

# Criminal Slang



Hellyer and Jackson



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**By LOUIS E. JACKSON**

A VOCABULARY OF  
**CRIMINAL SLANG**

WITH

SOME EXAMPLES OF  
COMMON USAGES

BY

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PORTLAND, OREGON

**Price, \$1.50**



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# **INTRODUCTION**

It is not with a view to sensationalism that this little work is undertaken, but with a sense of helpfulness, of social obligation. It is submitted for the perusal and study of all those public officers and professional servants whose responsibilities are such as to bring them into casual or constant contact with the confirmed criminal classes.

It may fall into the hands of some unfit subjects and thereby contribute to the propagation of its contents in undesirable quarters. On the other hand we may consider that publicity is the speediest agent for the destruction of cankerous moral growths. Perhaps the possession of such knowledge as is here presented argues a sordidness; but Gordian knots can be untied only by use of the sword; to have cherries in the winter a can opener must be used, or to stand eggs on end you must smash them.

By the very nature of crime its efficient vehicle of transmission is ephemeral, very ephemeral. The vernacular of twenty-five years ago is almost oblivion today. So with the future; provided, of course, that the idiom of the underworld surrender its meaning to the social layers superimposed upon it. This process can be made effective by investigation and publicity. When bench and bar, the press, custodians of law and order and private agencies devoted to the detection, repression and correction of crime are made familiar with the wiles and mode of communication of criminals, the latter are rendered less powerful insofar as the evolved system of guile and wrong-doing are concerned.

It is noticeably true that our average law officer or advocate is necessarily a specialist in one or perhaps a few, at most, of the many recognized branches of professional crime. The limitation is occasioned in part by prescribed capacity and in part by inexperience or unfamiliarity with criminals of all types and their methods. Efficiency in general correctional labor may undoubtedly be promoted by a fuller understanding of the linguistic acquirements of subjects to be dealt with in every day practice. It is hoped that the publication of this vocabulary of criminal terms will render material advantages to the conscientious workers in this large field.

We are conscious of many errors of omission in the work and we request the co-operation of all who are interested in its utility. Only the essential and most pertinent or purely criminal vernacular usages have been selected from the mystical parlance of professional violators and their accomplices, for the reason that popular slang is so extensively comprehended as to make its publication of doubtful value as a new contribution to our literature.

An analysis of the four hundred and thirty terms included in the vocabulary reveals the interesting fact that criminal idiom is largely an ingenious combination of epithet suggested by similitude and a perverted construction of essential and accidental attributes of things and powers to imply or express the things and actions themselves. An occult jargon on its face, yet systematic enough when the key is acquired.

Some of the terms seem to have been derived by simple partition of legitimate English words, occasionally with the addition of euphonious prefix or suffix. As a prime example of the transposition of an attribute for the thing itself, consider what is perhaps the most popular slang term in use today in the unregenerate world—"dope," at present signifying "news," "intelligence," or "meaning." Originally this word was derived from opium by partition, with the disguising

consonant "d" prefixed to the accented syllable. Amongst narcotic habitues the most salient attribute of opium is stimulation of loquacity, or imaginativeness or of exaggeration. In process of time any of these powers came to characterize narcotic intoxication; thence information on any subject was designated "dope." The "dope sheet," a "line of dope," are natural offshoots of this tendency to transpose attribute into a new substantive. To philologists this noteworthy observation should infallibly point out the utter lack of scientific relation between an artificial sound—or visual—symbol and the thing, quality or quantity symbolized thereby.

Without previous instruction a person gifted with intuition might divine the signification of the majority of these terms in vogue by weighing the context of the sentences in which they are included. Yet a practical working knowledge of them should be made more available by frequent reference to a complete list. The sole excuse for criminal slang is the protection afforded by secrecy, which once destroyed the slang is forced to die of neglect, though it will naturally be superseded by evolutionary linguistic devices.

To fraternize with a secret order we must equip ourselves with a knowledge of the ceremonies and aims as well as the selective means of the secret fraternists. To combat criminals successfully it is necessary to understand their complete vehicles of intercommunication, else the investigator is unqualified to fraternize with them so as to gain a fuller insight both into their actions and the living motives concealed behind them. Unquestionably, every term in the vocabulary is known to some officer of the law; unquestionably, too, every term contained therein is understood by but very few individuals even amongst criminals themselves. Therefore it would seem a distinct gain to become familiar with them all.

Aided by a panoramic view of recorded crime in the last generation we may roughly divide criminal offenses into the

four great departments of crimes against self, or reflexive crimes against personal character, which have their fountain head in intemperance and gluttony; crimes against sex, which have their basis in the emotions flowing out of lust; crimes against property, fed by the sins of avarice or greed; and the crimes of violence, growing out of anger. Of these four, reflexive crimes and crimes of violence are distinctively psychological and must be left to the individual for corrective solution. Crimes against property and crimes of sexual depravity constitute the bulk of costly and troublesome cases which choke the machinery of our legal tribunals and necessitate a regrettable public tax for maintenance of penal and detentional institutions. The chronic defectives who most seriously menace the social body are comprised of prostitutes; gamblers; nondescriptively larcenous tramps; yeggs; burglars; sneak thieves; confidence men; dishonest solicitors; promoters and agents; forgers; merchandise thieves; pickpockets; highway robbers; and their accessories, the unscrupulous pawnbroker, the unrestrained liquor dealer, and the drug dispenser. It goes without saying that the volume and value of business transacted by these latter three attest the stupendous proportions of the direct losses sustained by the commonwealth through the misdirected energies of the principal professional criminal classes.

From an economical standpoint the traffic of professional crime is stupendous. We are mulcted some four hundred millions of dollars annually by reason of the criminal element in the nation. A conservative estimate of the number of active professional criminals of high and low degree is probably 100,000. We have one uniformed police officer for every thousand of population, and about one auxiliary officer per thousand of population in addition. Here are 200,000 more persons in the non-productive class. Criminal lawyers and criminal court functionaries contribute another ratio of one to the thousand of

population, making a conservative total of 400,000 engaged in preying upon and relieving the producers from distress occasioned by crimes against person and property.

Admitting that the average income of the 300,000 police officers, lawyers and court officials is about \$1,200 per year, we have a \$360,000,000 over-head cost charged against production. The loss sustained through the peculations of criminals and the cost of detaining them is not less than another \$88,000,000 per year, on the estimated basis of \$882 per year per criminal. A grand total of \$448,000,000!

Suppose the average age of the professional criminal to be 30 years. As the average financial investment in an individual of that age in the U. S. is \$12,600, his productive capacity should be at least six per cent on the investment (if possessed of industrial training), plus the cost of human upkeep; which means a total of about \$1,170 per year earning capacity for the average individual. Or at six per cent interest alone on the personality investment he represents an annual potential addition of \$757 to the national wealth. Add to this the cost to the state of detaining him, say an average of \$125 per year, and we have \$882 per year per prisoner. The actual loss in interest on criminal personality investments is about \$75,000,000 per 100,000 prisoners per year; a waste that is perpetuated by the present judicial and penal system.

Now, the average thief cannot steal \$1,170 per year, nor even \$757, when account is taken of time lost in prison. The crux of the situation seems to lie in the criminal's lack of training in the useful arts, together with moral delinquency. So far we have experimented chiefly with two extremes in penology—employment of convicts for their exploitation by selfish interests on the one hand, and unemployment or else employment of such nature as tends to lower the standard of efficiency of the individual on the other hand. The evolution of labor unions has suppressed reform that makes for the criminal's economical

independence; and yet the criminal element is recruited mainly from the fourth estate. To date the history of penology shows some development of apprehenders and keepers in the practical side of the work, but at the prime expense of the apprehended. The producers at large pay the interest on the debt, whilst the principal is shouldered by the deficient themselves who are passing it along to the future generations.

As to the moral aspect of the problem with which the professional criminal confronts the nation, it must ultimately be determined by psychology. Intemperance, greed, lust and anger; these are the radical causes. Economical dependence is the first outgrowth of these known qualities but unknown quantities.

How are we going to reduce the overshadowing difficulty? By ostracism? By sterilization? By simple detaining repression without corresponding elimination of root causes? As for ostracism, folly flees a grave danger whilst moral courage fortified by intelligence faces and overcomes it. Ostracism revives and perpetuates caste divisions of society. Sterilization is as wrong in a larger moral view as infanticide in a smaller; the theory has emanated from higher intellectual, moral and spiritual darkness. It solves the criminal problem like national debt solves the economical problem—saddles a moral mortgage upon posterity. Detention without conferring assimilable moral uplift and increased economical efficiency is a parallel for the fabled delusion of the ostrich. Imprisonment as it obtains today costs much and produces little or nothing save waste. The maintenance of delinquents in rotting idleness or at labor which is subsequently unprofitable to the prisoner from the standpoint of talent and character development is an unbusiness-like as well as an inhumane make-shift which reacts upon society like a boomerang.

But it was not the aim to air views on criminology and penology in a preface, though it has seemed appropriate that the intelligence of interested men and women should be ap-

pealed to, as the widespread use of the following idioms has a deep significance. If this work achieves no other result than this it should be regarded as well worth while.

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City Detective Dept., Portland, Ore.  
and LOUIS E. JACKSON,

Portland, Oregon, October 3rd, 1914.

Should you find any terms missing from the following vocabulary which in your opinion should be included in it you will confer a favor by communicating same to the publisher.

W. H. THORNTON,  
872 Brooklyn St., Portland, Ore.



# **A Vocabulary of Criminal Slang Alphabetically Arranged with Practical Examples of Common Usages**



## **ADMAN, Noun**

Current amongst literary confidence men. A fake advertising solicitor. See "HUNDRED PER CENT."

## **ANGEL, Noun**

General usage. A financial backer. Derived from "good thing."

## **ARM MAN, Noun**

Current amongst "heavyweights." A strong arm man; a holdup; a highway robber. See "PUTEMUP."

## **ARTILLERY, Noun**

In general currency. Firearms of any description. See "ROD," "ROSCOE," "SMOKEWAGON."

## **B. A., Noun**

Current amongst literary confidence men. A book agent who commonly employs confidence methods for obtaining subscriptions or orders.

**BADGE, Noun**

Current amongst "hustlers" and the demi-monde. A badger; a blackmailer; an extortioner. See "SHAKE-DOWN."

**BALLY HOO, Noun**

Current amongst exhibition and "flat-joint" grafters. A free entertainment used for a decoy to attract customers. See "READER."

**BANNER, Noun**

General currency. Used in the colloquialism "carrying the banner," meaning to walk the streets all night or otherwise endure the hardship of loss of sleep.

**BATCH, Noun**

General currency. A number; a quantity; a lot; a great many.

**BELCH, Noun**

In general usage with all grafters. A protest; a complaint. See "SQUAWK," "ROAR," "HOLLER." Example: "When he blowed his dough he put up an awful belch."

**BELCH, Verb**

Idem Supra. Example: "He cannot stand the gaff without belching." Also used to denote the giving of information. See "COME THROUGH."

**BEN, Noun**

General usage. An overcoat; derived from Benjamin, in reference to the biblical coat of many colors.

## **BENNY, Noun**

General usage. A sack coat; derived from Benjamin, some say the biblical character, while others say the New York manufacturer of men's garments.

## **BENT, Adjective**

General usage. Crooked; larcenous. See "TWISTED."  
Example: "His kisser shows that he's bent."

## **BIG TOP, Noun**

Current amongst circus grafters and "open-air men." The large tent used by circuses; now evolved to include the meeting of the maximum exhibit possible in any given case. Example: "I'm flopping at the big top," i. e., "I am rooming at the biggest hotel in town."

## **BIT, Noun**

General usage. A portion; a division; a share or a part of anything, as profits or proceeds of a transaction. Example: "You're supposed to be in on anything that comes off, so you're entitled to your bit."

## **BIT, Noun**

General usage, particularly amongst grafters who operate on the outside of the law. A prison sentence. Example: "He did a bit in Joliet." Also a share. See "END."  
Example: "If you don't take a chance you're entitled to no bit."

## **BLOCK, Noun**

General usage. A watch. See "SUPER," "TURNIP."  
Example: "The wire rung six blocks in the breaks," i. e., "The tool (pickpocket) detached six watches from their rings in the crowded exit." As a noun it has another meaning, i. e., a head. See "NOODLE." Example: "He got his block sapped," i. e., struck.

## **BLOOMER, Noun**

Current with genteel grafters. An error; a failure. Example: "We framed wrong and scored a bloomer."

## **BLOW, Verb**

General usage. To cease; to get away; to lose; to miss something absent. Examples: "Blow! here comes a bull." "We blowed some kale that night" (spent it). "Just as the touch was scored the boob blowed his poke." "A shilliber's work is to cop and blow," i. e., to take and give in a gambling, ostensibly winning and losing in good faith from and to a confederate.

## **BLOW CARD, Noun**

Current amongst gamblers and genteel grafters. Any useless thing or condition; financial embarrassment; the last card; the final play or thing in any series. Examples: "Don't connect with this wop, he is on the blow card," i. e., broke. "Pull this one off and call it the blow card."

## **BOOB, Noun**

In general usage amongst all sophisticated classes. An inferior in any specific sense; a victim; an uninitiated person when used by a "gonif." Derived from booby.

## **BOOSTER, Noun**

Used by confidential grafters. One who endorses a person, thing or action of immoral nature either by complimentary action or by moral support; a helper; a confederate.

## **BOOSTER, Noun**

In general currency amongst "gonifs." A shoplifter; a thief who operates in merchandise stores in daytime. A "Boost" is an assistance; "The Boost" is the shoplifting profession.

## **BREAKS, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. Any place of exit where throngs of people pour through en stream, as from a theatre, from a convention or other popular gathering, or from a street or railroad car or from a boat, all of which afford facilities for the pickpocket to operate under cover and in the press of unusual excitement. Example: "The guns are rooting into the swell mob at the Grand Opera breaks."

## **BREAK UP, Noun**

Current amongst thieves who specialize in plunder or loot. Melted silver or gold. See "MELT."

## **BREEZE, Noun**

General usage. Loquacity; guile; "hot air;" bull con."

## **BREEZE, Verb**

General usage. To deceive; to beguile; to occupy one's attention; to descant loquaciously. Example: "She breezed everybody on the line." Also to move on, to leave, to come in or go out. See "BLOW."

## **BREECH (britch), Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets chiefly. The rear pants pockets, designated right and left breech, in contradistinction to the front pants pockets, for which see "KICK." Example: "Fan his right breech for a leather," i. e., "Feel of his right hip pocket for a pocketbook."

## **BROAD, Noun**

Current amongst genteel grafters chiefly. A female confederate; a female companion; a woman of loose morals. See "DONY," "FLUZIE," "MUFF." Broad is derived from the far-fetched metaphor of "meal ticket," signifying a female provider for a pimp, from the fanciful correspondence of a meal ticket to a railroad or other ticket, which latter originally was exclusively used by "gonifs"

to indicate "broad," or a conductor's hat check. Also a playing card from the deck of fifty-two. A "three-card monte man" is a "BROAD SPIELER"; "Tipping the broads" is riding on a purchased transportation ticket; "Beating the broads" is corrupting the conductor or other collecting functionaire of a transportation line.

### **BUCK, Noun**

Current generally. A dollar. Example: "They tax you one buck for a room without a bath at the cheapest hotel in the burg."

### **BUFFALO, Noun**

General usage in the northern states. A negro. See "DINGE."

### **BUFFALO, Verb**

General usage. To bluff; to intimidate; to frighten. Example: "The dick buffaloes him into tipping his plant."

### **BUG, Noun**

Used by alms beggars. A fearful looking sore artificially produced to simulate a burn or scald by the use of Spanish blister.

### **BULL, Noun**

General usage. Misrepresentation; a lie; deception. Probably derived from the financial term bull, which in polite and legal circles signifies inflation, optimism. See "BREEZE." Also used to indicate an officer of the law whose function is to apprehend or arrest, whether a constable, marshal, sheriff, detective or policeman.

### **BULL CON, Noun**

Supra idem.

## **BUMP, Verb**

Current amongst heavyweights and desperate characters chiefly, though understood by grafters generally. To kill; reflectively it signifies suicide. Examples: "He bumped himself off when he saw that the game was up." "He copped a cuter and got bumped making a get-away."

## **BUNCO, Noun**

General currency. Deceit. Derived from "BUNCOMBE."

## **BUNK, Noun**

In general currency. Deceit; ostentation. Derived by corruption of form while retaining the meaning of "Bunco," a contraction of buncombe. Example: "If you fall for this bunk you're a simp."

## **BUNK, Verb**

General usage. To employ misrepresentation; to defraud; to cheat; to establish confidential relations with intent to abuse the influence so acquired. Example: "The frame-up in the play was to bunk the sucker with protection and scare team work."

## **BURNEYS, Noun**

Current amongst "hop-heads," dope fiends. A catarrh powder containing an illicit proportion of cocaine, used as a snuff, administered with a combination detachable rubber and glass blowing tube.

## **BUZZARD, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. A timid or amateur or low life "gun" who operates on "molls," women. Example: "The moll buzzards tore into the jam at the market house on Saturday night and glommed a batch of pokes."

## **BUZZER, Noun**

Current mainly in western circles. An officer's badge or star, the insignia of authority. Example: "Who are you?" says he. For reply I flashed my buzzer." Derived, doubtless, from the metal disc toy with starlike points which revolves by pulling crossed strings which pass through it.

## **CAN, Noun**

General usage. A place of confinement; a prison; a cell. A practical metaphor for a receptacle designed to confine or bottle humans. Also a lavatory, toilet, urinal. Example: "He rumbled and made the can." See "CANISTER."

## **CAN, Verb**

General usage. To discharge; to eliminate. Derived from the prankish cruelty of tying a tin can to a dog's tail, whose effectual purpose is to get rid of a useless or undesirable object. Example: "He made so many bad breaks we had to can him."

## **CANISTER, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst prison habitues. A prison. Also in use amongst crooks who resort to the use of weapons, denoting a firearm. Example: "He'll stick his hands up if you flash the canister."

## **CANNON, Noun**

General currency. A revolver. In pickpocket parlance it signifies a pickpocket of indefinite order. See "GUN," "GONIF."

## **CASES, Noun**

General usage. Observation; scrutiny; survey. Example: "Keep cases on his actions and you will learn his motive." Also an ultimate, a finality, the last of a series of things or actions. Example: "He hasn't turned a trick for so long that he is down to cases." The term is de-

rived from gambler's parlance; in faro bank the recording of cards turned out of the dealer's box is denominated "keeping cases," whilst the last card to remain in the box is called the "case card." "Down to cases" is used to signify that the cards are all dealt and played; the money or resources at an end.

### **CASE, Verb**

General usage. To watch; to observe; to scrutinize.

### **CAT HOP, Noun**

Current amongst gamblers. See "KITTY HOP."

### **CENTURY, Noun**

General usage. A hundred; a hundred dollar bill.

### **CHIP, Noun**

Current amongst burglars and store prowlers. A cash-box; a till; a cash drawer without bellling device. A cash receptacle with bellling device is called a "combination chip," or a "damper," or a "dinger." Example: "He copped a heel on the chip and glommed a century."

### **CHIV, Noun**

In general use amongst yeggs and rough-neck criminals. A knife; a sharp-edged tool or weapon. Derived from the French word "chef," by reason of a cook's use of a carving knife, though the French term for knife is "canif."

### **CHIV, Verb**

Supra idem. To cut; to slash; used only in regard to an attack upon a human. Example: "Beware of that geezer that he does not chiv you."

### **CHOP, Verb**

General usage. To quit; to cease.

**CHUMP, Noun**

General usage. An unsophisticated individual; a victim; an inferior; an "angel"; a "captain." See "JOHN."

**CLATTER, Noun**

General usage. A patrol wagon.

**CLAW, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. The "tool"; the "jerve"; the "wire"; or the expert operator in a "gun mob" who lifts the money and valuable collateral from the victim's person. Example: "Our mob is working under one of the speediest claws in the country."

**CLAW, Verb**

General usage. To snatch; to appropriate; to annex.

**CLEAN, Adjective**

General usage. A state of financial embarrassment; exhausted supply of a given property. Example: "He wasn't very dirty when he got in town, but he is thoroughly clean now."

**CLEAN, Verb**

General usage. To take all one possesses of a given commodity; to deplete one's assets. Example: "He headed in wrong with that bunch and got cleaned." Also used by exponents of the art of self-defense to indicate the infliction of defeat upon an opponent. Example: "He made a pass at me and I cleaned him in one, two, three."

**CLOUT, Verb**

In currency amongst the plunderbund. To purloin any kind of valuables in any manner.

**COME-ON, Noun**

General usage. A prospective victim; a "steered" prospect.

**COME THROUGH, Verb**

General usage. To give up, to deliver, to surrender any secret information or any material goods demanded. Example: "After I showed him the situation was in our hands he came through with the dope." In pickpocket parlance "to come through" describes a function of one of the "wire's" "stalls," consisting of a frontal attack or sudden onslaught upon an intended victim with the purpose of bewildering the latter in order that the "wire" may operate upon the victim from the rear; or, the relative positions may be reversed, when the "stall" should "come through" from the rear. Example: "Precede this mark through the car door, wheel and come through just as he descends the steps."

**CON, Noun**

General usage. A convict; a lie; a misrepresentation. See "BUNK."

**CON, Verb**

General usage. To ingratiate; to establish confidential relations. See "BUNK."

**COP, Noun**

General currency. A policeman.

**COP, Verb**

General usage. See "CLOUT." Cop is an old Cockney flash-word and signifies capture; conquer. Example: "Booze and the blowers (women) cops the lot."

**COPPER, Noun**

Current amongst prison habitues. The commutation or good time allowed prisoners for good behavior. Example: "You grab one month copper off the first year."

**COSE, Noun**

General usage. A five-centpiece. "Cosan" is a ten-cent-piece.

**CRACK, Verb**

General usage. To talk. For example see "EYE FULL."

**CRAB, Noun**

General usage. A grouchy, stingy person; of inferior quality in intellectuality or habits. See "PIKER."

**CRAB, Verb**

General usage. To spoil or ruin or render impossible any plan of action. Example: "This fink crabbed the play and we went on the nut for a double saw-buck."

**CRAP, Noun**

General usage. Treachery. See "BUNK," "BULL," "CON."

**CREEP, Verb**

Current amongst prowlers and panel-joint workers. To use stealth; to crawl.

**CREEP, Noun**

Current amongst crooked pimps. A creeper, a crawler who searches the clothes of a victim while the latter is abed with the creep's paramour.

**CROKE, Verb**

General usage. Passively it means to die; actively it is used as an elegant expression for murder. Examples: "He croked himself with bichloride." "The copper got croked in the jack-pot."

**CRIMPY, Adjective**

Used by yeggs principally. Cold, applied to the weather.

**CROKER, Noun**

General usage. A physician.

**CROSSLOTS, Adverb**

In use amongst yeggs, hobos and the meandering unemployed. Cross-country; away from frequented routes of traffic; by star route. Example: "In the get-away they hammed twenty miles cross lots."

**CROW, Adjective**

Current amongst shoplifters and pennyweighters. Poor; mean; trivial; insignificant; worthless. Example: "There's a bale of slum in the joint, but it's all crow."

**CROWNS, Noun**

Used by drug fiends. Same as "BURNEYS."

**CRUSH, Noun**

General usage. A forcible entry or exit. Also as verb.

**CUT TO THE BRAKES, Verb**

Current amongst gamblers and ready-money grafters. Reducing action to its lowest terms; displaying only the essential. Example: "The mark stalled to tne can, gunned his soft and cut to the breaks," i. e., "The victim retired to the lavatory, inspected his bank-roll and separated the amount required to finance the intended operation."

**CUTER, Noun**

Used by gamblers and western criminals. A surprise; a fool; a josh; "a boob." For example of first-cited value see "BUMP."

**DAMPER, Noun**

Used by prowlers and daylight "heels." A combination cash drawer or register. See "CHIP."

**DANGLER, Noun**

Current amongst jewelry thieves and those who commit larceny from the person. A watch fob; an earring; a pendant; any article of jewelry which swings free at one end.

**DEAD ONE, Noun**

General usage. One who is useless in any specific case; out of funds.

**DERRICK, Noun**

Current amongst shoplifters chiefly. A "holster"; a "lifter"; a "booster"; an "elevator." Example: "The boosters are making a plunge with a derrick ben." In this sense it is used as an adjective, but can be transposed for "boosters."

**DICK, Noun**

General usage. A detective. See "RICHARD."

**DINGE, Noun**

General usage. A negro. See "BUFFALO."

**DIP, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. See "CLAW"; "WIRE"; "JERVE"; "TOOL"; "GUN"; "CANNON"; "GONIF." A common term for a pickpocket of any degree.

**DISE, Noun**

Current amongst store burglars, shoplifters, and box-car thieves or "RAT WORKERS" mainly. A contraction of

merchandise. Loot; plunder; effects that can readily be disposed of in the market as new goods. Example: "There's a mob riding the rattlers between here and the junction who have a dise plant stashed (cached) in the jungles."

### **DONY, Noun**

Current amongst pimps and free lovers chiefly. A female member of the demi-monde. See "HOOKER"; "JANE"; "FILLY"; "MUFF." Derived from the Hebrew "yoni," the female sex organ.

### **DOSS, Noun**

General currency. A place to sleep; a bed. See "KIP"; "FLOP." Example: "Stake me to two-bits to get a doss." Apparently from the French "je dors," I sleep.

### **DOUBLE, Noun**

General usage. A conspiracy to deceive or defraud a victim; the "double-cross." Example: "He got the double."

### **DUCAT, Noun**

Current amongst genteel grafters. A ticket of admission or transportation. See "BROAD." Example: "The ducat box was crushed last night," i. e., "The ticket office was burglarized."

### **DUCK, Verb**

General currency. To retire; to leave; to flee; to disappear.

### **DUKE, Noun**

Used by gamblers and genteel grafters. A fist; a hand; glad hand; a hand in a card game. "Reading the duke"

is fortune-telling by palmistry"; "tipping your duke" is betraying your intention"; "cropping his duke" is reading an opponent's hand by trickery in a card game.

### **DUKIE, Noun**

Used by yeggmen and hobos. A hand-out, or donation of cold victuals to a beggar. See "LUMP."

### **DUMMY, Noun**

Current amongst yeggmen, hobos and prison habitues. Broad. See "PUNK."

### **DUMP, Noun**

General usage. A rendezvous; an establishment of any kind; a hangout; a joint; a meeting place.

### **DRAG, Noun**

General currency. An influence with one in authority; a "pull"; a main thoroughfare in any community; the main street. See "STEM." Examples: "The boys are pivoting on the main drag," i. e., begging on the street; "The muffs are cruising on the drag tonight," i. e., soliciting on the street. Amongst female impersonators on the stage and men of dual sex instincts "drag" denotes female attire donned by a male. Example: "All the fagots (sissies) will be dressed in drag at the ball tonight." Also an inhalation of smoke, tobacco or opium.

### **DROP, Noun**

General currency. An apprehension in criminal action. See "FALL"; "SNEEZE"; "RUMBLE"; "TUMBLE." Also used as a verb to express the action corresponding to a similar state. Example of the latter: "The tribe dropped a man in the day's work," i. e., lost one by arrest. "We had to drop a stall for missing too many meets," i. e., discharged him. Command or control by reason of advantage in an exigency when shooting may be expected.

## **EIGHT DIE CASE, Noun**

Current amongst open-air or "sure-thing" grafters. See "FLAT JOINT." A glass showcase containing numbered prizes, as jewelry or gewgaws, for which eight dice are thrown by players, the totality of spots on the eight dice corresponding with the numbers on the prizes. The secret of this graft consists in the dealer's fraudulent counting of the spots arbitrarily and disarranging them before the victim can finish the count.

## **ELBOW, Noun**

General usage in cosmopolitan centers. A detective. See "RICHARD"; "DICK."

## **ELEVATOR, Noun**

In shoplifter's and holdup men's parlance. A lifter; a booster; a hoister; a "stick-up" man. See "PUT-EM-UP."

## **END, Noun**

General currency. A share; a portion; a division. See "BIT."

## **EYE (The), Noun**

General currency amongst long-odds criminals. The Pinkerton Detective Agency; an operative of the Pinkerton Agency. Example: "Blow this joint; it's protected by the Eye."

## **EYE FULL, Noun**

General usage. The object of scrutiny or of attentive observation. See "STRETCHING." Example: "Nix Crackin'! The mark on your left is getting an eye full."

**FALL, Noun**

General currency. An arrest. See "RUMBLE"; "DROP."  
Example: "He was soused when he attempted to pull off the stunt and got a fall." Used as a verb, "to fall for" is to be deceived by; to be taken in; to be influenced.

**FALL DOUGH, Noun**

Current amongst criminals who operate under clique or fraternal organization. A fund kept in reserve for protection, to be expended in procuring legal representation, bail, or bribery of officers or court functionaries. Example: "No one can join out unless he puts up five centuries for fall dough."

**FALL GUY, Noun**

General currency. A scapegoat; a victim. See "FALL."

**FAN, Verb**

In pickpocket parlance. To surreptitiously feel a victim's pockets, or inadvertently brush the person for the purpose of locating an object sought, as pocketbook, watch or weapon. Example: "Fan the pratt for a poke."

**FIEND, Noun**

Used by narcotic habitues chiefly. One addicted to the use of drugs, as a "hop fiend," a "dope fiend."

**FILL, Verb**

General currency amongst gang criminals. To join a mob, as of guns, or of confidence men, and thus fill a vacancy in the organization. Example: "If you know a good man who can make a fill steer him in."

**FILLY, Noun**

General usage. A young woman of questionable morals, not necessarily criminal by choice but potentially so. See "SKIRT"; "JANE"; "MUFF."

## **FINGER, Noun**

Current amongst criminals who localize more or less extensively. See "STOOL." An informer; an investigator for officers. Example: "He got the push sneezed by mixing with a finger."

## **FINGER PRINT, Noun**

Current amongst confidence crooks who specialize in paper securities or signed orders for merchandise or service. A signature; an endorsement. Example: "Put your finger print on this line." See "JOHN HANCOCK."

## **FINK, Noun**

Current chiefly in eastern criminal circles. An unreliable confederate or incompetent sympathizer. See "CRAB"; "LOB." Example: "We staked him to a day's work for a try-out, but he proved to be a fink."

## **FISH EYE, Noun**

General currency. A diamond. See "PROP."

## **FIX, Noun**

Used in general criminal parlance. A condition of security where grafters may operate with impunity. Example: "Don't pay any attention to the bulls; it's a fix."

## **FIXER, Noun**

General currency. One who acts as go-between for thieves and bribe takers. Example: "If you get a rumble, send for Jones, the mouthpiece; he's a sure-shot fixer and can square anything short of murder."

## **FLAGGINGS, Noun**

Used by yeggs and hobos. Meat of any description, usually applied to cold victuals. Example: "If you are not a vegetarian, stay away from that man's burg, for flaggings is scarce."

## **FLAP, Noun**

Current amongst pimps and criminals who are contemptuous of female values. An opprobrious epithet for loose women. Also employed to designate the female sex organ.

## **FLASH, Verb**

General currency. To show; to exhibit; to submit an object for inspection.

## **FLAT JOINT, Noun**

Current amongst open-air sure-thing men who operate at circus gatherings, fairs, carnivals, any gaming establishment where fortune is presumed to wait upon skill combined with risk. The "TIVOLI"; the "SWINGING BALL"; the "SPINDLE"; the "PINCH WHEEL"; the "PADDLES"; the "SHELLS"; "THREE CARD MONTE"; the "EIGHT DIE CASE"; the "FISH POND"; the "DISCS" are all grafting flat joints. The term is derived from the essentiality in all of these crooked devices of a counter or other flat area across or upon which the swindle may be conducted.

## **FLIM, Noun**

Current in polite criminal circles. A swindle; a fraud. See "BUNK"; "TWIST." Derived from "flim-flam."

## **FLIM, Verb**

Supra idem. To swindle; to defraud. Used especially by short-change experts. See "LAYING"; "FLOPPER."

## **FLOATER, Noun**

General currency in police circles. A suspended sentence; a mandatory order to quit a community or locality. Example: "The rap wasn't strong enough, so they took a floater."

## **FLOP, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs, dope fiends, prison habitues and to some extent in general use by initiates in the mysteries of informal annexation. A bed; a place to sit, recline or lie down. Also used by short changers as a synonym of "fim."

## **FLOP, Verb**

Same as above. To sit or lie down. Example: "Let's flop here on the grass and pound our ear." Also used by money changers to signify fraud by confusion. Example: "There's a muff in that candy store that can be flopped because she can't count change."

## **FLOPPER, Noun**

In general use by money changers, switchers (substituters); fim-flammers. See "LAYING." Example: "He calls himself a star flopper, but he's crabbing a string of good lays by hyping with a deuce where a saw buck could be changed just as readily." See "HYPER."

## **FRAME, Noun**

General currency. A prearranged plan of action; a secret implying sinister intention; a "frame-up." The contraction is used for greater secretiveness, as is the case with all terms which have become the common property of both criminals and their enemies. Example: "What's the frame for putting this one over? The lemon."

## **FRISK, Noun**

General usage. A search; a "shake-down"; an examination of the contents of one's pockets, of a room, of receptacles or of a community. Example: "Give him a frisk and see if he has a rod."

## **FRISK, Verb**

Supra idem. Example: "Frisk everybody that enters the hall."

## **FRONT, Noun**

Some general currency, but used mainly by crooks whose operations require a shield or distraction. An auxiliary defense; a "stall"; a secondary who interposes his person or contributes overtly to a surreptitious action. Example: "Give me a front here till I nick this leather."

## **FRONT, Verb**

See above. To hide; to conceal a principal in open criminal action. See "STALL." Example: "Front me out of this joint and don't lose my left wing."

## **FLUZIE, Noun**

Current in the cosmopolitan demi-monde. A woman; a questionable female character. See "DONY"; "HOOKER."

## **GAFF, Noun**

In general currency. An offensive action, thing or condition, of vague, complex or undetermined meaning. It is variously employed or construed to mean defeat, punishment, failure, or the instruments of these. Example: "There'll be no hop-heads joining out with this mob, for they can't stand the gaff."

## **GANDER, Noun**

General currency. An inquisitorial glance; a searching look; an impertinent gazing or staring. Also the simple act of looking or seeing. See "RUBBER"; "EYE FULL." Example: "Take a gander at this dump as we pass, and don't get the eye of the guinea inside."

**GAP, Noun**

Supra idem. General currency. Used also as a verb.

**GASH, Noun**

General currency. An invidious term for woman; synonymous with flap, which see.

**GAT, Noun**

General usage. A gun; a pistol; a firearm. See "ROD"; "ROSCOE." Derived from "Gatling."

**GAZABO, Noun**

In general use, but originating in the East. A man; any man without regard to qualities.

**GAZUNY, Noun**

Supra idem. Current in ultra slangy circles. A man.

**GEEZER, Noun**

General circulation. A drink of liquor; a man (contemptuously).

**GINK, Noun**

General currency. Synonymous with "gazabo," "gazuny," "gink."

**GLIM, Noun**

General usage. A light; a lamp; a match. Also used as a verb, signifying illuminated. Example: "Go and take a pike (peek) at the dump and see if it's glimmed."

**GLIMS, Noun**

General currency. A pair of spectacles or nose glasses. See "SCENERIES"; "RINGERS."

**GLOM, Verb**

General currency. To grab; to snatch; to take; implying violence. Example: "Glom this short and drop off two blocks below."

**GOBBLED, Verb, Past Part.**

General currency. Arrested. See "NAILED."

**GONGER, Noun**

Current amongst opium smokers and drug fiends. An opium pipe. Also used in the diminutive form of "GONGERINE."

**GONIF, Noun**

General currency. A thief of any class; a pickpocket. The term is taken intact from the Hebrew and is used mostly by pickpockets. See "GUN"; "CANNON"; "BUZZARD." Also a verb, to rob.

**GOOSEBERRY, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs, hobos and meanderers. A clothesline; laundry hung up to dry. Example: "He prowled a gooseberry for a skin."

**GOPHER, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs chiefly. A safe; a strong box. See "PETE."

**GRAB, Verb**

General currency. Passively it signifies arrested; actively it signifies the imperfect past action of arresting or seizing. Example: "Steer clear of the tip: It's made and you are liable to get grabbed." See "GLOMMED"; "SNEEZEZD."

## **GRIFT, Noun**

General usage. Graft; an opportunity for plying criminal talents. Example: "How's grift on the shorts in the winter? Crow. Too many togs."

## **GROUCH BAG, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs and western thieves. A place, as a pocket or receptacle, for concealing money or valuables; a reserve fund held in secret to the exclusion of fraternists. Example: "He's under cover with a grouch bag."

## **GUFF, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs, sailors, and old-timers. Palaver; conversation; a contumelious synonym for egotism. See "BREEZE."

## **GUINEA, Noun**

General usage. In the sense of a man it is synonymous with "gazabo," "gink," "mark"; it also means an Italian, as well as Europeans generally.

## **GUMP, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs, hobos and peripatetics generally. A chicken; a fowl. Examples: "We're going down in the jungles and have a gump stew."

## **GUM SHOE, Noun**

General currency. A detective; a silent trailer. See "PUSSY FOOT."

## **GUN, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets chiefly, though enjoying familiar usage in general circles. A pickpocket. See "CANNON"; "GONIF."

## **GUN, Verb**

General usage. To watch; to scrutinize. See "GANDER"; "GAP." Used both as verb and noun to express action or thing. Examples: "Nix! There's a dick on the corner gunning us." "He's giving us a gun."

## **GUN MAN, Noun**

General currency. A gun fighter.

## **GUNNELS, Noun**

Used by all classes of criminals who beat their way on trains. The curved trusses extending from end to end underneath both freight and passenger cars. Example: "The only way you can ride this rattler tonight is to make the gunnels or the rods."

## **GUNSHEL, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs chiefly. A boy; a youth; a neophyte of trampdom. Example: "The tribe's got a gunshel pivoting on the stem with a bug," i. e., "The gang of tramps have sent a boy up on the main street to beg under pretense of having a wounded or disabled arm or limb." The term "bug" is derived from railroad parlance, denoting a signal attached to the front of the engine as an indication of the train's nature, attracting attention.

## **GUTS, Noun**

General currency. Nerve; "sand"; ability to withstand the most powerful emotions. A metaphor derived from the common experience of depressing sensation concomitant with an inrush of the violent emotions of fear, horror or other moral obstructions. To have "guts" is to be unencumbered with conscientious scruples relative to the object contemplated. Amongst yeggs and others fa-

miliar with clandestine railroading the "guts" signifies the various constructive parts underneath a car, or the hidden essentials of rolling stock. Example: "We'll ride the guts tonight over this division," i. e., the gunnels, rods, brake-beams, trucks.

### **GUY, Noun**

Eastern currency mainly. A man. "TO GUY" is to ridicule.

### **GYP, Noun**

Current in polite circles. The act of short-changing; a duplicity; a defrauding by substitution; an action that belies a professed sincerity. Example: "Look out for this guy, he's a clever agent to slip you a gyp." Derived from the popular experience with thieving Gypsies.

### **GYP, Verb**

Some general currency, but especially significant amongst short changers. To flim-flam; to cheat by means of guile and manual dexterity. See "HYPE"; "FLOP"; "LAYING." Example: "Gyp this boob with a deuce." Also used by "flat-joint" grafters, comprehending the general meaning of face-to-face criminal transactions.

### **HABIT, Noun**

Current amongst dope fiends. Necessity for opiates; a craving; the condition produced by habitual indulgence in drugs. See "YEN-YEN." Example: "I must drop into the hotel donegan (lavatory) and fire (take a hypodermic injection), for I feel my habit coming on."

### **HACK, Noun**

Current amongst yeggmen and prowlers, in general. A night watchman; a night policeman or marshal. Most usually it signifies the watchman of a building. Used as

a verb in the past participle it describes the accomplished function of a night watchman. Example: "The joint's hacked but not kipped," i. e., watched but not occupied by a sleeper.

### **HAM, Verb**

General usage. To walk. Example: "If we get a tumble, it's a case of ham."

### **HANDLES, Noun**

Limited usage, chiefly by criminals who understand more or less about physiognomical description and disguises. Side-whiskers; "mutton chops."

### **HANKY PANK, Noun**

Current in polite slangy circles. Insincere or trifling small talk; flattery; garrulousness. See "BREEZE"; "BULL."

### **HARDWARE, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst merchandise thieves. Weapons; knives; razors; tools and paraphernalia used by safe-crackers and forcible entry prowlers. Used by holdup men to signify a weapon. Example: "Fan him for hardware."

### **HARNESS, Noun**

General currency. A uniform; a shoplifter's equipment for concealing merchandise. A "harness bull" is the commonest form of the term's use, signifying a uniformed policeman in contradistinction to a plain clothes officer or detective.

## **HARP, Noun**

General currency. An Irishman; used principally to designate the raw type.

## **HARPOON, Noun**

General currency. A metaphor for lampoon; used as a verb it signifies to "give a person the worst of it." See "GAFF."

## **HATCH, Noun**

General usage. A calaboose; a prison; police station; a jail. Derived from the nautical term "booby-hatch." See "CAN"; "WICKY." Example: "The only way he can be sprung is to crush the hatch."

## **HEAVY WEIGHT, Noun**

Current amongst long-odds crooks. A desperate thief; a husky capable of delivering a dangerous attack in the event of personal encounter; a yegg; a burglar; a "stick-up man."

## **HEEL, Noun**

General currency. An incompetent; an undesirable; an inefficient or pusillanimous pretender to sterling criminal qualifications. See "FINK"; "DEAD ONE"; "CRAB"; "LOB." Used also in the sense of "sneak" as noun and verb, to stalk.

## **HEP, Noun**

General circulation. Sapiency; understanding; "next"; "on." Derived from the name of a fabulous detective who operated in Cincinnati, the legend has it, who knew so much about criminality and criminals that his patronymic became a byword for the last thing in wisdom of illicit possibilities. Example: "Chop the skirmish; he's hep."

## **HICKS, Noun**

Current amongst "sure-thing" grafters. The walnut husks used in the three shell and pea game. Example: "This proposition is as sure as fate and as strong as the hicks."

## **HIP, Noun**

General currency. A burden; an attachment; a responsibility; an incubus. Examples: "I can't see you tonight; I've got a Jane on my hip." "What's the use of taking more on your hip?" Also used to denote being shadowed or followed. Example: "Don't round, we've got somebody on our hip." Always used colloquially. Also current amongst opium smokers, designating the act of lying on the side to smoke the "pipe."

## **HIRAM, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst yeggmen. A metaphor taken from masonry to signify initiation into the secrets of the yegg profession. A synonym for yegg, adopted when the latter term acquired too much notoriety. Example: "By way of the Hiram!" An exclamatory challenge or password used for a "feeler" to probe the state of mind of the encountered one.

## **HOBO, Noun**

General usage. A tramp, not necessarily of criminal tendencies.

## **HOIST, Noun**

Current amongst shoplifters mainly. The profession of shoplifting. See "BOOST"; "DERRICK". Example: "What's his grift? He's on the hoist."

## **HOOKS, Noun**

Current amongst shoplifters. A set of steel hooks shaped like the letter "U," fastened through the cloth of a heavy "boosting ben" under the armpits; concealed from the outside view by a pad of cloth similar in pattern to the cloth of the coat and having the inner arm of the hook filed to a needle-like sharpness; upon the hook merchandise may be hung, or slung around the operator's back and suspended from both hooks. When not in use the hooks' sharp points are sheathed in cork to prevent injury to the person. They are instantaneously detachable and may be "sloughed" by an expert without detection. "Hooks" also signifies the worst of a bargain. "HOOK" means a thief; "HOOKY" is larcenous.

## **HOOKER, Noun**

General currency. A prostitute. See "DONY"; "FLUZY."

## **HOLLER, Noun**

General currency. A protest; a vehement refutation. See "BELCH"; "WOLF"; "SQUAWK." Example: "Did the sucker make a holler? Sure he rumbled the touch before we blowed the joint and made a roar."

## **HOMBRE, Noun**

Western usage. A man. From the Spanish for man.

## **HOPSCOTCH, Verb**

General usage. To jump or travel about from place to place.

## **HOOP, Noun**

General currency, though used most frequently by "short-odds" grafters who practice merchandising by unlicensed solicitation. A finger ring. A "phony hoop" is a gold-plated ring. Grafters of mediocre intellectuality seek protection from apprehension for vagrancy by carrying a stock of "hoops," "glims" and "supers," or "blocks" (watches). Not to be confounded with the jovial exclamation, "Whoops! my dear," of fairies and theatrical characters.

## **HOP MERCHANT, Noun**

Current amongst drug habitues. A dispenser of opium and opiates. Usually applied to drug peddlers who have no established headquarters, but are itinerant.

## **HUCKS, Noun**

Current amongst "sure-thing" grafters. The walnut shells used in the three shell game. See "HICKS"; "NUTS." Example: "We'll make the ball game on Sunday and play the hucks."

## **HUMP, Noun**

Current amongst prison habitues. The middle of a term; the half-way point in a prison sentence. Example: "How long have you got yet on your bit? I'm just over the hump."

## **HUNCH, Noun**

General usage. An inspiration; an intuition; an "office."

## **HUNDRED PER CENT, Noun**

Used by sure-thing admen, by confidence grafters who maintain the plausible appearance of giving value for moneys received, but who in reality give nothing. Fake advertising is the principal hundred per cent graft.

## **HUNKIE, Noun**

Current in localities where North European laborers abound. A corruption of Hungarian, but employed to signify a Continental European who is unwashed and un-naturalized.

## **HUSTLER, Noun**

General currency. A grafter; a pimp who steals betimes. The genteel thief is designated a "hustler."

## **HYPER, Noun**

Current amongst money-changers. A fim-flammer; a layer of currency, that is, one who makes a purchase and tenders a bank note and after receiving proper change pretends to discover the exact amount of change required to pay for the goods purchased and thereupon declares his preference for the bank note rather than for the change. In the exchange he strives to confuse the obliging changemaker for the purpose of obtaining an excess of his proper due. Or, the "hyper" requests a bank note for subsidiary coin and upon being accommodated ostentatiously seals the bank note in an addressed envelope. The merchant discovers that the subsidiary coin is less than the stated amount and demands his bank note, whereupon a substitute envelope is tendered by the "hyper" with a request that he hold it until the "hyper" returns to his home and secures the additional small change. There are other systems of the "hyper" in vogue, but the principle is the same in all.

## **IN DUTCH, Adverb**

General usage. Mistaken; in trouble. See "JACK POT."

### **JAB, Noun**

Current amongst morphine and cocaine fiends. A hypodermic injection.

### **JACKPOT, Noun**

General currency. A dilemma; a difficult strait; a retribution; trouble; an arrest. See "JINX"; "IN DUTCH." Example: "Where's Joe? He pulled a raw-jaw stunt and made a jackpot."

### **JAKE, Noun**

General currency amongst cosmopolitan crooks. The state of knowing; familiarity with a secret or a scheme or meaning. See "HEP"; "JOE." Example: "You're making a boob out of yourself; he's Jake to the whole works." As an adjective "jake" means good; satisfactory; acceptable; all-right.

### **JAMB, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst yeggs and prowlers. The state of being closed, as a store or house; locked up; inaccessible. See "Sloughed," not in the sense of "sluffed" as the same word is sometimes used, though with the latter pronunciation while retaining the former spelling. Example: "The front's in the jamb; try the rear." Also used to signify trouble in the sense of "JACK POT."

### **JANE, Noun**

General currency. A woman, though not in any opprobrious sense; the sexual complement of the term "JOHN," a man.

## **JERVE, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. A vest pocket; the "tool"; the "wire"; the "claw" in a gun mob. Examples: "Go after the left jerve for a bundle of scratch." "The jerve was nailed bang to rights coming through the tip."

## **JESSIE, Noun**

General currency. A bluff; a threat. Example: "He rang in a jessie and got away with it."

## **JIG, Noun**

General currency. An affair; a misfortune; a mistake. Example: "He used bad judgment and got into a jig."

## **JIGGER, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs and tramps. A fake wound, burn, scald, or other crippled condition. See "BUG"; "P.P." Example: "They're all jigger bums."

## **JIGGER, Verb**

Supra idem. An exclamation of warning; an injunction to cease; to mar; to spoil; to deface or derange. Examples: "Jigger! The bull's coming." "You've jiggered the lock."

## **JIM, Noun**

General currency. A cheap, inferior or worthless thing. Contraction of "JIM CROW." See "CROW."

## **JIM, Verb**

General currency. A synonym for "JIGGER." Example: "Lay off! You'll jim the whole works."

**JIMMY, Noun**

Used mainly by yeggs and prowlers. A burglar's tool. A short, powerful chisel or lever used by thieves for prying doors and windows open.

**JIMMY, Verb**

Supra idem. To pry or wrench loose with any instrument.

**JINKS, JINX, Noun**

General usage. In difficult straits. See "IN DUTCH."

**JITNEY, Noun**

General currency. A nickel; a dime; a small coin; a picayune. Used variously to signify an extremity in finance. Example: "Break away; he hasn't got a jitney."

**JOE, Noun**

General currency in polite criminal circles. Wise; sophisticated. See "Hep," of which "JOE" and "JAKE" are subdivisions or contractions or substitutions.

**JOHN, Noun**

General currency amongst the demi-monde. A "captain"; a "sucker"; an amorous fool with money and free love proclivities. Also a man in a contemptuous sense. Examples: "She's got a John keeping her." "Ask this John what time the train starts."

**JOHN HANCOCK, Noun**

Current amongst confidence men and paper grafters generally. A signature. Derived from the common observation that John Hancock, of Revolutionary fame, wrote a massive, extremely legible hand. See "FINGER PRINT."

## **JOINT, Noun**

General currency. A business establishment; a hangout. Sometimes used as a synonym of "DUMP," though it does not necessarily imply meanness or disrepute. Example: "Let's drop in this joint and buy a suit of clothes."

## **JOLT, Noun**

General usage. A prison sentence; a penalization; a blow; a physical or moral jar. Example: "He did a jolt once before in Joliet."

## **JOHN O'BRIEN, Noun**

Current generally. A freight train, used in contradistinction to a "RATTLER," a passenger train. Example: "You can see by his clothes that he has been riding John O's." Amongst "yeggs" it signifies also a moneyless safe.

## **JUG, Noun**

General currency. A prison; a bank; a secret receptacle for money or compact valuables. Example: "Tail this mark to the jug and case what he draws," i. e., "observe what money he draws."

## **JUNGLE, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs. A loafing place or hang out beyond a city's limits, whether in the woods or not. An isolated or little frequented spot.

## **JUNK, Noun**

General currency. Inferior goods; any property of relative worthlessness. Example: "Everything in his keister is junk."

## **KALE, Noun**

General currency. Bank notes; money of any kind. Evolved from the term "GREEN GOODS," the latter metaphor for money being derived from the greenish aspect of currency. Example: "He's got a bundle of kale that would choke a cow."

## **KEISTER, Noun**

General currency. A satchel; a handbag; a small grip. Example: "What's his grift? He prowls the depots for keisters."

## **KICK, Noun**

Some general currency, but employed most effectively by pickpockets. In common usage it signifies a pocket, any pocket; amongst "guns" it is used exclusively to signify a front pants pocket. Also a protest, a "squawk."

## **KINK, Noun**

General circulation. A crook; a larcenous criminal. See "HOOK"; "HUSTLER." Example: "Are there any kinks in the joint?" Also used by yeggs to designate a non-criminal tramp, or one who is not initiated into the particular craft of the speaker. In this latter sense the term is derived from the epithet "gay-cat," meaning a "working plug." Example: "Cut him out; he's got forty-seven kinks in his tail."

## **KIP, Noun**

General usage. A bed; a place to sleep. See "PAD"; "DOSS"; "FLOP." Used also as a verb, to sleep, to go to bed, etc.

## **KISSER, Noun**

General circulation. The countenance. See "MOOSH"; "MUG." Example: "You'll recognize him by his hatchet kisser."

## **KITTY HOP, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst gamblers. A heads-I-win-tails-you-lose situation or proposition; a "double-cross"; a "frame-up," in which "both ends may be played against the middle." Also used to indicate a practical joke. Example: "We got the skirt to frame a kitty hop for him and he fell for it."

## **LACE, Verb**

General currency. To slam; to punch; to beat unmercifully. Example: "The three dicks laced him like a football and then squared it by throwing an order of ham and eggs under his belt."

## **LAG, Noun**

Current amongst statutory criminals. A prison sentence of one year; sometimes used to signify an indefinite term of years in prison. The "STRETCH" better expresses the latter sentence of penal servitude. Example: "He's doing a lag in the little can." Also used as a verb as the equivalent of "RAILROADING" a criminal to prison.

## **LAM, Noun**

General currency. A hasty get-away; a running escape. Example: "He heeled to the door and made a lam."

## **LAM, Verb**

General usage. To run; to flee. Most frequently employed in the imperative mood.

## **LAMISTER, Noun**

Supra idem. A corruption of "LAM." Also a fugitive from justice. Example: "He's a lamister out of Chicago."

## **LAMOS, Adjective**

General currency. Gold-plated; flimsy; unsubstantial. Derived from the name of a firm of Chicago jewelers who supplied the cheap jewelry trade with "PHONIES," or fake jewelry. Example: "You can't hock it for two-bits: it's lamos." Also used to signify inferior personal qualities.

## **LAYING OUT, Verb, Present Part.**

Current amongst prowlers and sneak thieves. To watch from ambush; to spy upon a person or establishment. Example: "To get this dump right we'll have to lay out on it every night for a week and make the doings."

## **LAYING (NOTES), Verb, Present Part.**

Current amongst flim-flammers. To make fraudulent change; to cheat by the ruse of substitution. The latter craft is denominated "LAYING THE ENVELOPE."

## **LEATHER, Noun**

Some general currency, but used chiefly by pickpockets. A pocketbook; a wallet; a billbook. See "POKE." Example: "He has an inside leather."

## **LEARY, Adjective**

General usage. Afraid; anxious; anticipatory.

## **LEMON, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst bunco men. A confidence game in which skill at pool is the bait, though its successful negotiation is based upon the dishonesty or avarice of the victim. See "WIRE"; "SPUD." A lemon joint is a crooked pool and billiard room. Lately evolved to comprehend the general meaning of a disappointment, a commercial illusion. In this regard "lemon" is used in the deprecating sense conveyed by the term "gold mine." Example: "Lemons are selling in the open market for thirty cents a dozen, but this one cost me a hundred iron men."

## **LIVE ONE, Noun**

General currency. An informed individual; a prospectively profitable victim; an ambitious or keenly alert person. Example: "If we put this live one through the sprouts we throw our feet under the mahogany at the big top all the rest of the winter."

## **LOB, Noun**

General currency amongst better informed crooks. An awkward craftsman; a delinquent; an opprobrious character amongst thieves. Contracted from "LOBSTER," which in turn is a metaphor derived by suggestion from "CRAB," the latter symbolizing backward action or the propensity for reluctant participation. "LOBBY GOW" is another form of the same term, used principally by confidence and "flat-joint" grafters to signify a minor confederate, or "booster."

## **LOADING, Verb, Present Part.**

Current amongst pickpockets. The act of following, escorting or forcibly jamming passengers aboard a street or passenger car or up any flight of steps, as the entrance to an elevated railroad station; the purpose of "LOAD-

ING" is to take advantage of unsuspecting eagerness on the part of passengers so that violent extraction of valuables from pockets shall scarcely be heeded. Example: "We were loading 'em on for two hours steady in the Sunday excursion pushes."

### **LOCO, Adverb**

Current chiefly in western circles, though not used exclusively by criminals. Slightly erratic in mental processes. The Spanish value of the term is "crazy," but by American criminal adoption it has been modified to comprehend just less than that. See "NUTS."

### **LOSER, Noun**

Current amongst prison habitues. An ex-convict. See "Con." Examples: "Three time losers cop life in some states."

### **LUMP, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst yeggs, hobos and the indigent. A donation of victuals intended for consumption outside the house. But alas! lumps are sometimes impaled on the fence pickets by fastidious beggars who become offended at the failure of well meaning but non-intuitive philanthropists to invite them in to eat at the table. This latter operation is gratefully termed a "sit-down."

### **MAC, Noun**

General currency. A pimp; a lover of a lewd woman. A man who lives upon the earnings of a prostitute. Derived from the French term "Macquereau."

### **MAIN STEM, Noun**

General currency. The main thoroughfare of a community. See "DRAG."

## **MAKE, Verb**

General currency. To recognize; to discern; to solve; to acquire in an intellectual sense. See "RAP." Example: "You had better ring up (disguise) so he won't make you."

## **MARK, Noun**

General circulation. A man; a prospective victim.

## **MATCH, Noun**

Current amongst confidence men. A bunco game similar in nature to the "LEMON," but in which coins are matched; the fraud consisting in treachery on the part of the confidence man who steers the victim with the professed intention of betraying his de facto confederate.

## **MEAL TICKET, Noun**

General currency. A female of the open market who supports a lover; any gratuitous source of subsistence. Example: "The stiff won't put up his back so long as he's got a meal ticket."

## **MEIG, Noun**

General currency amongst cosmopolitans. A nickel; a five-cent piece. See "JITNEY." Sometimes used to indicate the minimum basis of exchange medium, the cent, as a hundred meigs, fifty meigs, etc. Example: "What's the tax for the scoffin's? Twenty-five meigs."

## **MELT, Noun**

Current amongst loothunters, but pennyweighters and other jewelry thieves particularly. Precious metals that may be melted in a crucible to make identity difficult or impossible. See "BREAK UP." Example: "The swag netted a melt of a thousand dollars."

**M'GIMP, MEGIMP, Noun**

Current in western circles. A pimp; a lover in the vicious meaning. See "MAC."

**MICHAEL, Noun**

Current amongst bottle drinkers. A flask of liquor. Example: "Have you got a michael on your hip?"

**MICHIGAN, Noun**

General currency. A spectacular ruse; a deceptive appearance, as a fake bank roll; a hoax staged with sinister intent. Example: "They started a michigan scrap and trimmed the sucker in the mix-up."

**MICKY, Noun**

Current amongst bottle drinkers. A corruption of "MICHAEL."

**MILL, Verb**

General currency, but of western origin. To amble around aimlessly; to exercise by walking. Example: "We milled around town all day without turning a trick."

**MITT, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst gamblers when the sense is a hand of cards. The "MITT" is a confidence game of the same nature as the "LEMON" or the "MATCH," involving a double cross. Also a card hand in any square game. In general currency it means both the human hand and any scheme, system or personal character. See "DUKE." Amongst prison habitues the "MITTS" signify handcuffs.

Example: "If he spiels long enough he'll tip his mitt." "They framed a strong mitt for him and beat him for half a century." A "MITT JOINT" is a gambling house where victims are "steered" for fleecing by means of deceptively "sure thing" hands.

### **MOB, Noun**

General currency. Two or more confederates joined together for nefarious practices. Used most frequently to designate a gang of pickpockets, a "GUN MOB."

### **MOCHA, Noun**

Current amongst shoplifters. Cloth; a suit pattern. Example: "I know a derrick who'll peddle a mocha for a finif."

### **MOLL, Noun**

General currency. A woman, regardless of character. See "JANE."

### **MONACRE, MONACKER, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs and registering itinerants. A nickname; a professional cognomen. A corruption of the term "monogram," devised to meet the contingencies arising out of the oft requested information: "What's your handle?" Example: "You'll have to look in the cook book to find a fancy monacker, for all the ready ones are appropriated, judging by the register on this tank."

### **MONKEY, Noun**

General currency. A man, used in the mildly indifferent sense of a stranger. See "GEEZER," "GAZABO," etc. Sometimes used to signify a "BOOB."

### **MOOCH, Noun**

Current amongst beggars. A mendicant; an alms solicitor.

### **MOOCH, Verb**

General currency. To stroll; to move about. See "MILL."  
Example: "Mooch around the block and come back in ten minutes." Also, to beg.

### **MOOSH, MOUSH, Noun**

General circulation. The human face; the physlog. See "KISSER." Also the mouth. Probably from French bouche (mouth). Probably derived from the French "mouchoir," a handkerchief, suggested by its utilization as a face mop. Example: "He's got a harp moosh," i. e., Irish.

### **M, or MORPH, Noun**

Used by morphine fiends. Sulphate of morphia.

### **MOPE, Verb**

General currency. To walk away; to remove one's presence to another locality or spot. See "BLOW," "MOOCH," "DUCK."

### **MOUSER, Noun**

Current in cosmopolitan circles. A "fairy;" a character obsessed by lewd passions.

## **MOUHPICE, Noun**

General currency. A lawyer; an advocate; a spokesman; a representative. Example: "The fall dough is to be used exclusively for a mouhpiece and nothing else."

## **MUD FENCE, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs, safecrackers. A soap lip, a trench of soap or other plastic substance constructed to hold nitroglycerin in funnel formation until it seeps through a joint in a safe.

## **MUSH, Noun**

General usage. An umbrella. Example: "When you can't do anything else you can heel the hotels and depots for mushes and turkeys."

## **NAILED, Verb, Past Part.**

General currency. Apprehended. See "GRABBED," "GLOMMED."

## **NECKING, Noun**

General circulation. A scrutiny; an impertinent staring. See "GANDER," "RUBBER." Example: "The guinea on the end is giving you a necking through the glass." Also used as a verb, to "neck," to peer, to watch.

## **NEXT, Adverb**

General usage. Conventionally wise. A synonym for "JAKE," "JOE," "HEP." Example: "You can't spring anything he isn't next to."

## **NICK, Verb**

Current mainly amongst pickpockets. To surreptitiously extract something from the person; to "touch" in the criminal sense; to purloin by stealth in personal presence of a victim. Example: "This lob couldn't nick a handful of air out of a flour barrel without scratching his mitt."

## **NINES, Noun**

Current amongst roués and cosmopolitans. The limit possible; the maximum extent. Example: "He's soused to the nines;" "That dony is made up to the nines," i. e., artificially beautified.

## **NOODLE, Noun**

General currency. The human head; brains; savoir faire; mentality. Example: "He's got a noodle like a Santa Claus," i. e., intuition, perspicacity.

## **NUT, Noun**

Commonly current in all circles when the meaning is "LOCO." Used by grafters whose operations involve an investment to signify an expense incurred in connection with a venture. Example: "The grift was punk; we were framed five strong and never got the nut off." "We went on the nut for two fifty."

## **NUTS, Noun**

Current amongst "flat joint" grafters, though comprehended in general. The three shells. See "HICKS." Example: "If we can't beat the crap game we will play the nuts for the winners." As an adjective and adverb it signifies daft, mentally deranged.

## **OFFICE, Noun**

General currency. A signal; a sign; a warning conveyed by facial expression, by physical motion, by sound or other nonchalant prompting. Example: "When I give you the office, blow." Used also as a verb in the same sense.

## **ON, Adverb**

General currency. Wise. A synonym for "NEXT," "JAKE." Also used to indicate an acceptance, as of a proposition. Example: "You're on for five hundred."

## **OPEN AIR, Noun**

Current amongst "flat joint" men and circus grafters generally. Used both as adjective and noun. County fair, street carnival, popular sport gathering and other out-of-door grafting.

## **OVER ISSUE, Noun**

Current amongst confidence men of the "green goods" type. A bunco scheme involving the use of crisp, new legitimate bank notes which are purported to have been clandestinely issued by employees of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. One or two of the notes are given the victim who is then steered to a confederate who poses as a detective. The latter professes to recognize the principal in the bunco as an ex-convict and counterfeiter. The upshot of the scheme is the "shaking down" of the victim for all he possesses and is successfully carried out through the victim's fear induced by consciousness of criminal complicity.

## **PAD, Noun**

General circulation. A bed; a place to sleep. See "KIP;" "DOSS."

## **PADDED, Verb, Past Part.**

Current amongst shoplifters. To have swag concealed about the person in a neat, compact order so as to enable the thief to pass inspection. Example: "He moped out of the joint padded to the nines."

## **PAN, Verb**

General currency. To scandalize; to defame. Example: "They panned everybody to a whisper." "ON THE PAN" signifies a subject on the carpet for discussion.

## **PAPER HANGER, Noun**

Current principally amongst forgers and utterers of false paper. Example: "There's a bunch of paper hangers plastering the town from A to Izzard."

## **PETE, PETER, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs. A safe; a strong box; a "GOPHER." Example: "The pete in the pig is a single H. H. with a drop," i. e., "The safe in the hardware store is a single door, Herring-Hall with a drop handle." Amongst gamblers and badgers a "peter" is a sleeping potion, a "knockout," such as hydrate of chloral.

## **PIG, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs and prowlers. A hardware store; the merchandise sold by hardware stores, preferably the more valuable assortments. Deduced: "Hardware": steel

tools, steel, iron, pig iron. Example: "He's gone out to drop a swag of pig."

### **PINCH, Noun**

Current amongst "flat joint" grafters. A wheel of fortune or a roulette wheel that can be stopped at any point desired by operating a secret trigger or spring. As a noun its use is also general in the sense of an arrest; the same with the verb, to pinch.

### **PIPE, Noun**

General currency. A certainty; a cinch. Example: "It's a pipe that he can't get away with it." Derived from the term "lead pipe," used by highwaymen, because its effectual employment involves a moral certainty that the robber will relieve the victim of his valuables.

### **PIPE, Verb**

General currency. To look; to concentrate the attention; to observe. See "GUN." Example: "Pipe the moll with the rocks."

### **PITCH, Noun**

General currency. An effort; an essay; an attempt. See "PLUNGE." A "HIGH PITCH" is the term used by street fakirs to describe the operation of beguiling the public from a soap box, a platform, a carriage or automobile; selling merchandise from an eminence like an auctioneer.

## **PIVOT, Verb**

Current amongst yeggs and street beggars. To solicit alms on the thoroughfares. Used also by "HUSTLERS" to indicate the operations of a woman of the town who solicits on the streets.

## **PLUNGE, Noun**

Super idem. To sally out on the streets with a specific aim, as in begging, soliciting or in other reprehensible conduct. Example: "The whole tribe made a five buck plunge to spring Jimmy from the canister." Amongst non-criminal classes of the demi-monde the term is used to indicate a strenuous endeavor.

## **POKE, Noun**

General currency. A pocketbook. (Poke a sack or bag. "A pig in a poke.") See "LEATHER."

## **P. P., Noun**

Current amongst yeggs and money-begging tramps. A plaster of paris cast used on arm or limb to simulate fracture. See "BUG;" "JIGGER."

## **PRATT, Noun**

General usage. The human rear; the buttocks; a hip pocket.

## **PROP, Noun**

General circulation amongst pickpockets and looters. A diamond stud originally, now comprehending diamonds in

any sense. See "FISH EYE." Example: "Any heel gun can get a breech poke, but it takes an A1 claw to grab a prop."

### **PROWL, Noun**

General currency. An expeditionary investigation; a survey in transit; a search of the person or of a place in the sense of "FRISK;" a burglary; a sneak; a saunter. Also used as a verb in the same senses.

### **PUFF, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs. Powder used to blow a safe; the explosion of "SOUP" in a safe. Example: "The dump was kipped, but we muffled the puff."

### **PUNCHING GUN, Verb, Present Part.**

General currency. The use of criminal slang; ostentatious display of sophistication. Example: "He can punch gun till the cows come home, but he can't get a can of water out of a water tank."

### **PUNK, Noun**

General currency. Bread. As an adjective the term is synonymous with "CROW," "LAMOS." Example: "The whole layout is punk." Also a sodomite youth—a yegg term.

### **PUSH, Noun**

General currency. Crowd; gang; clique; mob.

### **PUSH and SLIDE, Noun**

Current amongst short changers and confidence men who employ the ruse of substitution. A short changing operation whereby money, currency, counted in the hand of the crook is afterward held out by palming, and depends for immunity from detection by a forcible pushing of the residue of the sum counted into the hand of the victim, accompanied by a suggestion or urge to pocket the money without recounting.

### **PUSSY FOOT, Noun**

General currency. A detective. See "RICHARD;" "DICK."

### **PUT-EM-UP, Noun**

Current amongst heavyweights mainly. A highway robber; a desperate criminal who is prepared to hold up any interloper to prevent interference.

### **RAG, Noun**

General currency. A woman. See "SKIRT;" "JANE;" "MOLL."

### **RAP, Noun and Verb**

General usage. An identification; a charge of guilt.

### **RAT, Noun**

General currency. Passenger train; street car. A contraction of "RATTLER." Also an ignominious term, used in the sense of "CRAB."

### **RAT CRUSHER, Noun**

Current amongst heavyweights, yeggs and "dise" men. A box-car burglar. The terms "rattler" and "John O'Brien" are used interchangeably by some criminals, but their original significations are those given.

### **RATTLER, Noun**

General currency. A passenger train; a passenger or street car. Example: "The two of us stalled the rattler can on one ducat." Also a "RAT WORKER."

### **READER, Noun**

Current amongst "flat joint" men and peddlers. A formal license; a certificate; a written permit. Example: "You can't open the ballyhoo in this burg without a reader."

### **READERS, Noun**

Current amongst crooked gamblers. A pack of marked cards, therefore readable from the obverse side. Example: "How are they working, with the mitt? No, with the readers."

### **REDUCTION, Noun**

Current amongst dope fiends. The reduction cure for a "HABIT." Example: "The only sensible way of getting off is on the reduction."

### **BEEF, Verb**

Current amongst pickpockets. To lift a pocket lining or an obstacle in the form of wearing apparel by methodical manner to expedite the operations of the "WIRE" or

**"TOOL"** in a gun mob. Generally used in the imperative mood. Example: "Reef the right kick for a tweezer." By this function a pocket may be slowly turned inside out without detection; it is done in cases where the pocket is too deep, too tight or where extraordinary caution is expedient in pocket picking.

### **RICHARD, Noun**

General currency. A detective. Derived from the process of nicknaming, but in reverse of the usual custom. Thus from the term "DETECTIVE," "DICK" was suggested and hence "RICHARD" was derived. Or, following the corruption of the English "Robert" to "Bob" and "Bobby," the American parallel was suggested.

### **RIGHT, Adjective**

General currency. Sympathetic in a criminal sense; fixed; squared; noncondemnatory. Also a synonym for "SQUARE-SHOOTER." Example: "He's as right as a golden guinea. Slip him a piece of soft." Also used as a verb, to fix; to bribe.

### **RINGER, Noun**

General currency. A similarity; a double; a disguise; a pair of spectacles. Used in the latter sense because of the wonderful change produced in one's aspect by the addition of a pair of nose glasses or spectacles to the personal adornment. Used also as a verb. Example: "They'll hardly make him because he's rung up."

## **RISER, Noun**

General circulation. An "eye opener;" a scare; a fright; any mental or physical agent that moves to action. Example: "He got an awful riser with that dick at his pratt."

## **ROAR, Noun**

General currency. A protest. See "SQUAWK;" "BELCH." Example: "If this gink blows the touch he'll make an awful roar."

## **ROCKS, Noun**

General usage. Diamonds. In popular slang it means money.

## **ROD, Noun**

General currency. A revolver. See "SMOKE WAGON;" "ROSCOE." Also used as verb, to hold up at the point of a pistol. Example: "Rod this guy right off the jump." (Here as verb.)

## **RODS, Noun**

In general circulation amongst "hop scotchers." The iron truck braces under a passenger coach, running at right angles to the length of the car. A "ROD DUCAT" is a small board used as a seat by truck riders.

## **ROLL, Verb**

General usage. To search the pockets of a sleeping person or of an intoxicated one. Example: "He rolled a stiff for a bundle of scratch." Used as a noun "ROLL" signifies a wad of money, as a "BANK ROLL."

## **ROSCOE, Noun**

Current amongst arms-carrying criminals. A revolver. See "CANNON;" "GAT." Example: "Stash your roscoe before you come back to the kip."

## **ROUND, Noun**

General currency. A turning of the head to take a backward glance; surveying the rear trail to ascertain whether or not one is being followed, or to determine the identity of a person or object passed. Example: "Stall something to the ground and take a round at this coat-maker;" (trailer or tailer, corrupted to tailor and thence coatmaker).

## **ROUST, Verb**

Current amongst pickpockets. To jam against a victim in a violent manner; to squeeze a victim between two pickpocket assistants in a way to distract his attention from the principal in the encounter who consecutaneously extracts the victim's valuables from a given pocket. In the present tense the term is used in the imperative mood, being a command and an instruction of itself. Example: "Roust!!" "Jostle the victim rudely, but in a seemingly unconscious manner."

## **ROUTE, Verb**

Current amongst pickpockets principally. To look up and make memoranda of dates of large popular gatherings, such as conventions, etc. This is known as "Routing the grift." To route is usually the function of the best mind in a "gun mob."

**RUM, Noun**

General currency. An ignoramus; an inefficient. Derived from the experience that "booze" incapacitates the mind of a crook, who to be successful requires a quick wit and a vigilant grasp of situations. A synonym for "RUM DUM," that is, dumb, of slow wit, from the use of rum.

**RUMBLE, Noun**

General currency. A botch that precipitates discovery; a faux pas; an awkward situation brought about by fumbling. See "BLOOMER;" "TUMBLE;" "FALL." Example: "If you walk on the main stem with him you'll get a rumble." In this sense the term implies an identification. Also used as a verb, to arouse suspicion; to be discovered.

**SANTA CLAUS, Noun**

General currency. An ingenious mind; an original thinker.

**SAPS, Noun**

General currency. Crutches; clubs or sticks as weapons of offense. Derived from "sapling." The latter meaning may also be employed in the form of the verb, to sap, to beat. Any bludgeon is a sap.

**SCAT, Noun**

General circulation. Whiskey. Derived by suggestion from "skey" (skee), the termination of "whiskey."

**SCOFF, Verb**

General usage. To eat. Example: "When do we scoff in this dump?" Also used as a noun; a "scoff" is a meal, a feed.

## **SCORE, Verb**

Current amongst pickpockets and criminals who are necessitated to make frequent repetitions of procedure to acquire means. To successfully negotiate; to "make a touch;" to "put one over. Example: "We scored seven times in the same joint by ringing up," i. e., disguising. Also used as a noun in the same sense.

## **SCRATCH, Noun**

General currency amongst literate criminals. Paper currency; a letter; a signature; a writing. Examples: "He's got a bundle of scratch," (Bank roll); "The only way you can get a knock-down (introduction) is with a scratch." "The difficult thing is to get his scratch." See "JOHN HANCOCK;" "STIFF."

## **SCREW, Noun**

General currency amongst prison habitues and prowlers. A key; a turnkey or jailor; a prison guard. Example: "That bunch of screws you're carrying is a knock." "You can get a letter in through the screw; he's a P. O."

## **SCENERIES, Noun**

General currency. A pair of spectacles or nose glasses. See "GLIMS;" "RINGERS." Example: "He's peddling sceneries and hoops."

## **SEND IN, Noun**

General circulation. An indorsement; a recommendation. Example: "With the proper send in I can twist this boob. Rib it up." Also used as a verb, to laud, to praise, with an ulterior motive.

**SETTLED, Verb, Past Part.**

General currency amongst outlaw criminals. Convicted of misdemeanor or statutory offense. Example: "He's settled for a two spot." See "LAGGED;" "LOSER."

**SHAGGED, Verb, Past Part.**

General currency. Identified; recognized; discovered; exposed. See "RAPPED." Example: "He was shagged on the first go."

**SHAKE DOWN, Noun**

General currency. A personal search; a deprivation of one's personal belongings. Used also as a verb. Example: "If this dick nails you you'll have to stand a shake down."

**SHILLIVER, SHILLIBER, Noun**

Current amongst criminals who employ "Stalls," "boosters," or aides. A supernumerary; a secondary; an epithet applied to apprentice crooks. To "SHILL" is to act in the capacity of a hired criminal.

**SHONIKER, Noun**

Current amongst cosmopolitan thieves, especially Jews. A neophyte or inexperienced hand at the game. A synonym for "SHILLIBER."

**SHOOT, Verb**

Current amongst hypodermic habitues. To inject morphine or other drug with a syringe. Example; "How many times do you shoot a day?"

## **SHOW, Verb**

General currency. To keep an appointment; to present oneself at a meeting place. Example: "This party can never be depended upon to show. He'll stick you nine times in ten."

## **SHORT, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst pickpockets, though used by all polished criminals to some extent. A street car. Derived from the limited extent of a street car ride compared with the distances negotiable by railroad transportation. Example: "After catching the breaks we'll make the shorts for a half hour."

## **SKIRT, Noun**

General currency. A woman. See "JANE;" "MUFF;" "MOLL."

## **SKIN, Noun**

General circulation. A shirt. Example: "Let's go down to the jungles and boil our skins."

## **SLAM, Noun**

General currency. An insult; a rebuke; an insinuation. Also used in the same sense as a verb as well as with the meaning of violence, to deliver a vigorous blow.

## **SLANG, Noun**

General currency. A watch chain. A watch fob, as well as an ear-ring, is called a "DANGLER."

## **SLOUGH, Verb**

General currency. To dispose of; to abandon; to throw away; to eliminate; to conceal without delay or forethought. Example: "There isn't a mark of identification on his clothes; he's sloughed everything." In this sense the term is pronounced "sluffed." In the sense of hiding or getting rid of an object instantly the same word is pronounced "slou," with the sound of "o" as in cow. To "SLOUGH" also means to close, to shut, as a door.

## **SLOUGHER, Noun**

Current amongst plunderbunders. A fence; a pawnbroker; a middle man in the disposition of contraband.

## **SLUM, Noun**

General currency. Jewelry of any description, but lately reduced in scope of meaning to include only the less valuable kinds of jewelry; a synonym for "CROW;" "PUNK." Example: "He's got a bale of slum for sloughings."

## **SMOKE WAGON, Noun**

General currency. A firearm; a revolver. See "ROD;" "CANNON."

## **SNEEZE, Verb**

General usage. To be apprehended; detained. See "GLOMMED;" "CRABBED." Example: "He wouldn't have been sneezed if he had kept away from that fluzie."

## **SNOW, Noun**

Current chiefly amongst cocaine fiends. Derived from the extremely flocculent nature of cocaine when pulverized, in which state cocaine is used as a snuff. A "SNOW BIRD" is the customary designation of the cocaine habitue.

## **SOFT, Noun**

Current amongst currency thieves and grafters who handle considerable sums of money. Paper money. See "SCRATCH." Example: "I fanned a gob of soft in the right jerve." As an adjective "soft" means easy, facile, felicitous, comfortable.

## **SOUP, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs. Nitroglycerine. Example: "If you drop that bottle of soup you'll grease the scenery," i. e., be blown up.

## **SOUTH, Adverb**

General circulation. Stored away; concealed, as valuables. See "UNDER COVER." As a verb the term is employed with the same meaning. Example: "Keep tabs and see that he don't go south with the dough."

## **SPLIT, Noun**

General currency. A division, as of spoils. See "END;" "BIT." Used as a verb it indicates to divide, as money; or to separate, as in the sense of "SPLIT OUT," or "SPLIT AWAY." Example: "The make was split three ways and then we split out."

### **SPUD, Noun**

Current amongst confidence men chiefly. The "green goods" bunco; a substitution ruse, devised originally on the basis of counterfeit currency, hence the name "SPUD," derived by attribution, as in the case of "KALE." Any confidence game in which currency plays a prominent part as a lure is aptly designated a variation of the "SPUD." Also commonly used as a synonym for the Irish potato.

### **SQUAB, Noun**

Current amongst libertines mainly. A young female; an unsophisticated girl.

### **SQUARE PLUG, Noun**

General currency. A timorous person who is in moral sympathy with the criminal element, but lacking the courage or inclination to actually participate; a harmless individual in the view of crooks. Example: "Don't be leery of him; he's a square plug."

### **SQUARE-SHOOTER, Noun**

General currency. A dependable person; a reliable, compact-keeping person; though not necessarily a moral, virtuous, impeccable one; for it is politic for even a crook to be a "square-shooter" provided it be also expedient.

### **SQUAWK, Noun**

General currency. A protest; a vociferous demonstration, as an indignant repudiation of an injustice. Also used as a verb in the same sense. Example: "If you don't put up a squawk they'll trim you."

## **SQUEEZE, Noun**

General circulation. The principal or manager of an institution, an establishment or of any undertaking. A contraction of the popular "MAIN SQUEEZE," meaning the same as here given.

## **STAB, Noun**

General currency. An essay to accomplish a project; an effort. See "PLUNGE." Also used as a verb. Example: "I don't know how it will come out, but I'm going to make a stab at it." Also used by dope fiends for "JAB."

## **STALL, Noun**

General currency. A pretense; an equivocation; a confederate who distracts the attention of a victim or misleads him to regrettable action. See "BOOSTER." Used as a verb in the same sense, to prevaricate, to misrepresent with sinister intent. The colloquial vernacular, "He's got more stalls than a livery stable," signifies that the person under discussion is a shifty agent, a colossal liar.

## **STASH, Verb**

General currency. To hide; to conceal; to cease talking; to "plant." Also used as a noun in the sense of something cached. Example: "Stash the gun crackin; there's a knocker in the push."

## **STIFF, Noun**

Current amongst literate criminals chiefly. A piece of paper; a letter; a ticket; a license; a permit. See "READER." Derived from the unpliant attribute of

paper in general. Example: "I haven't had a stiff from home for two months." Also used to designate a mean, contemptible person; sometimes it is employed as a synonym for man. See "GUY;" "MARK."

### **STIR, Noun**

General currency amongst prison habitues. Penitentiary; a synonym for "BIG HOUSE," the latter being employed in contradistinction to county jails, workhouses and police stations when prison is discussed. Example: "He's back in stir again."

### **STEM, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs. A steel drill. Amongst opium smokers the term signifies an opium pipe. See "GON-GER." It also is a synonym for "DRAG."

### **STRETCH, Noun**

Current amongst prison habitues. A prison sentence. See "LAG;" "BIT." In general circles the term signifies a look, a glance, used as a verb as well as a noun. See "GANDER;" "NECK;" "ROUND."

### **STIX, Noun**

General currency. A pair of crutches. See "SAPS."

### **STRIDES, Noun**

General usage. A pair of trousers. Example: "This dump is an easy boost for the strides."

### **STRING, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs. A fuse. Example: "He's got five yards of string around the midriff," i. e., wrapped around the waist under the shirt.

### **SUEY POW, Noun**

Current amongst opium smokers. A sponge or rag used to cool and cleanse the face of an opium bowl. Also used by the demi monde as an equivalent of the term "GRANNY."

### **SURE THING, Noun**

Current amongst confidence men and "flat joint" grafters principally. A something-for-nothing proposition. See "HUNDRED PER CENT." Used as an adjective it specifies an unmitigated robbery.

### **SWEETEN, Verb**

General currency. To augment; to "press" in the gambler's sense, as a jackpot. Amongst the plunderbund the term signifies the procuring of an additional loan on collateral. Also used as a synonym for "BRIBE."

### **SWINGING BALL, Noun**

Current amongst "flat joint" grafters. A ball suspended from a gibbet by a chain or string and which is skillfully swung at a wooden cone posited in the center of the ball's swinging area, the purpose being to avoid the cone on the forward movement, and to strike it upon the rebound. Incidentally the aim is to relieve the inexperienced of ready cash.

## **SWITCH, Verb**

General currency. To substitute; to exchange; to vary. Example: "The only way you can score with the weight in that joint is with the switch, as he has everything cased." Used as a noun to signify a substitute.

## **TAIL, Verb**

General circulation. To trail; to follow. Used as a noun in the same sense. Example: "Be careful not to bring anything home on your tail," i. e., a shadower.

## **TENT, Noun**

Current amongst prison habitues. A cell. Example: "He's doing penance in a tent."

## **THERE, Adverb**

General currency. Informed; wise; trained; artful. Example: "He's there forty ways from Revelation."

## **THIMBLE, Noun**

General currency. A watch. See "BLOCK;" "TURNIP." Formerly the term in the plural had the signification of "NUTS;" "HICKS;" "SHELLS;" as these are in use today.

## **TIN EAR, Verb**

General usage. To eavesdrop; to listen impertinently. Also used as a noun. Example: "Chop the wheeze, we've got a tin-ear on our hip."

**TIP, Noun**

Pickpockets. A ticket office. The place where obligations are paid to a cashier.

**TOG, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. An overcoat used for a shield. From Latin "Toga," a cloak.

**TOMMY, Noun**

General currency amongst the licentious. A prostitute. See "DONY."

**TOOL, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. A pickpocket proper; the member of a "gun mob" who does the "dipping." Also used as a verb in the same sense.

**TOP, Verb**

General currency. To execute by hanging. See "BUMP OFF." Example: "Carrying a rod is an invitation to get topped."

**TOUCH, Noun**

Current mainly amongst pickpockets, though used in a milder sense in general circles. See "SCORE." Example: "Any fink that tears into that tip without making a touch ought to be canned." "He tried to put the B. on me for the third touch this week."

## **TRIBE, Noun**

Used principally by yeggs and begging bums, though current, too, amongst grafters who operate in cliques. A gang; a class. Example: "You'll find the tribe at the joint when you get there."

## **TRIM, Verb**

General currency. To fleece; to cheat; to rob in any manner. Example: "If you make a flash you're due to get trimmed."

## **TUMBLE, Noun**

General currency. A discovery; an exposure. See "RUMBLE." Example: "It's a bad idea to work without fall dough, for it's a ten-to-one jig on the first tumble." Used as a verb in the same sense, as well as to signify acquiring understanding suddenly.

## **TURKEY, Noun**

General usage. A suit case; a large traveling bag. Derived by suggestion from the popular custom of stuffing a trunk full of personal belongings into a suit case. In noncriminal circles, as well as in criminal, the term has a vague meaning of facileness, something easily or readily accomplished.

## **TURNIP, Noun**

General currency. A pocket time piece; a watch. See "BLOCK."

**TWEEZER, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. A small pocket-book with knob clasps.

**TWISTED, Verb, Past Part.**

Current amongst confidence men. To be buncoed; to be deluded by a confidential snare. Derived by suggestion from the confusion created in the understanding of a victim in the usual confidence game. See "TRIM." Example: "Out of six plays we twisted five ripe ones."

**UNDER COVER, Adverb**

General currency. Protected financially by a reserve held in secret; selfish; miserly; illiberal with wealth. See "SOUTH." Example: "Anybody in this mob that's under cover is running chances of being prowled."

**UNDERNEATH, Adverb**

Current amongst shoplifters. A term used to describe the most common method employed by female shoplifters of concealing stolen goods; i. e., carried between the limbs. Example: "Se can go underneath with a bigger bunch of junk than any other moll I know."

**UNLOADING, Verb, Present Part.**

Current amongst pickpockets. Picking pockets in a crowd as passengers alight from street or railroad cars. Example: "We scored more pokes in unloading them than we did in the breaks."

### **WEAVE, Verb**

Current amongst pickpockets. To sway a victim rudely from right to left between two "stalls" so that the "claw" may operate without detection of finger contact. Example: "Weave! I've got a tight breech," i. e., "jostle the victim, I have got my hand on a pocket book that is wedged too firmly in the pocket to be pulled out without the aid of distraction."

### **WEIGHT, Noun**

Used by store jewelry thieves. Pennyweighting; the "pwt."

### **WELCH, Verb**

Current in all circles. To betray a professional confidence; to peach; to protest. See "ROAR." Example: "Unless you're nailed bang to rights don't welch, for the first principle of self-defense in law is to make the other fellow find out what he wants to know through some one else."

### **WHITE, Noun**

Current amongst morphine habitues. Morphine. Example: "How many times a day are you shooting the white?"

### **WEED, Verb**

Current chiefly amongst pickpockets, though used to some extent by those who are familiar with currency. To extract any fraction from a roll of bills; to withdraw a partial sum from the principal; to take the essential and leave the nonessential, as the money from a pocketbook of miscellaneous valuables; to steal a sum which will hardly be missed because of its proportion to the whole amount involved. Examples: "Weed the poke and put it back." "He weeded a sawbuck to me under the table."

### **WHITE LINE, WHITE LIME, Noun**

Current amongst yeggs and hoboes. Alcohol. Example: "You'll have to go to the croker and get a stiff for the white line."

### **WICKY, Noun**

General circulation. Calaboose; place of detention in small towns and villages. Contraction from "WICKY UP," an old term for a small tent, used by the Indians.

### **WIPE, Noun**

General currency. A handkerchief.

### **WIRE, Noun**

Current amongst pickpockets. The principal craftsman in a "gun mob." See "CLAW;" "JERVE;" "TOOL."

### **WOLF, Verb**

General currency. To vehemently protest. See "SQUAWK."

### **WOP, Noun**

Used principally in the east. An ignorant person; a foreigner; an impossible character. See "BOOB." Example: "You couldn't find a jitney with a search warrant in this bunch of wops."

### **WORM, Noun**

Current amongst shoplifters. Silk; a bolt of silk. Example: "Can you swing under with a worm?"

**YEGG, Noun**

General currency. A desperate criminal of the least gregarious and social type; a thieving tramp.

**YEN HOCK, Noun**

Current amongst opium smokers and other dope fiends. The slender steel needle used for preparing opium pills over a lamp flame. Used also as a metaphorical adjective to describe any slender object, as a lean person. Example: "Ask the yen hock guinea to stake you to a glim."

**YEN SHE, Noun**

Current amongst opium smokers. The residue of smoked opium, a black cindery substance which clings to the interior of an opium bowl after the opium has been melted by heat on the face of the bowl.

**YEN YEN, Noun**

Current amongst opium smokers. The recurrent relaxation from super exhilaration occasioned by habitual indulgence in any opiate; these three latter terms are pure Chinese, and were imported into criminal circles with the advent of addiction to the opium-smoking habit in the United States in the early seventies.



## Suggestions for the Reduction of Preventable Crimes

It must be apparent, to all who have given more than a passing thought to the relation between the criminal classes and the law and order departments of our government, that the peace officers to whom the public looks for protection can do but little more than apprehend criminals after they have committed crimes. For, although the modern system of identification, including the arts of photography, physical measurements and record of finger prints together with a biographical sketch of the suspect or convict, enables the police to locate a known criminal and to frequently determine the probable identity of an unknown who committed a crime from the more or less faithful description furnished by the victim, it is understood only too well that personal knowledge in possession of the peace officers concerning the criminal propensities of a given individual is not sufficient warrant before a trial court to justify the imprisonment of the criminal; and, furthermore, the readiness of venal counsel to plead the cause of guilty persons for a consideration is another insurmountable obstacle to the safeguarding of society against the depredations of the vicious classes who entertain such high respect for their freedom of choice in moral matters that they decline to sell it for bread.

In short, the point sought to be brought out forcibly is that property holders are depending entirely too much upon the police for protection and too little upon themselves. If the prevention of crime be possible then it rests as much with the

prospective victims to prevent it as it does with the guardians of peace, seeing the latter number scarcely more than one to the thousand of our population and cannot be everywhere at the same moment of time.

There is one practical method for successfully combatting stealth and deceit, and its keynote is awareness. The local department of safety has no bureau of publicity through whose functions the whole public may be educated in the latest schemes for obtaining money and valuables by false pretense, stealth and force, as well as apprised of the presence in the community of this, that or the other well-known confidence crook, sneak or robber. Just as the fire department is but partially efficient in preventing fires and is necessarily devoted to their suppression after they have come into existence, so the police must often await the call for help from the thief's victim before they may take action. This is not always the case, of course, as in critical times of crime epidemic, or upon the threatened approach of criminal action, or in cases of exposed conspiracy, all the potential as well as actual criminals in the community may be rounded up and detained by operation of the vagrancy act. However, even in times of ordinary or seeming quietude the total amount of losses suffered by the public and which are never accounted for satisfactorily makes a staggering sum. All losses are not discovered at once; of those that are all are not reported to the police; whilst of the reported losses only a fraction are ever recovered.

Many victims of the criminal classes prefer for one reason or another not to let their losses come to light. One reason is lack of confidence in the capability of the police to apprehend the criminal or recover the loss, and this feeling is often held unjustly, arising out of the failure of the victim to recognize the fact that police are no more omniscient or omnipotent than other men, but labor under quite as rigid limitations as do the victims of the criminals.

It devolves, therefore, upon the public at large to cooperate as far as possible with the peace officers in preventing crime by the adoption of self-protective measures, not measures of violence, but of self-education in the methods of crime and of elimination of such glaring opportunities as constitute a standing invitation to the morally weak and irresponsible to help themselves to whatever is not nailed down, sewed up in a bag, or too hot or of too high speed. The average citizen disdains to inquire into the modes of the criminal element; it is so sordid! Besides, he hires the policeman to do this dirty work for him. It is the policeman's business to rake in the muck and to get himself slaughtered, if need be, in return for the ninety dollars per month which the citizen pays him. Again, Mr. Citizen is asleep at the switch regarding self-protection until he suffers a loss, or he may have to suffer a great many losses before he awakens to the realization that he as well as the policeman has a certain part to play in the maintenance of public security.

The United States Supreme Court has held that it devolves upon a plaintiff to secure himself against fraud through altered bank checks by the personal use of the most approved devices which insure protection. Suppose this same principle were applied to every merchant in the protection of his goods against theft; to every automobile owner; to every individual who carries money on his person; to every householder who carelessly leaves vulnerable points to the watchfulness of Providence; to the credulous people who fall easy victims to the wiles of confidence men of a hundred schemes? Of course, there is no danger that the principle will be applied except by the Supreme Court of your personal conscience after you have looked the issue squarely in the face. Then you may come to the reduction of preventable crimes, whose solution rests upon a due recognition of carelessness and ignorance as the chief factors. Non-preventable crimes occur by reason of public impotence, both physical and mental. When your pocket is

picked it is because of your ignorance; or if you were previously aware of the pickpockets' methods then your loss is to be ascribed to carelessness. You wouldn't dare put your hand into a lion's mouth because you are afraid he will bite it. You know a pickpocket will put his hand in your pocket and yet you are foolhardy enough to carry valuables in accessible depositories.

The grand combination of popular attractions staged in all the cities of the Pacific Coast for the year 1915 will act as a powerful magnet to draw thither numerous criminals of almost every profession for the purpose of thriving upon the ignorant, the careless and the unprotected. They will operate upon the visitors and the natives with equal avidity and daring. Their ranks will be made up mainly of the cleverest members of their crafts; and as it will cost them a considerable outlay to come it is a foregone conclusion that they will come with a keener view to business than to pleasure. A few of them will inevitably fall into the clutches of the law; more, however, will probably be fortunate enough to get back to their native habitat laden with the spoils of adventure, whilst a percentage of the whole number may be expected, and reasonably, to fall by the wayside and thenceforth for an indefinite season be compelled to cast in their lot with the home talent and ply their trades in the principal coast cities. Every cosmopolitan law and order bureau will delegate representatives to the big celebrations to co-operate with local officials in identifying and apprehending pedigreed malefactors; still, a liberal estimate of the ratio of arrests to crimes will probably be one in every ten. Whilst the virtuous hold lawful carnival during the coming year the vicious will prosper.

There's an old saying, "Three meals missed makes a possible thief and six meals missed makes a possible murderer." More to the point, though, is the saying, "Eternal vigilance is the price of security." Very little stealing occurs in well-regulated banks, jewelry stores and corporation counting

houses, with the unavoidable exceptions of crimes by superior force or internal disloyalty, for the simple but signal reason that methods of awareness are in vogue there. This was not always so; for they had to learn awareness in the school of cold, hard facts, having been "bumped" and "twisted" and "turned" and "flimmed" and "gyped" times innumerable before they learned the value of precaution, self-defense.

There are two places from which a thief will not steal: where there is nothing attainable and where the possessors of the attainable are as wise and ready in self-defense as the thief himself. The eternal struggle to attain goods is not more strenuous than the battle to hold them. For, whilst possession is nine points of the law, dispossession is such an easy achievement with one professional despoiler in every thousand of our population that it behooves everyone in whose education this fundamental element of self-protection has been too sadly neglected to polish up his wit now and then by taking stock of what the bold criminal may do in the way of seizing opportunities. The self-reliant may not be frightened, yet it is not the purpose to frighten even the timid; it is, nevertheless, the duty of every citizen to pay heed to timely warning on the subject of preventable crime not alone that he may protect himself but likewise contribute to the protection of the weaker by removing as much of temptation from the path of the criminally inclined as is found to be practical and consistent with general commerce and the open enjoyment of honestly acquired wealth.

In this regard consider that twenty years and less ago jewelers all over this land, with very rare exceptions, were as easy prey to the pennyweighters, or diamond and jewelry thieves, as the burial mounds or "huacas" of the Incas with their fabulous treasure in gold ornaments and bullion were to Pizzaro and his free booters. Such was the lack of self-protection in the system of display employed by the jewelers in the recent past that anyone with the desire and temerity

could help himself out of trays in which gold ornamented with diamonds and other precious stones was heaped indiscriminately in such wise as to render detection of loss out of the question on the instant. Through the organized efforts of the jewelers and opticians, by means of their trade review, all this loose carelessness was wiped out, precision and order in display and necessary changes in fixtures were adopted; a system of surveillance and nation-wide reports on criminal developments were carried out methodically, until today it is a very infrequent occurrence for a capably managed jewelry store to suffer loss except by robbery through violence or by disloyalty of employees. And jewelers themselves are not the sole beneficiaries of this new order of self protection; they have almost totally denied to the sneak thief the opportunity, or temptation, of replenishing a depleted subsistence fund.

What they have done for jewelers the banks, aided by the inventive genius of the Todds and the Burns Detective Agency, are doing for savings fund and commercial bank depositors. The fraudulent issuance and alteration of bank paper has assumed enormous proportions in recent years, but by the operation of protective measures this resource of the lawless will soon be entirely cut off.

The evolution of the small merchandising business into great department stores has proved another fruitful source for both the early schooling and continued support of petty and grand sneak thieves by the irrepressible display of unprotected goods. The eagerness to sell lays the managers open not only to personal loss, which must eventually be charged off to advertising or some other item of overhead costs, but also to widespread community loss by the activities of the successful thieves outside the department store. In proportionate measure nearly every storekeeper who openly displays small or compact and valuable merchandise is contributing to the temptation of first-timers and to the required opportunities of the professional thief and the kleptomaniac. When confronted with this truth

storekeepers shrug their shoulders as though they are between the horns of a dilemma and say, "We set our goods out for people to buy, not to steal," unmindful of the fact that of thieves in general some are born so, some become so by surrounding circumstances, whilst every son of Adam is a potential thief. You may deny this with as much vehemence as you care to expend in protest against the aspersion of perfectly honest people, but if you know the hidden workings of the human mind you must pause when you reflect that hope, the well spring of ambition, is a variable in every personality at different times, and when it, hope, reaches the maximum intensity it becomes avarice. And with avarice goes the power of lying, mendacity in word or action or both. Hence the above truth. For, a liar will deceive, and larceny is but a degree of deceit. And once capable of lying the particular manifestation of larceny is but a question of congenital talent or combination of talents. But to get back to the subject of preventable crimes.

Admitting that only a small proportion of crimes against property are preventable (and in these suggestions for the reduction of preventable crime only the crimes against property are being given consideration), when we come to deal in aggregate losses, say annual ones, whatever proportion may be prevented, by the timely dissemination of helpful information upon this subject, should be recognized as a definite gain. During this unusually active year the total losses to be inflicted upon the fixed and floating population will undoubtedly run into five and maybe six figures.

Of the dozen unorganized guilds of professional criminals enumerated in the introduction to the Vocabulary the most to be feared and guarded against are burglars, sneak thieves, merchandise thieves, forgers, utterers of false paper, confidence men, pickpockets and thieves who threaten violence. Of these the burglar and the robber who uses weapons as an aide are the most difficult to deal with. Their suppression is almost

impossible, yet their partial defeat may be confidently hoped for by the increased watchfulness of the peace officers, aided by the greater prudence of householders and prospective victims in general.

What was said about banks, jewelry and specialty merchandise dealers applies with equal pertinence to householders and others who offer promising occasions for the application of the burglar's skill. Ordinary locks offer little protection against the burglar's master keys, jimmy and other tools of forcible or surreptitious entry; yet the greater secretion of valuables may prove an effective remedy against casual loss. Still, the best advice available for protection against this sort of loss may be laughed to scorn by the clandestine act of a desperate or determined criminal.

But of sneak stealing in stores much relief may be had by a sane regard for safety in display. Valuables should not be placed within reach of every ostensible patron, neither on top of counters and show-cases nor in end show-cases nor in unprotected windows. If show-cases are so narrow as to admit of access from the outside, in front, by reaching across, they should be kept locked. The same with all end show-cases, where free passage to their rears may be had. The merchant who violates these modern canons of commercial prudence not only assumes personal risk but he abets the thief and is a source of danger to others.

In department store prudence these same observations hold good, and what is more important every clerk should be trained as thoroughly in the protection of the goods submitted to his care as he is in the execution of common exchange formalities. No goods should be shown any customer without mental inventory of the number of separate displays, so that accurate account may be constantly kept of them, and when the fancy or demands of the customer are not satisfied with an accumulation of goods which is assuming proportions too difficult to inventory in a spontaneous summary they, or at least a part

of them, should be removed. Goods should not be left upon display while the clerk withdraws his presence in search of other samples. The secret of the successful store thief consists in his ability to obtain a confusion of displays and then send the clerk for an article which lies at some distance. The over-polite clerk or shop-keeper may at first object that he cannot afford to be discourteous, disrespectful, suspicious, gingerly or risk wounding the susceptibilities of a patron. This objection would have greater weight in a drawing room or at some function where politeness is on trial; in business it counts for far less than safety.

Observe the presence of mind of your jeweler when he finds it necessary to go in search of other displays. He knows it might prove fatal once in a hundred times to leave a stranger in undisputed possession of a tray of valuables, for even though he has them so arranged in geometrical formation as to detect an abstraction he is aware that a substitution might be made in the flash of an eye and thus wipe out the profits accruing from the previous ninety-nine customers who inspected his goods. No, he feels that business can dispense with the urbane conventions, and he avoids possible loss from this source of ever-present danger, as the veriest tyro of either sex and any age possessed of inordinate desire could easily help him or herself whilst the clerk's back is turned.

When store sneaks operate in pairs or threes one, or in the latter case perhaps two, of the number assumes the attitude of purchaser whilst the seemingly indifferent companion or companions plot to secrete goods. It is generally considered the duty of a floor or department manager to keep a lookout for such seemingly unoccupied companions of purchasers, yet it would be a profitable investment of time and pains to instruct each and every clerk in the simple rules of protection. An incentive, such as a bonus or promotion, should be held out as an extra inducement to clerks to prevent thefts. Loss sustained through internal peculations is, of course, a constant

annoyance, not so much on account of actualities as on account of possibilities. In well-regulated establishments where no employee may enter the display rooms with hat, package, umbrella, coat or wrap, and can therefore carry none away, the chief losses by dishonest employees are those of such small articles as may be hidden on the person. There still remains the avenue of secret transfer of the store's property to friends of the clerks who may carry the same away in bags, suit cases or in packages wrapped in paper imported into the store by the clerk's confederate. However, such cases do not come up frequently and are very difficult of avoidance except by means of daily or weekly inventories and an exhaustive knowledge of the employee's previous character and associates, which is an almost superhuman problem.

Clerks in all stores should be warned to scrutinize, not impertinently, all strangers carrying packages of bulk, boxes, traveling bags, umbrellas unfurled and loose or heavy wraps, whether worn or carried on the arm, as these all afford means for secreting goods. Yet if the few previous suggestions are observed no goods may be extracted from a special display, though the fixed and open displays do afford opportunities for the use of these sneak thief aides. Dangerous or professional store thieves thrive not on trifling articles, but upon the more valuable lines of merchandise, such as silks in bolts, articles of silk manufacture, furs, leather goods, art works, jewelry, wearing apparel, millinery and dress trimmings. Such goods should be removed as far as possible from exits.

In smaller establishments these same rules for security should be carefully carried out.

The stupendous losses suffered by business men of every class from the operations of forgers and utterers of false paper could be materially lessened if not wholly stamped out were obliging business men to adopt the commonest measure in vogue in the telegraph offices, express offices, postoffices and banks throughout the country—that of absolutely refusing to

cash paper of any variety for unidentified strangers. The strict enforcement of this principle might sacrifice trade for a time but it would save loss and eventually when all reputable business houses by mutual agreement honor the observance the obtaining of money by false pretenses with paper as collateral would be impossible. Whoever writes a check or draft or signs a note or other negotiable instrument unrecorded without protecting the same by the most modern methods is foolishly laying himself liable as well as contributing to the loss of other individuals. Whoever thoughtlessly leaves his check book in accessible places incurs the jeopardy of community and personal loss, seeing that "paper hangers" are vigilant in the search for these. A locked desk drawer is not sufficient protection as a "jimmy" will pry open any furniture lock.

As for confidence men, that satirical old saying "There's a new sucker born every minute" is so true that the task of educating them all to the folly of entertaining get-rich-schemes is quite beyond the power of even a wise man. The shortest and safest rule for self protection against misrepresentation is "Don't do it in a hurry." Take your time; if the proposition is good it will keep for a day or so; besides it will bear full investigation. If you are considering the investment of any sum of money in somebody's else scheme don't be too proud or stubborn to seek the advice of a man of large affairs and unquestioned integrity—your banker, for instance, or your legal adviser. If you have no relations with either of these professions consult your friend. Anyway, take it easy, take it easy and don't swallow the hook at one gulp. This will be especially difficult to avoid if your cupidity be aroused, provided, of course, you be burdened with such excess emotional baggage. If you make wagers with strangers or casual acquaintances you are a candidate for the mourner's bench, and sometimes all your regrets and the best efforts of the police are of no avail to bring back a single dollar of your loss. You simply pay so much money for so little experience, which may be likened to a mule's kick, not being worth anything when acquired.

As for pickpockets know these things: If you must carry money on your person carry it in an inside vest pocket, or nearer in yet if possible. And don't keep your hand on it, nor feel of it every once in a while to see if it is still there, lest a pickpocket observe your concern is solicitous and shortly cause you to learn that it is not there but elsewhere; just where no man may be able to inform you.

Avoid crowds if you carry money on your person and do not be too eager in the press when boarding or alighting from street cars, when leaving a theatre or other public gathering, or when seeking a vantage point at a fire or other unusual spectacle. For it is in these places that they do it. It may be your house rent, or your entire savings, or your employer's or your friend's money that you are carrying, but if you must carry money don't exhibit it nor get in a jamb. If you observe these suggestions the only opportunity the pickpocket will find to relieve you of valuables will be when you are intoxicated or hypnotized. Women who carry money in a hand purse or bag on the street, especially at night or in crowded places, run an even greater risk of loss than do men, for there are ten amateur pickpockets, maybe a score, to every one who by practice has acquired the skill necessary to extract valuables from the person, and the amateurs operate on women chiefly, finding little difficulty in opening a hand bag and extracting a purse therefrom in a jamb. The fairs and carnivals on the Pacific Coast in 1915 will call many of these gentry from the East.

Greater familiarity with the ways of criminals could be acquired if the department of public safety were provided with the means for organizing and maintaining a publicity bureau whose operatives should be charged with the duties of developing measures for preventing crime by circulating all the information available upon the subject. Against this proposal will be offered the objection that too many are already familiar with criminal methods. On the contrary, though, the fact of the matter is that too few are prepared by foreknowl-

edge of the proper means for defeating the propagation of criminal actions.

The present system maintained by each community leans more toward a cleansing of the locality of criminals by "floating" them off to another locality than it does toward either prevention or permanent suppression of criminals. These delinquent ones are as much the nation's wards as are the hundred-odd thousand dependent Indians or the insane. While a great step in advance of old customs has been taken by the adoption of the indeterminate sentence law, so long as the individual who has repeatedly demonstrated his propensities for moral obliquity is merely restrained and not improved both physically and intellectually just that long will he continue to be a thorn in the side of law-abiding society. And he will not be improved until you demand that he shall. When a man's principles and actions square with each other you are impotent to convince him of his wrongness and your rightness; and if punishment, the punishment of confinement, cannot awaken a higher feeling of responsibility in the convict how can you hope to eradicate his evil by hiding it from your sight, by consigning him to a living limbo? This accusation against society's present methods could not be made without fear of refutation if it could be shown that the ratio of criminals to population has diminished in the past fifty years. But it has increased rather than diminished, which points out the fact that there is a palpable flaw in the system of apprehending, convicting and imprisoning criminals at such tremendous expense. A sincerer effort must be made to lift up the delinquent if lasting good is to come from our peace measures within the house.

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