Criminal Is a Defective, but Not a Type: Conclusions from Biometrical Study of 3,000 British Convicts Discredit Lombroso's Theory and Minimize the Influence of Environment

By WALTER LITTLEFIELD.

Conclusions which will appear in revolutionary light to the criminologists of the Lombrosian school—those who believe in a "criminal type"—and may tend to jar cherished preconceptions of philanthropists who believe that the criminal is merely a creature of environment, are embodied in a work which has just been issued by the British Government. It is called "The English Convict: A Statistical Study by the Late Dr. Charles Goring, Deputy Medical Officer of His Majesty's Prison Service."

Presenting what seems to be the most complete first hand scientific study of the criminal that exists in any language, it goes a long way toward proving that there is no "criminal type," and that crime is not the inevitable result of specific traits of the criminal that would endure under all circumstances of environment. Such traits, if they exist, are so rare that a sample of criminals would not show their effects in any one crime and would be as likely to be found in the noncriminal population as it would be to be found in the noncriminal population.

His statistics deal with convicted criminals, the only trustworthy material, but he admits that the consequences of physiological and mental defects must appear in other occupations as well as in crime. Such defectsiveness, therefore, presupposes failure in all occupations, but not necessarily in one. Such defectsiveness, therefore, presupposes failure in all occupations, but not necessarily in one.

Further, the statistics have been compiled with care to show the difference between the crimes of criminals and noncriminals and the statistical data show the difference between the crimes of criminals and noncriminals. This is the principal conclusion of the Lombroso's theory of criminality. This is the principal conclusion of the Lombroso's theory of criminality. This is the principal conclusion of the Lombroso's theory of criminality. This is the principal conclusion of the Lombroso's theory of criminality.