

selves, who, in many cases, attempt no deception, so certain are they of being found out.

The result of the labours of the committee appointed is a recommendation that the Bertillon system should be adopted in this country with certain modifications, and to this end a number of police officers either already are, or very soon will be, undergoing a course of instruction directed by Dr. Garson, Vice-President of the Anthropological Institute.

The chief modifications suggested are the omission of certain measurements, and the use of "finger marks." Everyone must be familiar with the lines or papillary ridges found on the palmar surfaces of the fingers, but very few are familiar with them to the degree that Mr. Francis Galton is. He is not, indeed, the first to have recognised the possibility of identification by such means; the study of finger-marks is said to have originated with the Chinese, and Sir William Herschel employed it in India, but Mr. Galton has elaborated its systematic use to a point far beyond any previously contemplated. He has examined the finger-prints of 2,500 persons, and found every one different. It appears as though the comparison of a large number of impressions might be a work of time and difficulty, but this remains to be seen; the case may prove similar to that of the Bertillon system, in which an enormous amount of patient investigation and intellectual acumen seems to have been required in deciding on the measurements to be taken, and the best instruments and methods to obtain them correctly, with the result that the system is such that a person of average intellect and patience can employ it with satisfactory results.

The Drama.

"THE CHINAMAN" AT THE TRAFALGAR THEATRE.

STAGELAND promises to be very busy throughout the winter. During last week, several theatres began work, or play, afresh. "Little Miss Cute" was produced at the Royalty on Friday; Drury Lane Theatre has been "swept and garnished" in honour of the extension of five years to the lease that has been granted to Sir Augustus Harris; and a spectacular sporting drama, "The Derby Winner" is being now produced. "The Gaiety Girl" has been transferred from the Prince of Wales' Theatre to Daly's Theatre in Leicester Square, and "Niobe" will be performed at the Grand Theatre, Islington. We have only space in this number, however, to refer to the production of "The Chinaman," at the Trafalgar Theatre, St. Martin's Lane, on Thursday last. The play is extravagant and far-fetched; but, in spite of it, raises a hearty laugh. The farce was written by Mr. John Tresagar, who has assumed the part of the Hon. Harry Reginald Hampton, otherwise, the "Chinaman." This rakish young man takes advantage of his wife's absence on the Continent to "run over" to New York, where, posing as a bachelor, he becomes engaged to Stella Van Beckmann, the Houp la! Girl. Her father, a Circus proprietor, fully alive to the advantage of an aristocratic alliance, makes Hampton sign a certificate of betrothal. The man does so; and then, dreading the consequences, takes the next steamer back to England, pursued by the American

and his daughter. He pours out his troubles into the ears of his friend, Percy Fenton, an impecunious bachelor barrister living in the house of his absent Aunt, to whom he has written the incredible lie that he numbers a Chinese Mandarin among his clients. Suddenly, Cotton, the page (Miss Clara Jecks) announces the unexpected arrival of Percy's Aunt, accompanied by a Frenchman, M. Henri Gratin (Mr. Frank Wyatt, proprietor of the Theatre), and his sister Julia, who is none other than Hampton's wife, but who, under the conditions of a late will, is passing herself off as unmarried. How is Fenton to account for the mythical Chinaman? It so happens that Fenton is going to a fancy ball at Covent Garden; Hampton, who is to accompany him, turns up in a Chinese costume, and, "providentially," spares Fenton's credit with his aunt for the time being. So far, so good. But Hampton, beneath his disguise, recognises his wife, and her affectionate demeanour towards her brother Henri, of whose existence he is unaware. Mad with jealousy, the Chinaman commits all sorts of extravagance which call into question his sanity. And, to make matters worse, who should turn up at this inauspicious moment but the American circus proprietor and his daughter, who do a little "prospecting" with a view to hiring the house from Fenton, who proposed letting it in his aunt's absence. Then follow confusion, and recognitions, and, needless to add, more lies. Hampton gets from Stella the certificate of betrothal, and she runs away from her father. But Fate still pursues the wretched man. His wife, suspecting something, opens his Gladstone bag bearing his initials, and abundant proof of his escapade is forthcoming. "Divorce!" "Divorce!" she cries. Hampton rises to the occasion, however, and declares a friend had borrowed his bag, and assumed his name. The wife is satisfied, as she should be—on the stage. If our readers pay a visit to "The Chinaman" they will enjoy a good laugh, the excitement of which will be not least due to the admirable acting of the Page, Cotton.

A Book of the Week.

"LOURDES."

"LOURDES" is a book which will be of exceptional importance to all people who are interested in the strange phenomena of faith healing, and cures effected by the new agency of hypnotic suggestion. The vigorous and scientific research into the Miracles of Lourdes, made by the French writer Zola, have been gathered together in this volume, and the cures performed by "Our Lady of Lourdes" through the action of the sacred water of the Gratto (where it is reported that she appeared to the peasant Bernadette) are described with the pen of a master of literature. Although the book is not suitable reading (owing to its merciless accuracy of detail), for young girls, there is nothing in it that should prevent its being very heartily and earnestly recommended to older readers.

The publication of "Lourdes" has aroused the greatest interest all over the continent; it has extracted protests of alarmed disapproval from the whole Roman Catholic Church. Monsignor Ricard, Vicar-General of Aix, has published a counterblast, entitled "La

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