

A NEW METHOD OF IDENTIFYING CRIMINALS.

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In our issue of December 17, 1904, we gave a description of Dr. Bertillon's system of identification. But it is desirable not only to be able to identify an habitual criminal after he has fallen into the hands of justice, but also to be able to recognize him in a crowded street at sight, instinctively and without stopping to measure him. Such recognition is a very important and a very difficult matter, which often leads to error.

In order to avoid, as far as possible, mistakes of this sort, which are always greatly to be regretted and often entail serious consequences, all the inspectors of the Paris prefecture of police now take a course of instruction in descriptive identification, or the method of the "verbal portrait," as it is also called. At the end of the course, which comprises twenty lessons of one hour's duration, the pupils receive diplomas certifying that they are qualified to receive and utilize such descriptions.

This course was instituted as a result of the following observation, which had been made repeatedly:

An inspector of police and, in general, every person unfamiliar with the application of the "verbal portrait," though possessing the photograph of an individual, will pass by that individual without recognition, if the photograph is a few years old or if the general appearance has been altered by a gain or loss of flesh, or by a change in the beard, or the hair, or even the clothes. On the other hand, descriptive identification, which means an accurate description of the immovable parts of the face (forehead, nose, ears, etc.), enables those who are sufficiently familiar with the method to identify a person with certainty, not only with the aid of a photograph, but also simply by means of a printed description of those characteristics of the person in question which are out of the ordinary.

Another school of descriptive identification has been in existence for a short time in Bucharest. The experiment described below was made very recently by the director of that school, M. Minovia.

At the moment of starting of a crowded passenger train, the description of one of the passengers was given to two police pupils, who were then at the front and rear ends of the train. Before the next station was reached the person described had been recognized and identified, although he was disguised as completely as possible. The method of descriptive identification is based upon the following principle:

Suppose, for example, that we wish to describe the shape of the nose of every person that we are called upon to meet. The customary terms "straight," "aquiline," "flat," "pug," etc., enable us in some cases to give an approximate idea of the organ in question, but in most cases no known appellation will suggest itself as appropriate.

It is necessary, then, to analyze, to separate the characteristics until we arrive at categories which we

can distinguish by common words, such as "small," "medium," "large," etc., or other analogous series.

Thus, for the purpose of studying the form of the nose, the profile of the organ is divided into two perfectly distinct parts; the front, extending from the root to the tip, and the base, extending from the tip to the junction of the nostril with the cheek. The



Two Finger Prints.

different forms of the front of the nose, "hollow," "straight," and "convex," may then be combined with the inclinations of the base, "upward," "horizontal," and "downward." Besides, for every form of the nose, its three dimensions vary independently of each other, and are indicated by a series of terms, ranging from "very small" to "very large."

This method of instantaneous analysis, which allows the form and dimensions of the nose to be identified

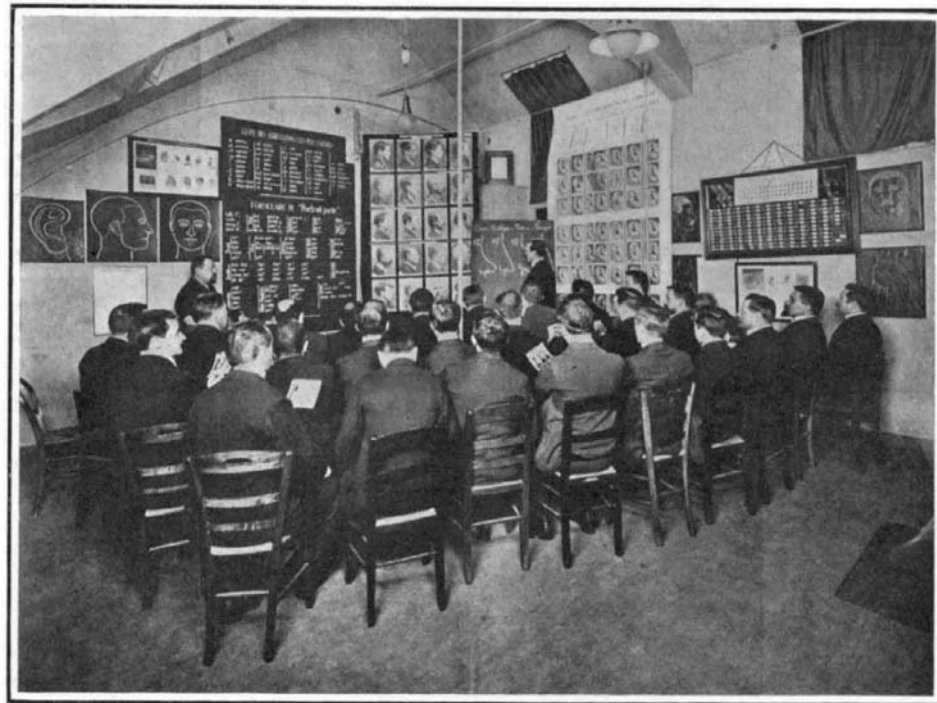
and the tracking of criminals, we may add a few words concerning finger prints, the lines of which exhibit details which are absolutely personal.

Very often, on the scene of a crime, finger marks are found on glossy surfaces (bottles, glasses, window panes, door plates, painted and varnished walls, etc.). By a comparison of such impressions, photographed by a special process, it is easy either to discover the maker of the finger marks observed at the scene of the crime, or to establish the innocence of a suspected person whose digital impressions have nothing in common with those marks.

Automobiles in Army Maneuvers.

Automobiles are to figure to a considerable extent in the autumn military maneuvers which will occupy the months of September and October, especially in France, Germany, and Italy. As regards France, it is stated that the forty-five chauffeurs who form part of the reserve of the active army and are to put their cars at the disposal of the officers during the grand maneuvers of the North and East, were passed in review at the headquarters at Vincennes, near Paris, early in September. Capt. Genty, who is well known as the chief of the automobile service, has the matter in charge. He is piloted by De la Touloubse, who has figured in different racing events with the Darracq cars. During the maneuvers of the West, three tractors will assure an active service of supplies. The tractors will be in charge of the military chauffeurs of Capt. Genty's corps. As Caillois, one of the winners in the Gordon Bennett cup race, is not to enter the Vanderbilt cup, Gen. Desirier, the military governor of Paris, who is familiar with his remarkable skill, asked him to be his pilot during this year's maneuvers. Caillois will, therefore, figure in a prominent place during these events. As regards the use of automobiles in the Italian army, the volunteer chauffeurs of the Milan Automobile Club, who are to take part in the maneuvers in the Abruzzi region, have been placed under the direct command of an officer of the Etat Major attached to the direction of the maneuvers. The chauffeurs are to be divided into three groups. One of these will assure the service of the general command of the maneuvers and the other two are attached to the two armies of the North and South respectively. To each of these groups will be attached the officers and men who are charged with organizing the movable garages and the repair shops for the cars. In Germany considerable prominence is to be given to automobiles, as heretofore. The Etat Major has been greatly pleased with the volunteer automobile corps which took part in the exploration maneuvers between Posen and Grandez. The corps showed a great efficiency on this occasion. It has been decided that during the grand maneuvers thirty-six volunteer chauffeurs will take part in the exercises with their cars.

The population of Japan proper is estimated at 47,812,702 for the present year.

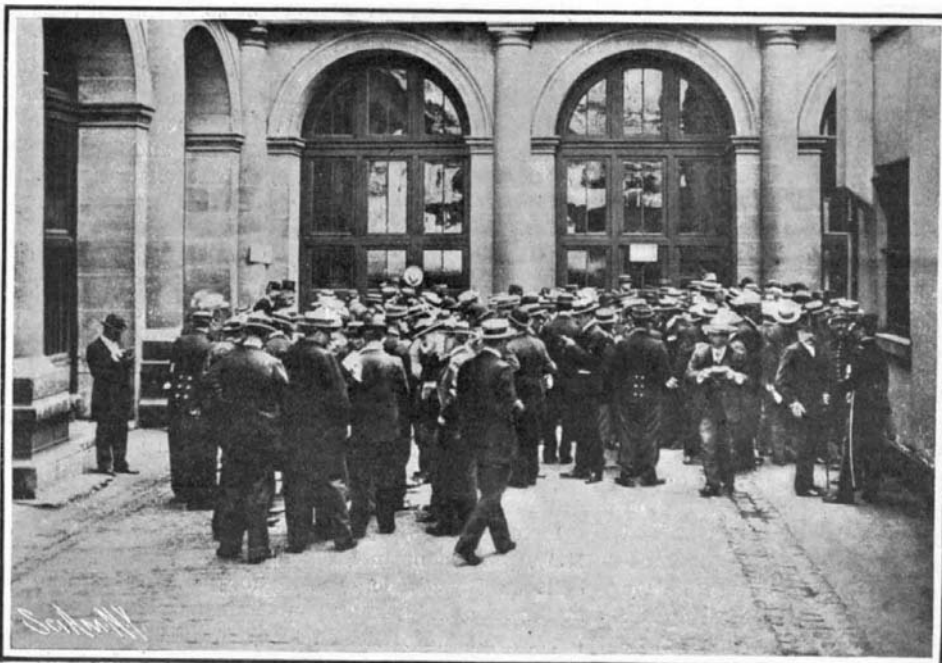


A Lecture on the Theory of Descriptive Identification at the Paris Prefecture of Police.

with precision, has been applied to other parts, especially to the ear, which suffices in itself for the establishment of identity, in many cases.

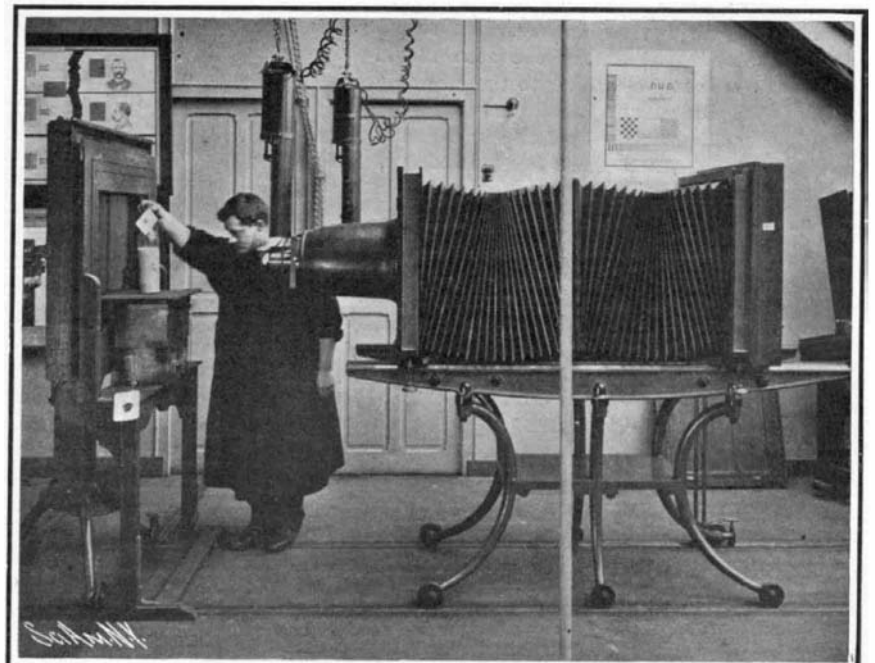
The general contour of the head, seen from in front, also presents various abnormal forms, and thus gives valuable assistance in the reconstruction of the "verbal portrait." We distinguish round, square, oblong, pyramidal, top-shaped, diamond-shaped faces, etc.

In regard to the system of identification in general,



Practical Exercises in Identification.

Each pupil, having received the description of some one of the persons present, endeavors to identify and "arrest" him. Experience shows that the method, properly applied, cannot lead to the slightest confusion of identity.



A Camera Specially Designed for Photographing Finger Marks on Glossy Surfaces.