

PRETTY DANISH CROOK CATCHER SHOWS U. S. POLICE NEW TRICKS IN TRAPPING CRIMINALS

Astute Metropolitan Detectives Amazed at Simplicity of Numerical System of Identification as Explained by Ingeborg Charlotte Hellner-Nielsen

GIRL OF 26 RECOGNIZED IN EUROPE AS WITHOUT A PEER IN HER WORK

Basis of Jorgensen Plan Is Fingerprinting Scheme, but Special Characteristics of Persons Wanted Are Reduced to Code by Use of Figures, Saving Time

Catching criminals by numbers! That's the latest idea in international police circles. Sounds something like putting salt on a sparrow's tail, but actually in practice it is much easier and does not require so much stealth.

It is all simple when you know how. Police departments throughout the Nation are expected soon to be carrying around crook logarithm, embesler equations and bigamist additions in their heads.

No merry quip about it. It is a fact. The new system has just arrived in America in the custody of its most expert exponent. Policemen from all parts of the country are in New York today to hear about it, and the whole thing is to be explained to them by a demure girl.

It goes something like this: Superintendent Mills wants to catch the professional bank robber who got into a banker's strong vaults where there was a million in currency and then supposedly got out with it. Mills thinks he knows the robber. He has a hunch he is now enjoying his million in the white-light district of Keokuk, Ia. He sends out an S. O. S. to the chief in Keokuk, after looking up his name in the little book in the pigeonhole, his wire reading:

"Bill Slick, N 1, E 8, H 2, M 2, F 4, Q 7, X 10. Wire of arrest C. O. D." The Keokuk chief responds overnight: "Got him. Wire thumb numbers for verification." Mills does and gets a second answer: "It's your bird all right. Chase along your extradition." Mills goes back at him: "Sure. Thanks." That's all there is to it.

A clear-eyed girl from Copenhagen, who employs science with a capital "S" in running down enemies of society, has just arrived in the United States to attend the International Police Convention at New York. This particular delegate savors nothing of familiar police types; in fact, has no counterpart in the world.

This pretty police agent, as they call non-uniformed operatives abroad, is a charming and modish young woman of quiet and unassuming manner, who is numbered among a very few of the world's greatest fingerprint experts.

Miss Ingeborg Charlotte Hellner-Nielsen, of Denmark, a cultured and carefully educated woman of twenty-six, who reads, writes and speaks six languages, "including the Scandinavian," has caught the fancy of New York and centered the attention of some of the brightest minds in the police profession. Her first brief stay in America, which she declares will not be her last, has already become one constant round of active inquiry from early morning to late at night into American police methods and equipment.

In America Long Enough to Pick Up Real Slang

Miss Hellner-Nielsen, in English—English of precise and prim diction—declares that the wonders of New York "quite bow her over" and that from what she has already seen of American police problems she can understand the intricacies and baffling perplexities of crime detection and punishment that frequently confront our metropolitan operatives because of great distances and polyglot population.

"I dislike being mistaken for an oddity or freak," she exclaimed earnestly, "merely because I am a serious-minded young woman in the police business. My profession is one fraught with the very gravest consequences to society everywhere, in so far as its successful practice is concerned. In the present temper of a sorely upset world, influences and elements are at work that only responsible persons familiar with the hidden meaning of events can intelligently analyze. The public as a whole of all countries has no conception of what is going on behind the scenes.

"Ever since the armistice the whole world has been off its normal mental balance and such a state of affairs has caused master criminals in all countries to seize their opportunity to cheat and betray society to their own advantage. It goes far beyond mere thievery or robbery accomplished by either cleverness or violence—that sort of crime has to be coped with even in normal times.

Society Honeycombed With High-Class Crooks

"There are men and women today in all countries, cunning, unscrupulous, cruel, tigers underneath the skins of gentle lambs, who will sell even the honor and safety of their own countries without a blush or

Europe, have called this wonderful international conference, which is bound to have far-reaching results.

"After all, higher civilization is one great fraternity, regardless of nationality or race or creed. Municipal police of the great cities of the world and of the capitals of all countries work just as much for national and international safety as they do in safeguarding their home communities. They are constantly involved in international cases and are often the successful connecting links between great criminals and governmental agencies seeking them.

"My sociological studies in crime have convinced me that Commissioner Enright is eminently correct in his estimate and conception of the importance of hearty and friendly co-operation between the municipal police departments of all countries. Please understand, however, that when I voice this opinion I do so only as one of the tiny cogs in the great machine of police in the world, in which I personally am of small importance."

Worthy of Attention She Is Attracting

After hearing this brilliant young woman enunciate the foregoing sentiments, which are given virtually word for word, one is compelled to agree with Mrs. Mary Hamilton, of the New York force, her chaperon and friend while in America, and herself a bright example of what a woman can be in efficient police work, that Miss Hellner-Nielsen is worthy of all the attention she is attracting.

Miss Hellner-Nielsen has a fine gray-blue eye that seems to penetrate to the inner consciousness. She is of that calm, poised type of modern woman who instantly commands respect and truth-telling, for the quest of truth and nothing but the truth is reflected by her whole engrossing personality. A novelist would spend whole pages in describing her as his heroine.

She is of medium, compact build and swells figure, that being a perfectly good Scandinavian word, and it is admirably suited to describing her. She wears



Ingeborg Charlotte Hellner-Nielsen, Danish fingerprint expert

the complete features in composite of the person sought.

"You may be surprised to know that it is an everyday matter with us to arrest criminals on sight as a result of nothing more than the telegraphing of a row of figures from one city to another. We have trained men and women who are so expert that they very rarely make an error, even though they have nothing but a mental photograph in numbers to guide them. With us it is getting to be like telegraphing market reports.

"We do not always send the portrait paré, but often only the fingerprint numerals and the person's name, where the receiving police have the same fingerprint record we have. Then when the constable encounters the man wanted, after learning his description from the files, he approaches him and says politely:

"Fingerprints Regarded as Sure Identification"

"Pardon me, sir, but I am a police-

Then his special distinguishing marks make his identity absolutely sure. We have found it possible through Mr. Jorgensen's wonderful system to reduce the general and special characteristics to a code expressed in figures."

The young woman next displayed a glass cube of two-inch dimensions, rounded to an ellipse on one side in the center of which, when looking through the rounded side, one sees lines and figures. This placed over the finger to be examined magnifies and measures and makes plain the characteristics of the thumb and fingers, all of which are numbered, on each hand. This glass is also the invention of the astute Mr. Jorgensen. She then went on to say:

Telegraphing Numerals Saves Valuable Time

"We telegraph these numerals and they are compared with the fingerprints taken of the person arrested. That saves time and we don't have to wait for forward old fingerprints. All these prints and numbers are registered in a central identification bureau and the formula in a given case is telegraphed or cabled. This is a system which we should like to see adopted throughout the civilized world and made an international aid to effective police work."

Miss Hellner-Nielsen explained that she did not "outside" police work worth mentioning—that her work was at a desk. In regard to police work by women, she said, they were excellent in matters of detail, that they had remarkable powers of observation and they never missed fine points that were sometimes overlooked by their male colleagues. In detective work, she said, they were useful at labor which necessarily must be performed at a desk, since men would much prefer to work outside in pursuing criminals.

Douglas McKay, Special Deputy Police Commissioner of New York and secretary of the International Police Conference, praised the numeral system of catching criminals by telegraph and mail, and he said the demonstration of it afforded by the Danish expert had convinced the New York de-

selected the duplicate of one at random and put it in his pocket.

When half-way across the Atlantic he wireless a row of forty figures to the Copenhagen police department, constituting a query as to the identity of the person.

Wireless Relay Gets Man Police Wanted

Mr. Jorgensen displayed the numerical record to the writer and the wireless message which he received on board the vessel in reply in four hours. The message read:

"The person in question identical with Peter Hansen, born in Copenhagen, September 21, 1888."

He was the man. The test had been made by wireless to see how long it would take to identify the person, whether the right person would be found and to estimate the chances of inaccuracy in transmission. Considering the fact of two relays of the message in ordinary transmission of wireless, the expert considered it a triumph for the system.

"We are quite willing to establish a school in America and to see a Grand Central Bureau of International Identification established in this country," said Mr. Jorgensen. "We are not at all selfish about this thing for quite apparent reasons. The more countries that use it the more efficacious it will become in protecting society.

"The system protects the innocent and unmarks the guilty. I will afford free facilities for a school here gladly. In two months, although the system can be learned in four days, we can make a corps of experts who will then be able to teach it to others throughout the country." Delegates from all the important cities could at first attend the school to get in operation.

Judge Schaffer, who is a young man to be presiding justice of a military or state police court, told in fluent English how a school was held in Berlin last May when twenty great identification experts from various countries of Europe were taught the new system. The delegates to Mr. Jorgensen's school mastered the system in less than a week



Miss Nielsen explaining her method



Taking fingerprints by new method



Another pose of Miss Nielsen

they whisk off to a ready market in some other nation. "Unfortunately in the present scheme of organized society there always is a market for that kind of stolen information, which, as long as it appears to be authentic, and is later proved accurate, is freely bought.

"On this subject of international crime, and your country, although isolated in its great physical strength, is not immune from its workings by any means, all I can say is that what seem to be the wildest imaginings of the writers of fiction are far surpassed by the actual facts.

Predict Valuable Result From Police Conference

"I am glad, therefore, that the police of your great cities in America, under the leadership of your energetic and highly modern chief in New York, Commissioner Enright, who has lately returned from

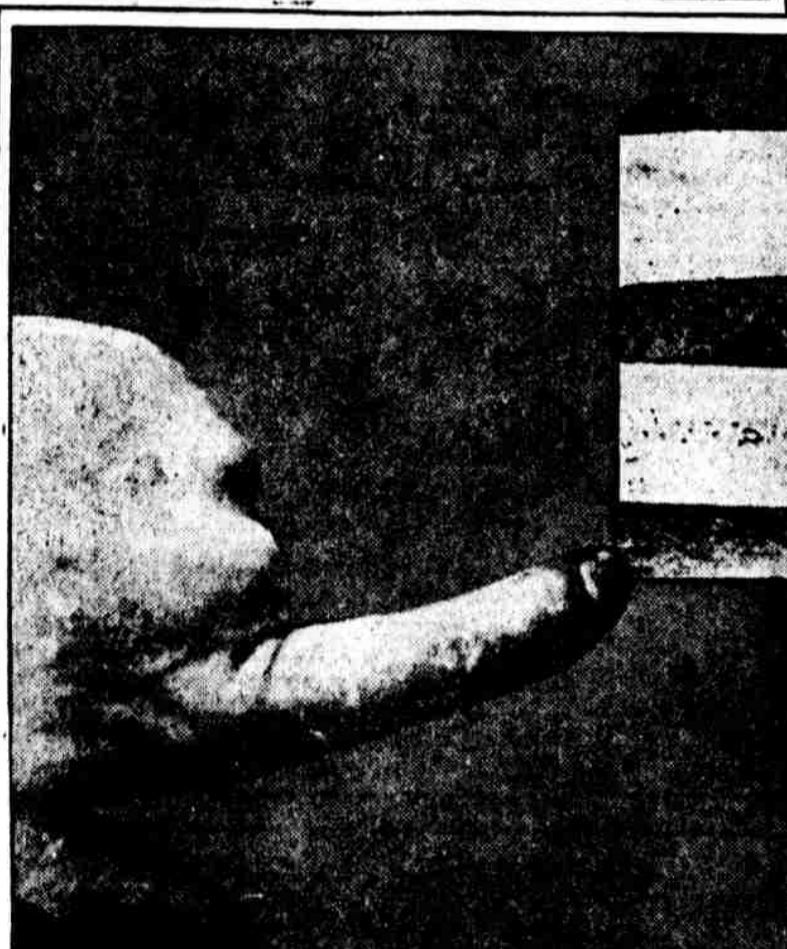
chief Parisian hats, suits and gowns well.

Miss Hellner-Nielsen arrived in America a fortnight in advance of the police convention, which brings together police chiefs and their most highly skilled operatives from the four corners of the world to study what she could of American systems. As a matter of fact, however, she has been teaching and demonstrating fine points to officials and detectives of the New York force of which they found they had no knowledge.

Mrs. Hamilton, after seeing some of the young woman's demonstrations, declared:

Gives Demonstration Before Police Heads

"She is a remarkable person and will be heard from in the police world. She is worthy of all the attention she is receiving from people here. We find that they are far ahead of us over there in many angles of crime ferreting and that they are able to get quicker results."



One of original fingerprint records brought from Copenhagen for demonstration purposes

the Danish police, Miss Hellner-Nielsen said:

Explains Ins and Outs of Verbal Photograph

"We employ and record, of course, all the usual information gained concerning a criminal's name and aliases, his history and general description. But in addition to that we employ a system of figures called the 'portrait paré' or verbal portrait, which can be telegraphed, mailed or telephoned to other places in case a suspect has escaped from or eluded us.

"For instance, if the police department with which we communicate ascertains that the fugitive has a 'Type One' chin and a 'Type Two' ear and a 'Type Three' forehead and certain other numbered features, it is possible to send out experts who can visualize

man. You resemble a person sought by the authorities of Copenhagen. Would you mind showing me your fingers?"

"Because of the classification of finger marks he can instantly tell whether the suspect is the man wanted. If the man hesitates to show his fingers, he is arrested anyway and his hands examined at headquarters, but, released, of course, if a mistake has been made. If he gladly shows his hands and a mistake has been made, the policeman says:

"Pardon, but we are in error. You are free to go. Won't you have a cigarette?"

"You have heard it said, no doubt, that no two fingerprints are alike. That is true. It is because of that fact that we can make no mistakes. All fingers have certain general characteristics, however, which are first looked for according to the classification in which the individual falls.

partment, at least, that it was quite feasible of adoption everywhere.

N. Y. Experts Already Studying New System

A half-dozen New York experts are already taking lessons in the new system from the members of the Danish party, including Miss Hellner-Nielsen. Mr. Jorgensen said to the young woman, remain in America to accept police invitations as long as it was useful to be a guest for practical purposes, but that when finished she would have to return to Denmark. He couldn't afford to lose her.

Mr. Jorgensen said he planned an unusual experiment while coming over to New York. Before leaving Copenhagen he went to the largest and most difficult group of fingerprint records in his bureau, numbering thousands of descriptions of individual hands. He

and it has now been adopted by their respective countries.

Can Use Jorgensen System Anywhere

He explained that the Jorgensen system did not interfere with present bureau systems or other established methods in any way which are used locally or nationally in any country. He displayed a copy of the Dactylogical and Alphabetical Register of International Criminals compiled by the Bureau of Distant Identification, of Copenhagen.

It contains the names of 1800 internationally known and feared criminals. Among them are the cleverest crooks in the world—persons who resemble as strongly "gentlemen" and "ladies" in appearance, manner, education and evidences of culture that no one except those knowing their records would suspect them. They are known as the most dangerous of all criminals.

Here is a typical record of a celebrated American crook, containing all it is necessary to know to effect his arrest: (Name omitted) America, D. 13333 1-7 1441 17 B. 3431, (69) 34981, 50 5-7 802, 33, 4-2, 3.

This description, cabled from Philadelphia to Copenhagen and other European capital having the record, would be sufficient to apprehend the man wanted, and identification would be absolute if he were captured.

The system itself, he explains, has been endorsed and to a large extent adopted by these police authorities of Europe.

European Police Officials Indorse the New Code

Mr. Bergerhoff, chief of the Belgian Fingerprint Bureau, who addressed recently the Congress of Medical Jurisprudence at Brussels on the subject.

M. Balzhazard, chief of the Fingerprint Bureau of the Paris Prefecture of Police, who declares international transmission of fingerprints in code of the utmost importance.