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Police Science Book Reviews

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POLICE SCIENCE BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by

Ralph F. Turner*

PRACTICAL SPECTROSCOPY. By *Harrison, Lord & Loofbouraw.* Prentice-Hall, New York. 1949. \$6.65.

The title of this book is descriptive of its contents. It is a one-volume summary of practical spectroscopic methods with sufficient excursions into theory to permit the non-spectroscopist to gain a general over-all view of a subject which, if considered without the advantage of perspective, would be exceedingly complex. Most users of spectrosopes are not spectroscopists. It is the virtue of spectroscopy that it has become a convenient tool for chemists, biologists, astronomers, and other scientists without requiring that the user become a specialist. "Practical Spectroscopy" is a general survey of the entire field written at the level of the non-spectroscopist.

The treatment of the subject is both general and specific, ranging from the subatomic and molecular bases for emission spectra to very practical minor operating details. The chapters on instrumentation, both in emission and absorption spectroscopy, and in photometry, will be very helpful to one confronted with the opportunity to equip a laboratory. For those whose spectroscopic equipment is already determined, the chapters on Testing, Adjustment and Care of Equipment, Illumination, Photography, Light Sources, Qualitative Analysis, and Quantitative Analysis constitute a mine of condensed practical information, the like of which has not been compiled previously. In themselves they justify the book.

Visible and Ultraviolet Absorption Spectroscopy, Infrared, Raman, and Vacuum Ultraviolet Spectroscopy each receives treatment in a chapter. Instrumentation is given general consideration in each case, and the applications to particular problems are surveyed. It must be pointed out that the text is liberally supplemented by references to the original literature and to recent reviews, permitting the reader to pursue the subject to greater extent if he chooses.

It is unfortunate that the authors have not chosen to adopt the standard photometric nomenclature recently proposed by the Optical Society and already adopted by the National Bureau of Standards and many eminent scientists in the field. The confusion of terms representing density, absorbancy, extinction coefficient, molecular extinction, absorption coefficient, etc., prevalent in this field imposes a handicap on those not completely familiar with the subject matter. The authors could have done much to eliminate this confusion by lending the weight of their authority to the recently proposed standardization.

The book is very well illustrated with photographs and diagrams. It is supplemented by an extensive subject and author index, and appendices listing the sensitive lines of the elements arranged both according to the element and according to wave length. It is a book which should be a convenient source of practical information to all chemical laboratories employing spectrography.

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ADJUSTMENT OF INSURANCE LOSS CLAIMS ON MERCHANDISE—ACCOUNTING PROBLEMS AND PROCEDURES. By *Leo Rosenblum*, Ph.D., C.P.A. King's Crown Press, Columbia University, New York, 1948. Pp. xi, 194. \$3.00.

The author of this book is an Assistant Professor of Accounting in the School of Business and Civic Administration at City College of New York.

Doctor Rosenblum points out this is a study in accounting theory and method in one area of insurance; namely, the adjustment of loss claims. Some loss claims involve fraud, an attempt to defraud, or false swearing. While this book is seemingly intended primarily for accountants and adjusters, it contains considerable information of value to the criminal investigator who handles cases involving property insurance.

Part one is devoted to the following subjects—The Insurance Policy and the Work of the Accountant, The Loss: Proof and Evaluation. Fraudulent Claims, Moral Hazard: Motive for Fraudulent Claim, The Records: Review and Check, Controversy and Litigation, and Summary and Conclusions.

The types of claims considered are those arising under policies covering risks to merchandise held as stock in trade. The classes of losses reviewed are those attributable to fire, burglary, and other casualties. Marine losses are excluded.

Part two includes a series of fifty-six cases based on the experience of Dr. Rosenblum. They consist of eight hold-ups, thirty-two fires, four disappearances, one theft, ten burglaries, and one water-damage case. An interesting tabulation of significant points in these studies adds to the value of the case material. Excessive claims were presented in thirty-two of the cases presented.

The author points out that the direction taken by the accountant's inquiries during the review of a claim is influenced by the unusual features of the claim or of the method of record-keeping; second, that as a result of an accountant's participation in insurance loss work over a long period, his experience contributes in cumulative fashion to the ability to decide upon the audit procedure in a given case, and that in insurance adjustment work the tasks of adjuster, accountant and lawyer are closely related.

He could have included the investigator who frequently coordinates information secured by members of the other professions in an effort to marshal evidence.

Such material will help competent investigators to more successfully carry out assignments involving the types of cases and situations presented by the author. In fact this publication should be made required reading for such investigators.

Many times the investigator arrives at the fire scene, for example, before the adjuster, accountant, or lawyer for whom this book is primarily intended. He often takes possession of the books and records and later collaborates with an accountant during the investigation which follows. This study gives the investigator a definite notion as to the possible value and importance of such evidentiary material.

Some fires are set in the hope that certain incriminating information in the records or books of accounts will be destroyed. In other instances the records must be destroyed to complete the attempt to de-

fraud the insurer. The accountant can aid the investigator in many such cases. This study will help the investigator to understand how the accountant can be of assistance.

The material on moral hazard will help the investigator to know about the possible motive where suspected fraud is under investigation.

The attention given various aspects of the inventory problem enables the investigator to have a good understanding as to why he is called upon to investigate some fires. Also, it gives him some further information as to how cases are investigated.

An interesting comment on the subject is as follows: "Occasionally it is found that one or more pages of a detailed inventory bear a date a year later than the alleged date of inventory-taking. This generally indicates that the inventory sheets have been re-written, since errors in dates are often made in the first few days of a new year, when one inadvertently writes the date of the year just ended; almost never is the error committed of writing, towards a year's end, the date of the year not yet begun."

The reviewer also recommends this publication to forensic chemists, photographers, laboratory technicians and other police scientists who are called upon from time to time to examine books of accounts or certain records submitted to them for examination.

The value of this publication is enhanced by the inclusion of an excellent bibliography. The text is carefully documented. A table of cases is also included.

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RICHARD C. STEINMETZ

THE TRIAL OF MOTOR CAR ACCIDENT CASES. By A. D. Gibb and R. Miller. Sweet and Maxwell, Ltd., 3 Chancery Lane, W. C. 2, London, and Stevens & Sons, Ltd., 119 Chancery Lane, W. C. 2, London, 1947 (Third Edition). Pp. 345. £2 2S.

This is the third edition of a volume designed as a guide in the preparation and conduct of trials of motor vehicle accident cases. Plan and general content of the third edition remain the same as the first edition. In his preface to the first edition, Professor Gibb points out that the work "is an adaptation of an American work on the trial of run-down cases, by Mr. Louis E. Schwartz, of the New York Bar." "In adopting the book," the author continues, "the work of the writer has been in part sheer translation. For the rest, the most important part has been to vouch the statements made, by English instead of by American decisions."

The volume begins with a brief section (Part I) comprised of general questions to be asked in interviewing client and witness for trial preparation purposes. Attention is directed to such accident factors as: How did the accident happen, who were involved, nature of the accident scene, seriousness of injury, what negligence, if any, was involved, and so on.

Principal contribution of the volume lies in its Part II, titled, "Detailed Examination of Witnesses." About a thousand questions are propounded and are arranged according to the *kind* of witness being interrogated. A series of questions is devoted to each of the following: Driver, injured pedestrian, medical witness, owner, passenger, police-

man, private investigator, repairer, and X-ray expert. Duplication of questions is, of course, inescapable in such a format of materials. The authors' intent is to include questions that will serve to give a full and undistorted view of the whole case.

Some of the questions are followed by answers suitable for reply by a witness on the stand. In most instances, however, the questions are answered in a general way and are designed either to disclose the reason for the question, or the law involved. Typical of the "reason" questions and answers is the following: "(Q) What experience have you had of driving cars? (A) The driver of a car is obliged to have reasonable experience and skill in the management of cars, and he assumes responsibility if injuries result from his own unskilfulness or inexperience. Counsel should therefore try to place his witness in the most favorable light possible. Where the witness has had much experience in driving, counsel should bring this fact to the attention of the jury as clearly and impressively and from as many angles as is possible."

Explanatory of questions and answers designed to bring out a point of law is the following, on the subject of "negligence, although rule of road observed": "(Q) What part of the highway were you travelling as you approached the place where the accident occurred? (A) The mere fact that a motorist is on his right side does not mean that he is of necessity not negligent, for the law does not allow a person on his proper side of the road to run down everything in his path with impunity. Even though the other car is on the wrong side of the road, nevertheless the car on the proper side of the road has the duty of exercising reasonable care." References to legislative provisions and judicial decisions are footnoted.

While the volume does have a basic interest for the American trial lawyer, prosecutor, and judge, its chief value lies in its presentation of English and Scottish practices and needs. The volume is written in non-technical language. Although the specimen questions are mainly for use in examination-in-chief, the comments included in the answers readily suggest matter for cross-examination. Both authors bring many years of experience to bear on this volume. Professor Gibb is barrister-at-law, Gray's Inn, is advocate of the Scottish Bar, and is Regis Professor of Law in the University of Glasgow. Mr. Millner is barrister-at-law, Inner Temple and Midland Circuits.

D. G. MONROE

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