

**WHY CRIME
DOES NOT PAY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649733552

Why Crime Does Not Pay by Sophie Lyons

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
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SOPHIE LYONS

**WHY CRIME
DOES NOT PAY**



Yours Truly
Daphnia Lyard.

WHY CRIME DOES NOT PAY.

BY

SOPHIE LYONS

Queen of the Underworld.



NEW YORK
J. S. OGILVIE PUBLISHING CO.
57 Rose Street

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INTRODUCTION

The publishers believe that a picture of life sketched by a master hand—somebody who stands in the world of crime as Edison does in his field or as Morgan and Rockefeller do in theirs—could not fail to be impressive and valuable and prove the oft repeated statement that crime does not pay.

Such a person is Sophie Lyons, the most remarkable and the greatest criminal of modern times. This extraordinary woman is herself a striking evidence that crime does not pay and that the same energy and brains exerted in honest endeavor win enduring wealth and respectability. She has abandoned her earlier career and has lately accumulated a fortune of half a million dollars, honestly acquired by her own unaided business ability.

Sophie Lyons was a "thief from the cradle," as one Chief of Police said; at the early age of six years she had already been trained by her step-mother to be a pickpocket and a shoplifter. A beautiful child with engaging manners, she was sent out every day into the stores and among the crowds of shoppers, and was soundly whipped if she came out of a shop with less than three pocketbooks. "I did not know it was wrong to steal; nobody every taught me that," Sophie Lyons writes. "What I was told

was wrong and what I was punished for was when I came home with only one pocketbook instead of many."

As the child grew into womanhood she was conspicuously beautiful, and soon became known as "Pretty Sophie." Then romance entered her life and she married Ned Lyons, the famous bank burglar. Her husband was a member of the great gang of expert safe-blowers who were the terror of the police and the big banks of some years ago.

Women are regarded as dangerous and are seldom taken into the confidence of such criminals as these. But Sophie Lyons was not only welcomed to their councils, but was taken along with them to the actual scenes of their operations. Many of the most daring bank robberies were, indeed, planned by her and to her quick brain and resourcefulness the burglars often owed their success.

Sophie Lyons became famous not only among the burglars who work with dark lantern and jimmy but also among those specialists who are called "bank sneaks"—the daring men who walk into banks in broad daylight, in the midst of business, and get away with great bundles of money. Her fame spread, too, among other specialists—the shoplifters, pickpockets, confidence women, jewelry robbers, importers of forbidden opium, and the men engaged in bringing Chinamen into the country (a very profitable and hazardous field).

For twenty-five years Sophie Lyons was "The Queen of the Bank Burglars," the active leader of