1938 his office conducted about 550 prosecutions.

### *Abolition of the Grand Jury*

In 1933 the Grand Jury was abolished as it was felt that the system had become cumbersome and unnecessary. The present practice is to charge a person accused of an indictable offence before the justices. After hearing the evidence for the prosecution they may discharge the accused on the ground that the evidence is insufficient to justify further proceedings or they can commit him for trial either to a Court of Quarter Sessions or to an Assize Court.

**Mental Deterioration Among Sex Offenders**—A random sample was gathered of 480 inmates sentenced to the State Prison of Southern Michigan for all types of offenses since January 1, 1940, and the data tabulated. The data of this control group were then compared with 479 inmates sentenced for certain sex offenses during the same period. "Mean grade placement" in the table below was determined by the Stanford Achievement Test. The Bregman Revision of the Army Alpha was used to secure the I.Q. averages. It must be remembered that an alpha I.Q. of 89 represents the average adult performance and corresponds to a Binet I.Q. of 100.

*Comparison of Sex Offense and Control Group Data*

	Number Cases	Mean Age	Mean Alpha I.Q.	Mean Grade Place- ment	Per cent with Previ- ous Pris- on Record	Per cent Negro
Control (all crimes)	480	29.15	89.12	5.20	29.58	24.37
Gross indecency . . . .	48	40.28	92.06	6.18	29.16	8.33
Indecent liberties . . .	120	42.11	85.58	5.40	23.33	13.33
Statutory rape . . . . .	98	36.71	84.69	5.41	30.61	13.26
All other classes of rape . . . . .	213	35.61	85.03	5.11	33.80	16.90
Average of all sex crimes . . . . .	479	37.93	85.79	5.35	32.98	14.40

The results show that the sex offense group is significantly older, averages lower in I.Q., scores about the same in grade placement has about the same rate of recidivism, and has a lower percentage of negroes when compared with the control groups.

Concerning these results, a number of comments can be made; however, such comments should be considered as suggestive, not as proved. It will be noted that, with the exception of those convicted of gross indecency, the I.Q.'s average lower, while the grade placement scores average about the same or higher in the sex offense group when compared with the control group. Since the sex offense group is also older, this I.Q. and grade placement variation may suggest that deterioration is occurring in a group which, by virtue of the offense, gave evidence of psychosexual abnormalities. That is, perceptual and reasoning processes may have begun to show impairment while material already learned (school achievement) has suffered less or not at all.

Gross indecency, the exception to the trend suggested above, is essentially a homosexual offense. Many of these 48 men related histories of homosexuality of long standing; and it is likely that if their victims had been adult men instead of young boys, they would either have remained undetected or punished less severely. These men also tended to possess higher vocational skill, even professional training, than the other offense groups. Whether the gross indecency group has deteriorated from a higher level to a level which, while lower, is still relatively high, is uncertain. It is suggested that this homosexual group may have been more intelligent originally.

The lower percentage of negroes in the control group may reflect a social difference rather than a difference in the proportionate number of offenses. That is, it may be that negroes regard sex offenses less seriously and do not report them; or perhaps they prefer to settle such offenses among themselves.—Irwin August Berg, University of Illinois.

**Salmon Lectures for 1943**—Dr. Abraham A. Brill, one of the nation's leading psychoanalysts and an authority on the teachings of Dr. Sigmund Freud, will deliver the Salmon Lectures for 1943 at the Academy of Medicine, 2 East 103rd Street in New York on three successive Friday evenings—November 5th, November 12th and November 19th.

The Salmon Committee on Psychiatry and Mental Hygiene, appointed by the Council of the New York Academy of Medicine which is sponsoring the lectures, has extended an invitation to all members of the medical profession and their friends to attend.

The Salmon Lectures, now in their eleventh year, are delivered annually by an outstanding specialist in the field of psychiatry, neurology or mental hygiene, either in this country or abroad, who has made the greatest contribution to his specialty during the preceding year.

Dr. Brill, who at one time served as clinical psychiatrist at Aunstalt Burgholze in Zurich, Switzerland, is now Lecturer in Psychoanalysis and Abnormal Psychology at New York University, Lecturer in Psychoanalysis and Psychosexual Sciences at Columbia University and Consultant for the Manhattan Hospital in New York.

He is the author of numerous works, many of which are translations into English for the first time of the writings of Freud. Among his writings are: "Psychoanalysis—Its Theories and Practical Application", "Fundamental Conceptions of Psychoanalysis", "Freud's Selected Papers on Hysteria", "Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex", "Freud's Interpretations of Dreams", "Psychopathology of Everyday Life" and others.

Dr. Brill is a Major in the Medical Reserve of the U. S. Army, a Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, and a member of the American Psychoanalytic Association, the American Psychopathic Association and the American Therapeutic Society.

The Salmon Committee on Psychiatry and Mental Hygiene includes:

Dr. Samuel W. Hamilton, Division of Mental Hygiene, United States Public Health Service, Washington, D. C.; Dr. Adolph Meyer, Psychiatrist-in-Chief emeritus of the Henry Phipps Psychiatric Clinic, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, Md.; Dr. Edward A. Strecker, Department of Psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania Medical School, Philadelphia, Pa.; Dr. Edwin G. Zabriskie, Professor of Clinical Neurology, Columbia University Medical School, New York City; Dr. C. Charles Burlingame, Chairman, Psychiatrist-in-Chief of the Institute of Living, Hartford, Conn.; and the President and the Director of the New York Academy of Medicine.

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