

Fall 1951

Police Science Book Reviews

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Recommended Citation

Police Science Book Reviews, 42 *J. Crim. L. Criminology & Police Sci.* 423 (1951-1952)

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POLICE SCIENCE BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by
Ralph F. Turner*

CRIMINAL LAW FOR POLICE OFFICERS. By *Harry Bloomberg*. Boston, Massachusetts. Pp. 1005. \$15.00.

This treatise on criminal law is both a text book and a reference book. It is a voluminous but also a practical book for police officers of all ranks. It covers a very wide field such as: Definitions, legal principles, evidence, questions and answers. Many of the questions could be used in police promotional examinations. While this book has been prepared primarily for Massachusetts law it will be found helpful to police recruits and students in all states. A police officer who carefully reads this text should acquire an excellent foundation of legal information. Its table of contents include:

1. Definitions of crimes taken from the police manual.
2. Definitions of legal and other terms from the manual.
3. Definitions of pleas from the manual.
4. Definitions of evidence from the manual.
5. Definitions of writs, orders, etc., from the manual.
6. Definitions of warrants and summons from the manual.

There are various chapters on theories of punishment, jurisdiction, venue, intent, ignorance of law, crimes against the person, crimes against property, crimes against public peace, crimes against public health, crimes against chastity, morality, decency and good order, motor vehicle laws, criminal procedure, the law of arrest, duties after arrest, the law of evidence, and special powers of police. The book contains a mass of other information of use to police officers in their every day tasks. It is thorough and exhaustive. This reviewer recommends it to police schools and to officers who have not had the benefit of intensive in-service training.

Captain, Chicago Police Department

JOHN I. HOWE

PRACTICAL REPORT WRITING. By *Selby S. Santmyer*. International Textbook Company, Scranton, Pa. 1950. Pp. 118. \$2.75.

The aim of this book is quite positive. It is to give those who must write reports confidence that they can write such reports in a manner that will produce the desired effect.

The dictionary defines a report as an account of some matter especially investigated or an official statement of facts. The full meaning of the word "report" is clearer when we realize that it is derived from an old Latin word that means to carry or bring back. In general we may assume that someone is waiting to read, with a purpose, the reports of those matters especially investigated or those official statements of facts.

With the growth and expansion of business and professions, more frequent written communications become necessary. This is very true of the police profession. In a large measure the efficient administration of any organization is dependent upon reports. Incomplete reports are of little value for they tell nothing to those for whom they are intended. When someone must visualize an

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event with only the written contents of a report as a guide, the necessity for completeness becomes obvious. The report must be so complete that anyone reading it will have a complete and clear knowledge of what is being reported. If there is anything that must be explained orally, a report is not complete.

A report serves three important functions:

1. Permanent record
2. Convey information to persons not present
3. For future reference.

A great fault with many report writers, particularly in police business, is the acquiring and using of unfamiliar words. We all have limitations, and it is much more noble to admit them and to recognize them than to attempt to impress others by using so called "six cylinder words" which are not a part of our vocabulary. However, we must not neglect vocabulary for this reason. From your vocabulary must come the words to express exactly the ideas you have in mind. The real value of a vocabulary is dependent upon how it is used. Words are the expression of your thought; they are not slaves, they are friends. It is therefore important to ever increase your vocabulary. Reference to standard works is but one source.

In the police profession, report writing is a very important function. In the investigation of crime there are nine fundamental questions—who, what, where, when, how, what with, why, with whom, how much. If the police officer's report contains answers to all of these questions, a complete report of what transpired is available to all.

If the correct answers are obtained then the case is completely solved. These questions are always kept in mind by a police officer who refreshes his memory with the following short poem:

What was the Crime, who done it?
When was it done and where?
How done, how much, with what and the motive
Who in the deed did share?

The book *Practical Report Writing* deals with the importance of reports stressing the background needed by the writers, together with the gathering and organizing of material, and with the writing of the rough draft of the report. The author deals with putting the report into an understandable and presentable written form. The author stresses the importance of the outline in the writing of any report. However, outlines do not play a part in the preparation of a police report. Here it is a report of factual items in chronological order. These discussions will be most useful to business employees rather than to the police profession.

The book will appeal to those persons whose daily business involves the making of reports to superiors in pursuit of their business or scientific profession.

Director, New York State
Police Scientific Laboratory

WILLIAM KIRWAN

SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS II. By *Herbert J. Cooper*. Chemical Publishing Company, Brooklyn, N. Y. Pp. 300. Illustrated. \$6.50.

As stated by the author in his preface to this text, the object of the book is primarily to inform analytical workers of the methods and instruments utilized in other fields for various testing purposes.

Included in the text are chapters on optical, electrical, electronic, and

related instruments, as well as on certain mechanical testing devices, recording apparatus, etc. Obviously, the work has no great direct application so far as police science is concerned. However, it was not intended to have such application to any one field, and it will be found of interest to many employed in criminological laboratories—particularly those who may be mechanically inclined.

It does not provide a detailed description of each instrument described, nor does it give specific details of operation—for, as stated by the author, that would require an individual text on each instrument. What the book does, is to provide a general description of certain representative instruments in each of the various categories included, supplemented by such photographs and diagrams as will make the function of each instrument clear to the reader. Diagrams particularly have been simplified as much as possible so that they may be most easily understood. The written descriptions are presented in much the same manner.

It would seem to this reviewer that the book should prove of value primarily to the laboratory worker who is particularly interested in the general function of instruments, or who may have occasion now and then to design some piece of equipment for a specialized use. The types of instruments included in the text are such as to cover most of the basic forms of testing equipment, and should suggest ways and means of accomplishing certain results in the police laboratory where conventional equipment might prove inadequate. This does not mean that one will find in the book specific directions as to how to design or produce a testing device of any sort—rather it contains such basic design features as would enable a reasonably “mechanically minded” person to choose such features as might best be applied to a particular testing problem. A more direct application of the book—and the one primarily intended by the author—is in suggesting the use of testing instruments in laboratories whose methods and instruments may presently be more restricted. It is an unfortunate fact that one laboratory may apply a testing technique which would be invaluable in another laboratory or industry—but which is completely unknown in the latter. Each analytical field seems to grow along certain lines, developing its own instruments and methods as the need arises. As a result, years may be spent in designing or constructing a testing device which has already been constructed and long in use in some other field. As a partial answer to this situation, *Scientific Instruments* should prove of interest.

Oakland, Calif.

JOHN E. DAVIS

PRACTICAL MICROSCOPY. By *L. C. Martin and B. K. Johnson*. Chemical Publishing Co., Brooklyn, N. Y. Pp. 124. Illustrated. \$2.50.

In this small text, the authors have presented the essential constructional features of the microscope in its varied forms, plus an easily understood description of the optical principles involved in its application. It might be described as a text on “How to get the most out of your microscope.”

For the student of science, or the more experienced worker who perhaps lacks a basic foundation in the use of microscopic equipment, this book should prove of considerable value. Much of the material presented will be found in other sources. When one purchases a microscope, the manufacturer generally provides with it a small pamphlet describing its constructional features and its application. Texts on a variety of scientific subjects include a