

1957

Police Science Book Reviews

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Recommended Citation

Police Science Book Reviews, 47 J. Crim. L. Criminology & Police Sci. 514 (1956-1957)

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stated that the defendant had "raced away" from a traffic light at an "excessive rate of speed." A "Police Speedometer Test Certificate" was introduced to prove the accuracy of the police car's speedometer. In reversing defendant's conviction the appellate court held the certificate inadmissible as hearsay, since no one who had observed the test was called as a witness. While in this case the arresting officer did not clearly express an opinion as to defendant's speed, other than to say that it was "excessive", the court stated that, in certain

cases, the officer's opinion as to the defendant's speed may be sufficient evidence of guilt to sustain a conviction. Where the estimated speed and the lawful speed limit differ by only a few miles per hour, the opinion testimony alone, it was said, would be inadequate. However, the court stated that where the officer had "observed some exponent of jet propulsion" driving well in excess of the speed limit, his sole testimony may be sufficient proof of guilt. *People v. Boehme*, 152 N.Y.S.2d 759 (Nassau County Ct. 1956).

(For other recent case abstracts see pages 465-467)

POLICE SCIENCE BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by
Richard L. Holcomb*

THE ESSENTIALS OF FORENSIC MEDICINE. By Cyril John Polson, English Universities Press, Ltd., London, 1955. Pp. 561, 30/.

The author, Professor of Forensic Medicine, University of Leeds, has gathered a wealth of information in compact, readable form. Primarily designed for undergraduate medical students in Great Britain, this book is worthy of serious study by those engaged in police science. Its lucid style is punctuated by illustrations stressing the liason between forensic pathology and police scientists. The legal portions of the text are of most significance to British practice, but the remainder of the volume has widespread application.

A feature of the book is use of actual cases to demonstrate technical points. Concise summaries of outstanding medicolegal cases in the *Notable British Trial Series* are offered. A

number of case references contained in news clippings and comment on the author's own cases are interwoven.

Chief emphasis is placed on forensic pathology. The sections dealing with other specialties are of less merit. Toxicology is left for a separate volume.

Possible weaknesses of the book include a lack of visual aids (text alone is used) and incomplete reference to pertinent literature, especially that published in the United States in recent years. Professor Polson, himself, has justified these omissions in the preface, and has sought to "provide a reliable and up-to-date account of forensic medicine in readable form acceptable to medical and lay readers alike." In this, he has accomplished his task with splendid results.

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