

a presentment to County Court Judge Vause, in Brooklyn, expressed its "amazement and depression at the prevalence of crime and criminal tendencies of the youth of Brooklyn." It declared that "in seeking an explanation of this menacing fact we need look no farther than the homes which have reared them." The jurymen said parents have shirked their responsibilities by ignoring the spiritual welfare of their children. Business and pleasure pursuits of parents have deprived their children of the right of loving companionship. Others by their own defiance of law have taught their children defiance of law. "Law-breaking homes do not produce law-abiding children. Law-breaking breeds law-breaking." The jurymen went on to say that an alarming number of children in Brooklyn are growing up with no religious training whatever. A prominent jurist recently declared that in his twenty years on the Bench he could recall but one of the thousand criminals brought before him who had had a Sunday-school training. If this record is to be accepted at its face value it means that the arch enemies of crime are the religious institutions of whatever creed. "What are the remedies? We are convinced that the most essential is a revaluation of religious influence in the home. The perfect home is that which trains its sons and daughters not only in body and mind but also in the spirit. Let us see to it that our children shall have learned the golden rule rather than the rule of greed. Let us see to it that they have a square deal. Join the children in their amusement-seeking, and insist that their conception of life shall not be corrupted by vicious movies and filthy books. Gunmen, thugs, and bootleggers are not made in a day. They are the product of homes where laxity and indifference reigns. The criminals of to-morrow are in our homes and schools and on our streets to-day, impressionable, eager to learn, looking for a hero to worship and a gang to join."

Skulls

Sir Bertram Windle has written an article in *America* entitled "Some Wild Writings about Skulls," in the course of which he tells of some ridiculous blunders regarding "prehistoric man" of which some alleged scientists have been guilty. He had said that there was more rubbish written about prehistoric man than about almost any other subject. Immediately a critic, modestly labelling himself "A Man of Science," dealt severely with this opinion; and in order to justify his criticism, he said that "from the other side of the world the cables jolted us with the message that a million-year-old human skull has been found in the Patagonian Andes." The article was accompanied by a fancy picture of the being called *Pithecanthropus erectus*. The discovery was sent to a jury of experts who reported that the thing was not a skull at all nor ever had been such, but merely an oddly-shaped bit of stone. Sir Bertram also refers to the amusing case of the Talgai skull. This skull, found in Australia some few years ago, was dug up in a billabong. It undoubtedly is the cranium of a person of small brain, and it presents other characters generally associated with a

low level of civilisation. Its age was immediately fixed at the conventional million years. This estimate was not permitted to pass unchallenged, some authorities holding that fifty-thousand years was nearer the mark. Then came Mr. Archibald Meston, for many years "Protector of the Aborigines" in Queensland, charged with the sorrowful duty of removing the Talgai skull from the realms of romance. He said that to his own knowledge a black fellow was shot by the native police and buried in that billabong, the grave being filled in with red basaltic clay in which the supposed ancient skull was found. But even that did not embarrass the "scientists," for even yet they speak of the Talgai skull as of great antiquity and fossilised. Sir Bertram Windle then goes on to deal with the current fallacy that the age of man and his standard of civilisation can be accurately determined by his skull. It is quite possible that the specimen may be one of a recently-living individual, perhaps a wandering idiot, with a misshapen skull. Those who are old enough to remember the early 'seventies of the last century do not need to be reminded that Leon Gambetta was one of the most prominent politicians in France at that time. He was contemporaneous with Bismarck the German Chancellor. It happened by the accident of the positions occupied by these men that their skulls and brains were examined after death. Bismarck was found to have a brain which weighed somewhere in the region of four pounds, being perhaps as heavy a brain as was ever recorded. Gambetta's brain, on the other hand, weighed only two and a half pounds, rather more than half the weight of the brain of Bismarck, and a half pound lighter than the average European brain. Yet whatever might be alleged against Gambetta, no one would accuse him of being a fool. Some twenty years ago there was a little Dutch girl, a dwarf, about two feet high, with the brain about the size of that of a child of one or two years of age. Yet she could talk fluently in four languages. All of which goes to show that the size of the skull does not indicate the capacity of the brain inside it, and as guide to the period in which its owner lived it must be dismissed altogether.

Crime and Its Causes

It was not yesterday we formed the opinion that "popular" scientists are a class who invent unpronounceable words to give weight and dignity to palpable absurdities; and it was not yesterday the theory was advanced that the criminal is the victim of a physical defect of the mass of grey matter, comprising the basal ganglia and the nervous system. The theorists say we should not punish the law-breaker for burglary or murder any more than we punish a person for contracting cancer or breaking his leg. Mr. French Strother attempts, in a series of articles in the *World's Work*, to justify this nonsense. He describes the new discoveries in criminology made by Judge Olsen and Dr. Hickson of Chicago, according to whom a particular type of emotional insanity (*dementia Praecox*) is the cause of practically all crimes. Mr. Strother goes on to say that we now

know three facts about emotional insanity that we did not know before: 1. Emotional insanity is nearly always inherited. 2. Emotional insanity is incurable. 3. Emotional insanity can now be positively diagnosed and accurately measured. A novel cure for this disease is proposed. "These pathetic victims of their physical inheritance" should be committed to guarded farm colonies where they may live a civilised life in a place of sunshine and fresh air. And the permanent solution of the problem of crime is to prevent the victims of emotional insanity from ever becoming parents.

An Able Critic

Anthony M. Benedik, D.D., writing in *America*, delivers a caustic criticism of the untenable theory advanced by Mr. Strother, and incidentally he exposes a very dangerous feature of it which is common to quite a number of the fallacious theories applied to other problems. The dangerous feature is exaggeration. It is undoubtedly true that physical or mental defects may have an influence on the acts of criminals; but it is certainly untrue to say that that influence is the total cause of crime, or that it bears even a paramount share. To accept this would be to say that the criminal is not personally responsible for any of his offences. The Commandments, "Thou shalt not steal" and "Thou shalt not kill" would have no application at all. Again, if emotional insanity is incurable, it follows that when Christ said to the woman taken in sin, "Go and sin no more," He was just voicing a few vain words of encouragement, knowing that the traits she inherited from her ancestors made it impossible for her to avoid sin. Why was Judas blamed, for he but followed the bent which nature placed in him? And how were great sinners transformed into great saints if the malady from which they suffered was incurable? The truth, of course, is that God gives every man the grace sufficient to enable him to work out his salvation; and the notion of free will and human responsibility is necessary to explain why, in spite of this grace, men can lose their souls. This new theory is but another revival of the attempt to explain away our responsibility for our own acts. It is said that 128 items of emotional behaviour are being studied by members of the staff of one of the American universities, enabling them to classify their students as "introvert, psychoasthenoid, neurasthenoid, schizoid, and hysteroid." "In their day," comments the *Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, when their son's conduct became too obstreperous mentally the conduct was classified merely as "tantrums." This had the additional recommendation that it was easier to pronounce as well as to spell than the new terms. In those days campuses were not so spacious as they are now—mot. y was scarcer and endowments fewer—so the usual place selected for observation was a small shed to the rear of the dwelling house, where the winter's wood supply was stored. The treatment was according to an old Scriptural prescription, indexed: Psalms. 89; 32 [Douay Version Ps. 88: 33] and Proverbs 13: 24. One dose was ordinarily sufficient to give prompt relief."

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