

We think that this letter from so eminent an authority should be of great value, and should enable our readers to arrive at a definite decision on this matter. It would have been well if the Government had stepped in at the beginning, as we urged, and made a thorough investigation.

THE MAKING OF CRIMINALS.

This is a subject of vast inductions and has engaged the time and thought of many distinguished students of psychology. Of recent years there has been a great wave of crime in Europe, Canada and the United States. The conditions in Russia are most alarming, and if we had the real facts at hand, they are no doubt very bad in Germany. In France since the cessation of the war there has been a very heavy wave of crime. We are all familiar with the condition in this regard on this continent.

Now, one asks, why? This is an easy question to put, but by no means an easy one to answer. In the first place a certain number of persons have an unstable nervous organization. So long as things are going on in a normal way, they may maintain their mental equilibrium, and their conduct pass muster. But there have been a number of circumstances during the past few years that have been active in the way of unsettling those of a faulty nervous organization.

Among the influences operating towards the production of criminals one must place the motor car. There is a strong temptation to take a car and go joy riding. Those in the stolen car can go a long distance to where they are not known, and in a short space of time. The stealing of the car may be the first step to losing moral control in the case of those who do the act. The pleasure of the ride with company, usually bad, leads to an effort to repeat the theft, and so the habit grows. The end is disaster, as other forms of crime follow.

With regard to the moving picture theatres there can be no doubt any longer that they may be good or bad. There is a strong desire for the "thriller," and far too often, in compliance with this desire, the film proves a real "thriller." There is burglary, the "hold up," the train-wrecking, the shooting, the throttling, and such like. All this works on the young mind, which is all too easily inflamed. Some of the less balanced spectators think it would be fine sport to "stage" what they saw on their own account. Things are improving, but on this continent there has been much damage done to the minds of our youth through the agency of the "movie" staging the "thriller."