

THE
Catholic World



A
MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OF
GENERAL LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

VOL. CXVI.

JANUARY, 1923.

No. 694.

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PUBLISHED BY

THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE IN
THE STATE OF NEW YORK
(The Paullist Fathers)

New York:

THE OFFICE OF THE CATHOLIC WORLD,
120-122 West 60th Street.

Price, 40 Cents—\$4.00 Per Year

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Entered as second class matter July 8, 1879, at the post office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized October 9, 1918.

CRIME: ITS CAUSE AND TREATMENT. By Clarence Darrow.

New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. \$2.50.

The keynote of this book is to be found in the concluding paragraph of the preface: "I am aware that, scientifically, the words 'crime' and 'criminal' should not be used. These words are associated with the idea of uncaused and voluntary action." Mr. Darrow does not believe in free will, and is quite sure that any person placed under certain circumstances could commit any crime. The concluding sentence of his chapter on "Homicide" is: "But beyond doubt all persons are potential murderers, needing only time and circumstances, and a sufficiently overwhelming emotion that will triumph over the weak restraints that education and habit have built up, to control the powerful surging instincts and feelings that Nature has laid at the foundation of life."

Unfortunately, Mr. Darrow fails to realize that there is some-

thing divine in the majority of men, and his book is likely to do a great deal of harm among those with criminal, or as he prefers to call them, unsocial tendencies. In his chapter on "Remedies," he begins by saying: "All investigations have arrived at the result that crime is due to causes; that man is either not morally responsible or responsible only to a slight degree." A little later, he suggests that "the first thing necessary to lessen crime . . . is a change of public opinion as to human responsibility." This is exactly the sort of teaching that will confirm the criminal in his unsocial career. He is not responsible, he cannot help it; why then should he try to repress any tendencies that he has?

Mr. Darrow's book, on the other hand, is a very valuable contribution to current criminology, inasmuch as it comes from a man who knows prisoners from their standpoint; he has been, for forty years, a criminal lawyer. It is true that about one in five or six of the so-called criminals are really irresponsible, and should not be punished. Punishment will do them no good, and very often harm. The remaining four or five, however, are just like the rest of us, only they have, as Osborne says, gone wrong. Opportunity does not make the thief, lack of restraint and self-control does. It is for normal individuals, who follow the path of least resistance and go wrong, that our laws are made.

Who will not agree with Mr. Darrow, however, in the declaration that "life should be made easier for the great mass from which the criminal is ever coming? As far as experience and logic can prove anything, it is certain that every improvement in environment will lessen crime."