

"Social Outlook in Police Service"

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CRIME AND the criminal constitute a social problem which although allied with every other social problem can only be solved through well-directed determined police and social effort. Crime is a destroying influence which inflicts more useless suffering than any other social evil upon many innocent, well-deserving and hard-working individuals. The criminal, who descends from a good home into a life of crime, brings to his family a stigma which is almost unbearable and, under the burden, the family life is broken.

There are other sufferers. For instance, a short time ago the papers were filled with news of the Labatt abduction. The sufferings of the Labatt family were brought forcibly before the public eyes. Everyone shared with Mrs. Labatt her anxiety for a husband, perhaps in torture, perhaps dead. Again last autumn there was the Copp Murder. The daily press was filled with news of this sad case and I think that I may say the Citizens of Toronto were never so stirred with compassion over any injustice, or any wrong that has been committed, as they were for the Copp family at that time. The Copp family and the community of Toronto were deprived of a young life that had every promise of distinction. Then a few years ago there was the Lindbergh Kidnapping and the sympathy of the world was stirred for the famous Lindbergh family and everyone followed with interest the sadness that had befallen them. The Labatts, the Cops, the Lindberghs, know the cruelty of the criminal. In these cases severe suffering was inflicted on innocent persons. The suffering that these families have endured is by no means exceptional—crime always leaves a trail of suffering. Whenever a murder is committed, some family circle is plunged into grief such as the Copp family had to endure; whenever an abduction is committed there is suffering for the abducted and anxiety for family and friends; whenever robbery is committed some innocent person or persons are deprived of their well-earned savings. And thus through all the category of crime there follows a trail of suffering.

Sometimes the police officer is considered hard-hearted by the well meaning citizen but really his desire in prosecuting a criminal is for the purpose of preventing more crime and more suffering and in so doing preserving organized society. Untimely sympathy for the criminal who has not served his sentence often defeats the ends of justice without conferring any benefit on the criminal. Our sympathy for the criminal must not be allowed to overshadow our sympathy for the victim of his crime nor prevent us from upholding and supporting a high standard of law enforcement. In combatting crime we are assisting in every other type of social endeavour. When we curb the criminal tendency we prepare the ground for the social worker to cultivate the fulfilment of cleanliness and health. In return the social worker prevents the development of many an embryo criminal. Whenever