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## Current Notes

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## CURRENT NOTES

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V. A. Leonard, *Editor*

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American Prison Association Establishes Research Center—President Howard L. Bevis of Ohio State University announced recently that headquarters of the Bureau of Research and Planning created by the American Prison Association, will be located on the campus of that university, with Professor Walter C. Reckless of the School of Social Administration as chairman. Activities of the new bureau will include research, advisory and professional services to correctional institutions throughout the country, mainly on the state governmental level. Among the first projects to be undertaken, according to Dr. Reckless, will be a nationwide study of measures taken by the states to aid in the prevention and control of crime and delinquency, and the development of a manual for uniform reporting of statistics on the adult offender, with the aim of standardizing data on probation, parole and correction for all areas. In addition, another function of the bureau will be to encourage active participation by interested university faculty members and graduate students throughout the country in studies of probation, parole and correctional institutions.

Creation of the bureau resulted from action of the 77th Annual Congress of Correction at Long Beach, California, last September, in establishing a permanent Committee on Research and Planning. This continuing committee will act as the Bureau of Research and Planning of the American Prison Association under Dr. Reckless. Other committee members were to be announced later. Dr. Reckless is a widely known authority on penology who established at Ohio State University the first full training program in penology and corrections.

The American Prison Association, founded at Cincinnati in 1870, is among the country's oldest national welfare groups. It sponsors the annual Congress of Corrections, which includes annual meetings of the American Prison Association, the National Probation Association, the National Jail Association, the National Conference of Juvenile Agencies and numerous other national organizations. The new President of the American Prison Association, which has headquarters in New York, is W. F. Smyth, Jr., of Richmond, Virginia, and E. R. Cass, New York, is General Secretary. The Association's board of directors includes outstanding figures in the field of penology and corrections, among whom are Sanford Bates, President of the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission, Trenton, N. J.; Lewis E. Lawes and Austin H. McCormick, both of New York; and James V. Bennett, director of U. S. Prisons, Washington, D. C.—*From a recent news release.*

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Identification Officers Meet—The thirty-second annual convention of the International Association for Identification convened at Houston, Texas on October 27, with the Texas Division of the Association acting as hosts. Delegates from every state were present, together with representatives from Canada, Mexico and other foreign countries. An address by Judge Loyd Davidson of the State Court of Criminal Appeals, Austin, Texas, on *The Duty and Responsibility of the Identification Witness*,

was received with pronounced approval. *Making Questioned Documents Talk*, was the title of an important address by Clark Sellers, President of the American Society of Questioned Document Examiners and an outstanding authority on the subject, who resides in Los Angeles. Colored slides and motion pictures presented by officials of the Texas Department of Public Safety and local officers on the identification problems generated by the Texas City disaster was followed by a tour through the devastated area. Other speakers at the Convention included Paul D. McCann, Department of Correction, Albany, N. Y., Howard M. Travis, Special Agent of the National Board of Fire Underwriters, Rochester, New York; and Colonel Homer Garrison, Jr., Director of the State Department of Public Safety, Austin, Texas.

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**Increased Tempo in State Action and Legislation on Correctional Programs**—There has been considerable interest throughout the country in the improvement of correctional programs and a good deal of outstanding legislation has been enacted and legislative investigations authorized. A Youth Conservation Commission, similar in function to the California Youth Authority, was established in Minnesota and in Wisconsin corresponding duties were authorized for a Youth Service Commission in the State Department of Public Welfare. However, bills to establish Youth Correction Authorities failed to pass in Connecticut and Illinois. In Congress, a bill for a Federal Youth Authority is still in the Judiciary Committee.

Arizona created a State Board of Correction and Rehabilitation to supervise the state penal and correctional institutions. In Idaho, a State Board of Corrections was established to administer the penitentiary, parole, and probation system and to constitute a board of pardons. In Vermont, the Department of Public Welfare has been expanded to function as a Department of Institutions and Corrections, headed by a board which acts also as an advisory parole board to the Governor. Several investigating commissions have been set up in various states to study penal problems. These include a State Penal and Correctional Survey Commission, appointed by the Governor of Indiana to study the state's penal system and release procedures and to report to the Governor and Legislature. In Maryland, a similar Commission on Prison Control, Probation and Parole, was preparing a report to the Legislative Council. Massachusetts instituted a legislative and lay commission to make a special study of sex crimes. In Virginia, an Advisory Legislative Council is making a statewide survey of juvenile detention.

For the first time, Texas gave its Board of Pardons authority to release on parole inmates who have served one-third of their sentences, subject to the approval of the Governor. The Board is empowered also to act as a state board of probation which constitutes Texas' first probation law. The statute provides, however, that probation may be granted to first offenders where the maximum does not exceed ten years, except in cases of rape, murder and offenses against morals. In Wyoming, similar legislation empowers the State Board of Pardons to grant paroles from all state penal and reformatory institutions; it succeeds to the duties of the Board of Probation and Parole. A Board of Parole was created in the District of Columbia to take over the functions of the District Board of Indeterminate Sentence and Parole. In Wisconsin,

the entire probation, parole and pardon statute has been revised. All exceptions in granting probation have been deleted; courts are no longer limited in fixing the period of probation, and probation may be granted for misdemeanors by all courts. The requirement that all paroles must be approved by the Governor has been eliminated. In New York, the parole board has been enlarged from three to five members and paroles may now be granted by a majority of the board. A defendant in Illinois now may be eligible for probation despite previous conviction of felony if he has lived without committing a crime for ten years after discharge from probation or eight years after completion of a prior sentence. A bill to establish a state probation board failed to pass in Colorado, as did a bill to eliminate the requirement of the District Attorney's approval of probation for felony convictions. A similar failure was noted in Nevada where a constitutional amendment authorizing the legislature to regulate paroles and pardons and also authorizing the courts to suspend sentence as well as grant probation, did not pass the legislature.—*From a statement by James V. Bennett, Director, Federal Bureau of Prisons.*

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**Venereal Disease Control Shifts Emphasis to Discovery**—Federal appropriation under the Venereal Disease Control Act of 1938, was set by Congress for the fiscal year 1947-1948 at \$17,399,500 to finance the Venereal Disease Division of the United States Public Health Service, general grants-in-aid to states, the rapid treatment center program and special projects. This represented an increase of \$159,500 over the 1946-1947 appropriation. The Division has been concentrating its efforts to an intensive case-finding campaign. For several years past its activities have been shifting in emphasis toward case-finding, but it is only during the past year that an intensified program has swung into action. A feature of the educational work that is being done is a publication by the Venereal Disease Educational Institute of Raleigh, North Carolina, in cooperation with the U. S. Public Health Service, of a 16-page brochure, entitled “. . . *the undiscovered—the challenge to VD control today.*” Copies may be obtained by addressing the Institute.—*Social Hygiene News, The American Social Hygiene Association.*

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**An Appeal for Data**—Dr. W. Eliasberg, 420 West 2nd Avenue, New York 24, New York, has appealed to qualified workers for case information which will be of aid to him in furthering the investigation of the relationship between endocrine malfunctioning and the behavior pattern. He calls attention to the fact that for years a certain type of criminal behavior has been puzzling those interested in the administration of justice. There is the shoplifter who has the money in his purse to buy what he wants. Another enters a trolley car and for no good reason insults passengers, or goes into a candy store to buy sweets and provokes tumult. A man attacks his wife with a kitchen knife for no known reason. A mother pricks her child's eyes with a pin. Other amazing instances of cruelty to children, sexual crimes, aggression against authorities, arson and robbery are in the records. Dr. Eliasberg expresses the view that there are two common factors in the type of behavior he has in mind—neither the perpetrator himself nor those who know him would have expected or predicted the act. In former years, he states,

kleptomaniacs and moral offenders were made to feel the full severity of the law. Then followed a period when there was much discussion of the irresistible impulse and of the neurotic determination of criminal behavior. Currently, some attention is being given to the malfunction of the endocrine glands, especially hyperthyroidism, Graves Disease, hypoglycemia and hyperinsulinism. The investigator is interested in assembling data concerning offenses in the foregoing categories which have come to the attention of other workers in the legal and medical professions. He has prepared the following questions as a guide to interested persons who feel that they can be of assistance: 1. How many cases have you seen in which either you or the experts thought of endocrine disorders as a cause or a conditioning factor? 2. Specifically, how many cases of hyperthyroidism or of hyperinsulinism (hypoglycemia) have you observed? 3. Can you give a percentage estimate of the above cases in your practice as a whole, and among crimes characterized by sudden violence? 4. Have you handled cases where hyperthyroidism or hypoglycemia seemed to account for other types of criminality? 5. Were the diagnoses established beyond any doubt? 6. What was the disposition in cases where, without a plea of insanity or so-called irresistible impulse, irresponsibility on the basis of hypoglycemia or toxic hyperthyroid was pleaded? 7. Are you in a position to contribute characteristic case histories, including age, sex and particular traits of the offenders? Interested persons may communicate with Dr. Eliasberg at his New York address.—*From a personal letter to the Journal.*

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**Relationship Between Intelligence Level and Psychiatric Classification in Parole Risk**—A recent study of the relationships between the intellectual levels and psychiatric classifications of reformatory parolees on the one hand and parole success or failure on the other by Dr. Robert M. Allen, Professor of Psychology of the University of Miami is of unusual interest. Two hundred parolees were studied; 100 in the N-V group (nonviolators), and 100 in the V group (violators). The intelligence level was found to be closely related to parole outcome in that the nonviolators were intellectually superior to violators. The coefficient of contingency value between intelligence level and parole success was .333. The second element, psychiatric classification, indicated that the presence of a personality aberration was found in both parole groups. Both factors have been adequately covered in the literature. Allen (R. M. Allen, *Problems of Parole*, this JOURNAL, 1947, vo. 38, No. 1, pp. 7-13) reviewed their roles in parole prediction. Cantor (N. Cantor, *Crime and Society*, Holt & Co., New York, 1939) pointed to the contradictory evidence regarding the part played by intelligence and mental abnormality in the general picture of delinquency. With regard to intelligence, he stated (p. 47), "The safest conclusion, in the light of present data, is that any large group of unselected criminals will have approximately the same average intelligence as any unselected group of the general population." The same condition of conflicting research findings was extant in the area of personality pathology (see Cantor, pp. 47-50 for a clear review of this question). The final conclusion was in terms of a challenge. . . "The precise ways in which the emotional disturbances lead to delinquent behavior are not well understood, but no one who

has insight into delinquent behavior will deny that such conflicts are symptomatic of emotional difficulty" (Cantor, p. 49).

Turning to the more specific problem of parole success and failure, a study of the psychological histories of 200 parolees is shown in the following table:

Distribution of Intelligence  
Levels and Psychiatric Classification  
of 100 N-V and 100 V Parolees

	No Mental Disease		Psychopathic Personality		Psychotic		Total	
	N-V	V	N-V	V	N-V	V	N-V	V
Above Average .....	1	0	6	1	1	0	8	1
Average .....	24	10	16	14	4	2	44	26
Dull .....	10	9	23	32	3	5	36	46
Feeble-minded .....	1	1	7	16	4	10	12	27
Total .....	36	20	52	63	12	17	100	100

A qualitative, rather than a statistical, analysis may throw better light on the relationship that exists between these two psychological factors and parolability. The nonviolators, as a group, presented a more benign psychological picture than the violators. In the former group 36 individuals (raw numbers are equivalent to percentages since there were 100 individuals in each group) had no history of mental disease compared with only 20 violators in this category. Fifty-two nonviolators and 63 violators were considered "psychopathic." (The author notes that the Kraepelinian nosology was, and still is, used in reformatory classification. Perhaps a more dynamic taxonomy would have distributed these parolees among the various neurotic reactions and thus would have pointed the way to an improved intramural treatment program. The three-fold psychiatric classification: No Mental Disease, Psychopathic and Psychotic—is tenuous at best and admittedly inadequate from every point of view.) In the third psychiatric classification, 12 nonviolators were psychotic as contrasted with 17 violators. One wonders why these 29 inmates were released at all!

The table further discloses this information: eight nonviolators and one violator were above average in intellectual status; 44 and 26 respectively had average intelligence while 48 nonviolators were below average intellectually as compared with 73 violators in the same category. Aligning both groups on hypothetical gradients from above average to feeble-minded intelligence and from no mental disease to psychotic, it should be noted that the greater number of nonviolators would cluster about the psychologically and psychiatrically "better" half of the scale, while the violating group would tend to cluster about the poorer end.

A final conclusion emphasizes the need for studying the relationship between factors rather than isolated personality traits. Each group included individuals in all but one of the 12 categories. Yet some succeeded and others failed on parole. Therefore, the author states, the answer to the question of a good or poor parole risk does not lie in average or above average intelligence alone any more than it can be found in the presence or absence of mental disease alone. It is the *interaction* between intelligence and mental health, among other factors that should be considered—not only the individual's intellectual capac-

ity but the availability of the person's abilities for the process of adjustment to extra-mural life and the demands it makes upon him.—*Relationship between Intelligence Level and Psychiatric Classification in Parole Risk*, Dr. Robert M. Allen, Professor of Psychology, The University of Miami.

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**United Nations Plans Study of Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders**—The Social Commission of UN, at its first session, 1947, recommended to the Economic and Social Council that the Secretariat be requested to submit to a future session a report on the prevention of crime and treatment of offenders "showing which suggestions are suitable for international action and how they could be carried out." A Preliminary Report has now been prepared.

It is suggested that UN find, accumulate and analyze what information is available in the Member Nations that pertains to the psychophysical and social causes of crime and delinquency; the most successful treatment of juvenile, adolescent and adult offenders in various countries and circumstances. The inquiry should include, therefore, a study of social, economic and other conditions in the nations respectively that will affect the practical application of given techniques of treatment.

The Preliminary Report will suggest to its readers a vast pool of information and a clearing house available to inquirers from the various nations. It suggests also, the systematic dissemination of information by means of occasional bulletins or by periodical publications.

It is anticipated that investigators will maintain an uninterrupted flow of pertinent information from the nations to the pool and that a permanent expert staff will classify it to the end that whatever an inquirer wants may be most conveniently drawn out and put to use.

The Report contemplates the establishment of a panel of experts representing the nations respectively to advise and assist their peoples in regard to such measures as are deemed to be most suitable in view of all the circumstances. The same experts will promote national and international conferences on problems of criminal law, criminology and penology.

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**New Publication: The Journal of the Neurological Sciences**—The increasing numbers of practitioners and investigators entering the fields of neurology, psychiatry and neurosurgery is an indication of contemporary growth in American Medicine. So numerous and productive have they become that the existing channels of publication are too few for the products of their work. So acute has this editorial congestion become, according to the sponsors of this project, that many believe the situation cannot be remedied without the formation of a new journal. They state that urgent need has been expressed for a single organ that will deal not only with the clinical sciences, but one that will also correlate them with essential developments in the basic neurological sciences. With these factors in view, a new publication, **THE JOURNAL OF THE NEUROLOGICAL SCIENCES**, has been announced. The first issue appeared in January 1948. It is hoped that the new Journal will supply an additional avenue of publication for the continuously increasing stream of meritorious neurological contributions and will, in addition, integrate the clinical and basic neurological sciences into a workable and

valuable whole. All of the neurological sciences—neurology, neurosurgery, psychiatry and its affiliated disciplines, neuroanatomy, neuropathology, neurophysiology, neuropharmacology, neurochemistry, and neuroendocrinology, will be given equal emphasis. The Journal is not affiliated with any organization and is without prior commitments to groups or individuals. Papers, accepted only on condition that they are contributed solely to the Journal, will be promptly published. Subscription (\$10.00 per year) may be entered with Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 301-327 East Lawrence Avenue, Springfield, Illinois.—*Editor.*

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**Journal Article Inspires Foreign Comment**—An interesting letter has been received from Dr. Bernard Ascher, Advocate, P. O. B. 1057, Haifa, concerning the article *Redhead and Outlaw, a Study in Criminal Anthropology*, by Dr. Hans von Hentig, which appeared in this JOURNAL, Vol. 38, No. 1, May-June, 1947, pp. 1-6. An excerpt from Dr. Ascher's letter is quoted here: "I have read in 'Magazine Digest' for November, 1947, a condensation of Dr. Hans von Hentig's fine article on the criminality of redheads. The Cohanim, the Jewish caste of priests to which belong all Jews named Cohen, Cogan, Kahn etc., are 'known' to be redheads—at least a great part of the members of this caste. Jewish tradition says that all Cohanim were originally redheads . . . In fact, this is only a popular explanation of the 'known' fact that the red Cohanim are 'zealous,' or, as criminologists would say, 'mentally and temperamentally maladjusted.' This maladjustment might have been the natural sign of both criminal character and divine election for leadership. In this country, most children are blond, at least the children of all immigrated Jews. Jewish children suppose that a blackie is not really a Jew. Nobody knows why even the children of Jewish blackheads are so blond. The few (generally beautiful) redheads are despised. They are called 'Jinji' (a profane term) mainly because the Arabs believe that a red-head is a little devil or bad spirit. I do not know how the Arabs came to this belief. In olden times, they never saw redheads—Jews nor Slavs nor Irish. Perhaps they remember the now extinct Guanches in West Africa who are said to be the last remnants of the Cro-Magnon race. They were redheads."

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**Increased Appropriations for Welfare**—Congress has made the following appropriations for 1948 health control programs: *Mental Health*—An appropriation of \$7,500,000 for mental health work which includes \$400,000 for research, about \$1,000,000 for grants for the training of mental health personnel, \$3,000,000 for grants for community mental health services, \$850,000 for the site and plans for a National Institute of Mental Health, and the balance for the operation by the U. S. Public Health Service of its mental health centers; *Cancer Control*—Approximately \$10,000 appropriated to U. S. Public Health Service for expansion of a national cancer control program. In addition, up to \$5,000,000 was made available to the Atomic Energy Commission for the nuclear aspects of cancer research work; *Heart Disease Research*—Approval was given to an expanded program of research in heart diseases. The National Institute of Health of the U. S. Public Health Service was voted approximately \$2,000,000 for this purpose. During the previous fiscal

year, the Institute spent \$131,734 for research in heart disease and, in addition, made grants in the amount of \$857,660 to universities, other institutes and to individuals for research on this subject; *Tuberculosis Control*—In addition to the regular \$8,000,000 appropriation for the tuberculosis control program, is \$1,000,000 for a clinical and laboratory research program in tuberculosis therapy revolving about the use of streptomycin.—*Health Notes*, Anti-Tuberculosis League of King County (Washington), January 1948.

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**Alcoholism and Criminality (Foreign)**—The question of alcoholism and criminality was discussed at the annual meeting of the Danish Association of Criminalists in 1940 (See Year Book, 1940-1945, pp. xxi-xxiv, and 61-114). It was again placed on the agenda at the annual meeting of the Swedish Association of Criminalists, which took place in Stockholm, October 26, 1945. The opinions of European experts appear to parallel those of their American contemporaries in the approach to the problems of alcoholism. Dr. Helge Knoos, physician at the Psychiatric Hospital, Stockholm, viewed alcoholism as a form of narcomania. The claim, he stated, that the true alcoholics are mentally abnormal is supported by various recent discoveries concerning the nature of alcoholism and by the results gained by new therapeutic methods in psychiatry. It is both irrational and ineffective to attempt to cure true alcoholism by punishments or threats thereof. It is both barbarous and contrary to a sensible program of preventing the criminality of alcoholics to shut them up in prison cells. Every recidivist drunken driver, and even the first offender in special cases, should be socially and medically examined, since his conduct has a pathological origin in many instances, perhaps, in most. Mr. A. Aman, Bureau Chief, Social Welfare Administration, joined Dr. Knoos in his suggestion that alcoholics who have committed an offense which is associated with the abuse of alcohol, be subjected to medical care rather than to imprisonment. Professor Olof Kinberg, M. D., proposed that drunkenness be stricken from the criminal law. He expressed the view that the procedure of dragging a drunkard to the police station and locking him up is irrational; that drunkenness is an illness and its treatment should be based on a real diagnosis. Dr. Martti Kaila, Helsingfors, was sceptical about the demand for a medical examination of drunkards and stated that the problem was not exclusively a medical one. He thought the general "preventative" effect of punishment was considerable in the case of drunken drivers. In his opinion, a psychiatric examination would merely show that most of those examined would neither be in need of treatment nor of special supervision.—*Alcoholism and Criminality*, Yearbook of the Northern Association of Criminalists, 1944-1945, Stockholm, 1947.

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