

Scientific Notes

Cherchez la femme. Find the woman, say the French police, and through her it will be possible to locate the perpetrator of a crime. Yes, but before "la femme" can be found, it is necessary to know whose woman to "chercher" so after all the first and most important function of the police is to determine who actually committed a particular crime. It is undoubtedly true, however, that criminals are not infrequently caught as a result of their efforts to communicate with some woman, but locating the woman is not by any means a solution.

The present-day criminal uses up-to-date and scientific methods to commit crime and avoid detection and consequently modern detective departments must employ the most modern scientific methods to discover him and bring him to book. Some of the European police departments have made very marked progress along scientific lines.

The introduction in France in 1883 of anthropometry, a system of body measurements, marked one of the first important steps in this direction. Alphonse Bertillon discovered that certain bony portions of the human frame did not vary during the period between adolescence and extreme old age. Thus he built up a system of identification which was adopted by most of the countries of Europe. The system had certain inherent shortcomings. It could not successfully be applied to women and children, it required a highly trained personnel, instruments were apt to get out of order, measurements varied and classification was extremely difficult.

Then from India came dactyloscopy, or the finger-print system, where it had been developed by the English authorities. It was introduced at Scotland Yard in 1891. It is based on the fact that the papillary lines on the surface of the fingers form certain typical patterns which are possible of absolutely accurate classification. Experiments have shown that these patterns make their appearance three months before birth and disappear after death only with the dissolution of the body. Following this, Sir Edward Henry, who was then commissioner of police of London, devised a method of classifying finger prints by which their position in a file could be accurately determined. The Henry system is now almost universally used, with Italy and South America use a somewhat different method of classification known as the "Argentine system." By a numerical classification, finger prints can now be telegraphed or telephoned from one city to another.

Finger prints have now almost entirely superseded the Bertillon system of body measurements, although both methods are still employed in some places. The creation of some central clearing house naturally became a necessity to the perfect functioning of the finger-print system and it has only been within the last few years that a national identification bureau has been established in the United States at Washington. Even today many of the states and cities do not register their finger prints with this bureau.

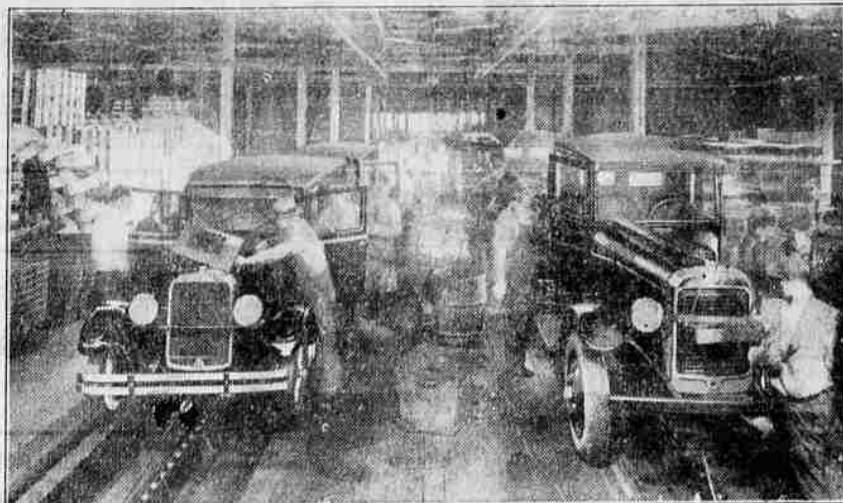
The finger-print system at the best also has its limitations. It is effective only where the finger prints of a criminal are already on file. It is of no value in discovering an unknown criminal.

The "M. O." or Modus Operandi system, introduced in England by Major L. W. Atcherley, marked another advance in crime detection methods. Atcherley built up a system of classification based on the methods employed by the criminal. It is a generally recognized fact that the average professional criminal shows a strange lack of originality. He sticks to his particular line or, as the saying goes, "once a pennyweighter, always a pennyweighter." Even in the higher ranks of criminality this peculiarity is even more striking. The pay-roll robber and the forger are fascinated by their own style of business, and each, it seems, has his peculiar specialty or "racket" within his particular field.

Germany, with her unusual attention to detail, has built up an elaborate system of registration, the Meldewesen, by which track is kept of the movements of all her citizens. In Berlin over twelve million cards are on file. Almost one hundred and fifty rooms are required to house the system. The criminal record of a man is kept in the city where he was born. If he moves to another locality he registers there with the police, who write to the city of his birth to see if he has a criminal record and to ascertain the truth of the statements he has made. The Meldewesen has also served many other useful purposes than that of locating criminals. It has been invaluable in collecting taxes, in enforcing the compulsory education system and in making it practically impossible to escape military service.

But crime can by no means be detected by indexes, registration and finger prints alone. In recent years, therefore, the camera, the microscope and the chemical and physical laboratories have played increasingly important roles. A vast assortment of criminal apparatus has come into being and the study of criminology has been broadened to include crime detection. The great universities of France, Germany and Italy have made important contributions. For example, one of these laboratories was supplied with a cap containing two hairs. The cap had apparently been dropped by a criminal after he had fatally wounded his victim. After a microscopic examination of the two hairs the police were given the following description of the fugitive: "A man of middle age, of robust constitution, with black hair intermingled with gray, recently cut; commencing to grow bald." The description proved to be accurate. It is now claimed by one

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ONE of the busiest truck assembly lines in the country is operated by the truck division of Dodge Brothers, Inc., with the introduction of the all six cylinder line of Graham Brothers Trucks. Here trucks grow from the chassis to the completed job under speedy, efficient workmanship. At the left, is the Merchants Express with panel body and at the right is the big two and one half ton capacity. Various other capacities are following in rapid order.

German scientist that human hair varies as do the finger prints and no two persons have hair exactly alike.

The most recent scientific invention for detecting crime, the so-called "Lie Detector," has, however, quite taxed the imagination of the average layman. It is considered by them as being even more absurd than was the finger-print theory when it was first advanced. Experiments with the machine have been highly successful and it is today being used by some police departments to eliminate suspects. This machine when attached to a suspect accurately records certain inward nervous reactions. But, say the laymen, anyone to whom the machine is attached would naturally be more excited than usual. Perfectly true, but the machine can distinguish between such excitement and the inward reaction which would take place when one was questioned about an affair with which he had some connection.

It is a well-known fact that it requires more mental alertness to lie successfully than it does to tell the truth. If one were asked to account for his movements on a given day it would be a relatively easy matter for him to do so. But, on the other hand, if he wanted to eliminate some important thing which he had done during the day, it would require considerable mental alertness to tell a story which upon investigation would hold water. It is in this way that the machine trips him.

A class of university students was given a test with the machine. Each man was asked a series of

questions. The students were told to lie deliberately about one of the questions asked and to tell the truth about the others. As remarkable as it may seem the operator of the machine was able to tell each student the question about which he lied. Such a test would seem to be both fair and convincing. Much further experimentation with the machine is admittedly necessary. Then, too, there is the obstacle of violating the constitutional rights of a suspected man by the use of the machine unless he consents to the test.

Baltimore city has recently furnished an example of the use of scientific methods of crime detection and their value. A guard was shot and killed when two convicts at the Maryland penitentiary attempted to escape. Both convicts had revolvers, but of different caliber. Another guard who answered their fire had a revolver of the same caliber as one of the convicts. The bullets taken from the body of the slain guard were the same caliber as those used by the guard who fired upon the convicts.

In order to be prepared for the possible defense that the slain guard had been hit and killed by a bullet from the gun of his fellow-guard and not from that of the convict using a weapon of the same caliber, the state's attorney had a very careful series of tests made with each pistol. These tests were made by a national expert. A number of bullets were fired from each pistol and then photographed and enlarged. Each revolver left its identifying marks on the bullets fired from it. The bullets from each weapon were

marked in a widely different way. When the bullet taken from the slain guard's body was photographed and enlarged and exhibited with the two series it was quite evident, even to a school child, that the bullet from the dead body was marked identically as were the series shot from the convict's revolver.

Could there be a more convincing example of the real value of scientific methods in crime detection?

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No More "The Street of Springtime"

By Welland H. Gordon
Associated Press Correspondent
LOS ANGELES (AP)—Spaniards who founded Los Angeles gave one of its streets the poetic name, Calle de La Primavera, the "Street of Springtime." Today it is a busy canyon of skyscrapers, center of one of the fastest-growing financial districts in the United States, but plain Spring Street.

Near the heart of the street stands the new Los Angeles Stock Exchange building, housing the successor of an institution founded September 23, 1887. The Exchange's volume of business last year was \$242,000,000. In the first six months of 1928 the total was \$419,000,000. Last December a seat on the Exchange sold for \$25,000. A few weeks ago a new member paid \$65,000 and since then \$90,000 has been paid for the right to trade on the floor. On June 1 the post system of trading was inaugurated and June 4 the Los Angeles Curb Exchange was opened, sponsored by the older institution.

The history of formal financial trading in Los Angeles since the inauguration of the first stock exchange is a chronicle of ups and downs. The original Stock and Bond Exchange existed about eight months in a city then having a population of 50,000. The blow that killed it came when it lost the remnant of its reserve fund, \$1,000, to a needy member accepting collateral a bond issued by a civic organization. The bond proved worthless the borrower insolvent and the exchange died.

The Los Angeles Mining and Stock Exchange, second member of the family of five whose youngest is the present institution, came into being in May 1896, with an auspicious formal opening. Its first regular trading took place in August, but less than a month later the Exchange passed away, its final act being to sell its effects to a political club.

In June, 1897, the Los Angeles Stock and Mining Exchange, underwritten by the gravestones of two predecessors, reared its head

with an initial membership list of 42. It began to weaken with the slowing down of mining activity and in 1899 was dissolved. While its sorrowing members were holding the wake, a successor

into existence December 7, 1899 as the Los Angeles Oil Exchange, its first memberships sold for \$50. Gradually it absorbed smaller exchanges, changed its name to that it now bears, moved its quarters as it grew and today occupies its own building with complete and modern trading equipment. John Earl Jardine is president.

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