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Police Science Book Reviews

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International Conference on Forensic Activation Analysis—The United States Atomic Energy Commission and General Atomic Activation of General Dynamics Corporation are co-sponsoring an international conference on forensic activation analysis, September 19–29, 1966 in San Diego, California. The conference is designed specifically for law enforcement personnel. A number of distinguished speakers will participate. (OH)

Special Police Training Program—The U. S. Department of Labor is launching a series of train-

ing programs in major cities for the culturally disadvantaged and those with slight physical handicaps so that they may qualify for police work. The department of Police Administration at Indiana University is undertaking an 18 month study to evaluate this program. It is hoped that this new pool of potential police applicants will help to relieve the shortage of qualified police personnel. The study hopes to answer the question as to whether these people after training will become effective policemen. (OH)

POLICE SCIENCE BOOK REVIEWS

Edited by
Rolland L. Soule*

THE TARNISHED BADGE. By *Ralph Lee Smith*. New York; Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1965. Pp. 247. \$4.95

The Tarnished Badge is a factual report on police scandals that have plagued many American cities. It deals with corruption of police officers in such places as Buffalo, Indianapolis, and Boston where gambling and vice were permitted to flourish. It covers the police-burglary rings in Denver and Chicago as well as a major scandal in the Illinois State Police force stemming from widespread pay-offs from trucking companies and towing firms.

The problem of official corruption is not peculiar to police agencies. The presence of police corruption is frequently an indication of the moral and political climate of the community in general. Boston received nationwide publicity stemming from the connivance of police officers with book-makers. But, as the author relates, "with monotonous regularity, engineers and construction firms in Massachusetts bribe legislators and highway officials to obtain contracts. Judges award trusteeships to relatives and friends. . . A consulting engineer, an attorney, a state official, and a judge were all convicted in 1963 of embezzling nearly \$800,000 of public funds in connection with the construction of the Boston Common Underground Garage. . . More than a score of indictments against important

public officials for conspiracy, bribery, and larceny are pending."

The political aspects of police corruption cannot be over-emphasized. In some cities gang leaders and syndicate heads have sufficient political power to obtain promotions for police officers who gain their favor. Conversely, in Yonkers, New York, a police captain who cooperated with a district attorney in stamping out gambling, found himself transferred to an innocuous non-enforcement position following the election of a new mayor. In Massachusetts a former governor appointed as police commissioner of Boston a man who had served as his campaign manager in the city during the election. A survey team of the International Association of Chiefs of Police determined that Boston has 640 more policemen than needed, and its yearly per capita expenditure of \$26.19 for police protection was the highest in the country. In Denver much of the work of a survey team of the International Association of Chiefs of Police costing \$20,000 was junked. Following the election of a new mayor the personnel of the internal affairs bureau of the police force which was designed to keep the department clean was drastically reduced. And only a few months earlier Denver had been rocked with a major police-burglary ring scandal that received nationwide publicity.

Many police forces in American cities have just grown like Topsy with divisions sprouting up all

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over with little coordination and no real supervision. Corruption is often a natural product of improper police department organization and an absence of adequate control and supervision.

The author states that a large segment of the nation's law enforcement machinery is poorly financed and badly out of date. The seeds of scandal are sown at the very beginning of the process of creating police forces through low recruiting standards and a sub-standard of professional training.

A common denominator of almost all serious police scandals is weak leadership. Good leadership within a department, backed by a healthy moral tone in the community, usually brings a majority of the policemen toward a high level of integrity and performance. Morality within a department is not unrelated to the morals of the community. Civic indifference, civic neglect, and sometimes active or passive implication of large segments of the local populace in police-crime have contributed materially to police corruption.

These are some of the fundamental issues involved in the problem of police corruption, and the author's discussion of them is constructive. In this reviewer's opinion, he is on shaky ground when he suggests the consideration of legalized gambling as a means of reducing law enforcement dishonesty. Effective remedies must necessarily be broader than the problem of police corruption alone.

A long history of legalized gambling in this country clearly reflects that more abuses were created than eliminated. The historian, John S. Ezell, in a Harvard University Press book, *Fortune's Merry Wheel*, published in 1960, concluded: "... if history teaches anything, a study of over 1,300 legal lotteries in the United States proves ... they cost more than they brought in if their total impact on society is reckoned, and ... 160 years experience indicates clearly that the most careful supervision cannot eradicate the inevitable abuses in a system particularly susceptible to fraud." The Betting and Gaming Act which was enacted in England in 1960 made legal almost all forms of gambling. Since that time England has been hit by an unprecedented wave of gambling. Recently, George Thomas, parliamentary secretary at the Home Office, declared "There are families whose lives are being ruined because of gambling. The time has come to strike a note of warning to the nation. Unless a halt is called now,

we will be on the way to decadence from which it will be very difficult to recover."

VIRGIL W. PETERSON

Operating Director
Chicago Crime Commission

HANDWRITING IN PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIONS. By *Arthur G. Holt*, Charles C Thomas, Springfield, 1965. P. x, 262, \$10.50

This is an incredible book. After reading it, one finds it hard to decide whether it really deserves a review in a serious journal. But because the title might mislead some professionals interested in handwriting and because graphology is a controversial subject, a brief review seems necessary.

The preface gives an early signal of the caliber of scholarship that follows. After telling the reader how this "new" method of handwriting analysis will enable him—whether he be parent, teacher, law enforcement officer, minister, doctor, or psychologist—to unmask his fellow men, the author claims that the method is infallible. If the student will follow the prescribed analytical method closely, "... this alone is a guarantee against the possibility of error". Further on, in Chapter 2, we find that "every single interpretation definitely explains a writer's individual thoughts, feelings and intentions".

The Method itself consists solely of detailed analysis of letter forms, i-dots and t-bars, which are then interpreted in terms of childish symbolism. One example, picked at random, should suffice: a certain form of bulging "1" is said to be "WHIPS HELD UP and the writer exercises authority to have mastery of people and situations". The sum total is nothing but the century-old graphological method of assigning specific traits to isolated signs in handwriting.

After the text, the index is nearly as revealing of the narrow scope and peculiar slant of this book. Almost every one of the "characteristics" listed is some kind of term used by laymen in describing disagreeable personality traits. The index word "tricky" has 36 page references, "cruel" has 48, and "hypocrisy" has no less than 80 page references. And so on.

It is regrettable that a book such as this has been published under the flag of "psychological interpretations". It is especially regrettable because there are so few authoritative books in English on the subject of serious graphology.

The book has no value to police officers, crimi-

nalists or document examiners, in this reviewer's opinion. Whether it has any value to psychologists in an open question, but to ask psychologists to investigate the validity of the claims made in this book seems rather like asking astronomers to investigate all claims that the moon is made of green cheese.

The bibliography is excellent.

JAN BECK

Falls Church, Virginia

EYE-WITNESS IDENTIFICATION IN CRIMINAL CASES.

By *Patrick M. Wall*. Charles C Thomas, Springfield, Illinois 1966. Pp. 231. \$8.75.

Of all the factors that account for the conviction of the innocent, the fallibility of eye-witness identification ranks at the top, far above any of the others. The present book makes that fact abundantly clear, with ample case illustrations, but the author's objective is not simply to prove that point alone. What he does do, and in commendable fashion, is to offer suggestions that can minimize the risks involved in eye-witness identifications.

At the outset, the author presents a discussion of the "Identification Problem" itself, with an explanation of the "Causes of Erroneous Identifications" and a discussion of the "Factors Aggravating the Problem". Then comes a discussion of the advantages of a "Line-up" (with the suspect presented in a group of other persons for a viewing by the crime victim or witness), in contrast to a "show-up" (consisting of a viewing of the suspect alone). He offers a number of suggestions as to the ways and means for conducting a line-up fairly and dependably, and for this he draws upon his studies and observations of the police practices and procedures followed in England and France, where he spent a year (on a Ford Foundation grant) upon the project which culminated in the publication of his book.

In England and France, according to the author, greater care is exercised by the police in identification procedures than prevails in the United States. Moreover, the courts in those two countries have established more cautionary rules with respect to identification evidence than have the courts in our country. The appropriate cases are cited and discussed, and for this task the au-

thor relied, as well he might, upon his legal training, particularly as a graduate student at New York University School of Law.

Attention is devoted to "Identifications by Photograph". Although recognizing the practical need for police resort to their photo albums for viewing by victims and witnesses in seeking to identify criminal offenders, the author points out the hazards involved. And again drawing upon his observations in England and France, he urges that the viewers be shown a series of photographs rather than just one, and that the series be presented in such a way as to avoid any possible suggestion or insinuation as to the likely suspect. He also recommends that whenever one of several witnesses makes a photo identification the photos should not be shown to the others, but rather a corporeal line-up should be conducted for their viewing.

Twelve "Danger Signals" are listed and discussed. Among them are: "The witness originally stated he would be unable to identify anyone"; "The identifying witness knew the defendant prior to the crime but made no accusation against him when originally questioned by the police"; "A serious discrepancy exists between the identifying witness' original description of the perpetrator of the crime and the actual description of the defendant"; "Other witnesses to the crime fail to identify the defendant"; "The witness and the person identified are of different racial groups"; etc.

In my judgment this publication will endure as a very significant contribution to the field of crime detection and to the protection of the innocent. It is well deserving of a prominent place among the texts used in police training schools, and in the libraries of all prosecuting attorneys, and of judges who try criminal cases. Attorneys who defend criminal cases will find in it valuable information that will unquestionably render more effective their trial court cross-examinations of eye-witnesses, as well as render more persuasive their criminal case appeals involving convictions based upon eye-witness identifications.

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