

now. Kelly turned to the officer. "We are going up the alley, and I advise you to have your pistol within reach in case of any emergency."

"All right," laughed the other skeptically. "I'm under your orders."

"Call your men and have them follow us as closely as possible."

The next moment Kelly had penetrated the gathering gloom of the alley and was carefully feeling his way forward. The aperture was bricked on either side and covered. Kelly had not gone far when he uttered an exclamation of satisfaction.

The Closed Door

"Ah, here we are!" "What is it?" asked the officer.

"A gateway—a wooden gate. Put your shoulder against it and help me to open the thing. It is evidently bolted from the inside."

They were only halfway up the alley. At the far end could be seen the subpost-office. The police Captain was staring at him in a stupid sort of way. The detective turned to him almost harshly:

"Put your shoulder to the gate and push!"

The officer obeyed, the bolt gave way, and they found themselves inside a little yard.

"Tell your men to come in close!" cautioned Kelly.

The squad entered the yard and lined up ready for action, while the secret service man reconnoitered.

The rear end of a brick building confronted him. The door was closed tight. The window had no shutters; but the blind on the inside was drawn down. Kelly turned to his companion.

"Mack, we'll go in here alone. We are in citizens' clothes. We can have a quiet talk with the folks inside. Tell your men to lay low and watch that window. If the blind flies up, it will be the signal that they are wanted on urgent business."

Mack nodded comprehendingly.

Kelly advanced to the door and knocked loudly with his clenched fist.

Immediately there was a scampering within, and the sound of many hurrying feet. Presently a bolt was withdrawn, and a Chinaman poked his head out of the half opened door. It was the Chinaman whom Kelly had seen on the wharf.

"What do you want?" asked the latter in good English.

"I'd like to speak to Joe Fow."

"That's my name."

"Very good. I'd like a few words with you."

"Go ahead and say them," was the sullen re-

sponse, still with the door remaining partly closed. "I can't talk out here."

"Then you can't talk at all!"

As he spoke the Chinaman made as if to shut the door; but Kelly was too quick for that. He shoved his heavy soled boot in and kept it open on a crack. The Captain of police pushed his bulky form forward, and the next moment the two men were in the room.

It was the rear apartment of a warehouse. There was a rough table in the center of the room, with a chair on each side. Pen, ink, and papers were there,

frowning upon him ominously. "Mr. Fow," he said blandly, "we started for the postoffice, but somehow landed in the back of your store."

"Well," said the other surlily, "the sooner you get out the better, unless you want to be turned over to the police."

"Please don't mention the police," said Kelly, with a significant smile; "I don't like the sound of the word."

"Get out!" shouted the big fellow, pointing a bony forefinger to the door.

Kelly never moved. Mack was beginning to feel ill at ease.

"Fow," said the detective, "the Government has recently missed some of its mail bags. Can you tell me where they are?"

"The bony forefinger, still suspended in air, trembled a trifle. The harsh voice was modulated a bit with the reply. "How should I know anything about mail bags?"

"Oh," said Kelly carelessly, "you are such a clever Chinaman, I thought you might know."

"Well, I don't," he answered. "Now please leave here and go about your business."

"All right," said the detective.

Going About His Business

HE started to move across the room, and as he did so contrived to get near a pile of the tea chests. He gave a forcible push of his arm, and one high pile of boxes toppled over on the floor. They were empty. The detective quickly pushed his way into the opening, and the next moment emerged with two heavy mail bags, one in each hand.

Fow gave a wild whoop, and rushing over put his bony fingers about Kelly's neck. With a great effort the detective threw him off and bounded to the other side of the room. Mack, at last alive to the situation, pulled out his pistol; but it was almost immediately seized by the fireman.

"Now," snarled the Chinaman, "you've put your pretty heads in the lion's mouth and can take the consequences!"

The words were scarcely out of his mouth before Kelly plucked the bottom of the window shade, and giving the spring a jerk sent the blind flying to the top of the window. Before the echo of the click had died away ten stalwart officers were in the room, pistols in hand, and in complete control of the situation. Joe Fow, the grimy faced one, and the murderous looking Chinaman were handcuffed, and then the mail bags were dragged to the center of the room. It took only a few minutes to make the examination. The result was conclusive. There were a dozen of the bags, and each one was stuffed full of smuggled opium. Its value ran into thousands of dollars.

Two more days sufficed to bring the scattered threads of evidence together. A conspiracy was established. The confiscation of the opium and the conviction of Joe Fow and his associates broke up the game, and after that the remaining smugglers transferred the scene of their operations to British Columbia.



With a Great Effort the Detective Threw Him Off.

with some sheets containing figures in Chinese characters. Roundabout, piled as high as the ceiling, were many tea chests. A dozen big bags of coffee and boxes of soap completed the furnishings. Nothing could be more regular.

But the persons present were not so reassuring. Standing next to the Chinaman was the fireman who had talked with him on the wharf, with the smudge still covering his forbidding countenance. Beyond these two were four Chinamen with the bodies of dwarfs and the faces of murderers.

"What is the meaning of this outrageous intrusion?" The speaker was Joe Fow. His tone was haughty and his manner menacing.

Kelly was about to reply, when he felt a plucking at his coat sleeve. It was the Captain of police.

"It looks as if you'd made a mistake," he whispered. "The thing to do is to get out of it as gracefully as possible."

Kelly smiled. "I'll be polite," he whispered back; "but I can't answer for the graceful part."

He turned to Joe Fow. The tall merchant was

THE TELLTALE FINGERS

By HARRY H. SECKLER



THE finger print system of identification, now used almost exclusively in England for the identification of criminals, has recently been adopted by the War Department of this Government, to be used for the identification of unknown dead on the field of battle, and for the detection of deserters from the service; also to prevent the reenlistment of dishonorably discharged soldiers. In recent years several of the larger prisons in the United States and police departments of the larger cities have recognized its infallibility in the detection of criminals and installed bureaus of identification; but in time, when its real worth becomes more generally known, it will in all probability be adopted by life insurance companies, banking concerns, the United States pension department, the immigration bureau, and in a hundred and one different ways, all leading to the identification of persons, and its use in detecting criminals alone will be of minor importance.

Many articles have been written during the last few years regarding the origin of the system, crediting it to China hundreds of years ago, and of those in whom we are indebted for the method of classification of prints; yet none has mentioned its practical value to the world at large. Until a few years ago the Bertillon system was used exclusively in tracing criminals, and was looked upon as perfect. Many were convinced that the world would never find a more accurate method; but the great drawback to its adoption by other than criminal investigators was that, while it does not necessarily require that one remove much of his wearing apparel, yet for perfect measurements this is absolutely necessary. Even in its simplified form one must

remove at least a portion of his clothing, and bare his left foot and left fore arm.

But a great compliment has been paid to the finger print system by Bertillon. On signalment cards recently adopted by him he has left a space for the prints of the finger tips or bulbs of the fingers of the right hand of all measured by his system.

Failure of the Bertillon System

THE Bertillon method is not perfect, as was recently proved at the United States penitentiary on the Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, military reservation. A young Negro arrived at the prison, and was being measured in the room of the record clerk. His features seemed familiar to M. W. McClaughry, the expert, who asked the man whether he had not been a former inmate. The prisoner, whose name was Will West, said that he had not been there before. The record clerk searched in the Bertillon files, and there found the signalment card and photograph of William West. The photograph was shown to the prisoner, who, startled beyond measure, admitted that it was of him, but again asserted that he had never before been in prison, and could not understand how his likeness had been obtained, as he had never had it taken.

The Bertillon measurements were then compared, and in only two instances did they differ, and then so slightly from the scale or "limit of variation," that any Bertillon expert, measuring Will West with the signalment card of William West before him, would have been fully convinced that the one

who had made the first measurement had made some slight mistakes, and would have concluded that they were of the same man. It is said that there is a double for everyone in the world, and the record clerk ascertained this, even to names. Turning the card over, he noted that William West was a life prisoner. He had him brought from his work in the prison yard to the office, and there Will West and William West faced each other. They were dumbfounded. They looked as nearly alike as two peas, and suspected that they were the victims of some joke. Twins seldom show more remarkable resemblances. They denied relationship. One said that his mother was dead; the other that his father was; but both came from Texas.

The finger prints of the men were then taken. They varied in both primary and secondary classification. The trend of the ridges on some of their fingers was the same; but the classifications were different. No finger print student with even a slight knowledge of the system could possibly have confused them.

Another instance of the correctness of the finger print system and the failure of the Bertillon identification was also found in this prison. A prisoner, after being "Bertillonized," was questioned as to whether he had ever before been an inmate. He stated that he had never been in any prison before. The Bertillon records were searched; but none comparing with the man's measurements was found. Later his finger prints were taken and classified. A search of the files revealed a duplicate set of prints. It was then ascertained that he had been released from the prison two years previous, before he had attained mature growth. In that time he had grown until his former Bertillon

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