

are of the same nationality and had learned the same writing system. All these points are general writing characteristics and any identification based on such general characteristics alone is of little or no value. Other features, such as individual writing characteristics, must be looked for and identified, as well as all differences explained before an identification may be considered satisfactory.

We occasionally hear of cases of mistaken identity. This confusion arises, not because of so-called doubles having many points alike, but because the average person has not sufficiently developed powers of observation to enable him to pick out the differences. The average person picks out the general and not the individual characteristics upon which to base his identification. Studying the subject of "Portrait Parle" we learn, among other things, to pick out the individual physical characteristics of an individual. Continuing our studies into "Modus Operandi" it is demonstrated how the habits of an individual will assist in his identification and set him apart from his fellow men.

Thus a study of the individual writing characteristics or writing habits of a person will assist in his identification. Nature does not reproduce any two specimens alike—even the common expression "alike as two peas" is entirely incorrect as a few minutes' study under a low power microscope will reveal.

This individuality persists in man, and though the workings of the human brain cannot be measured or judged; the result can be judged by his actions, habits, mannerisms, and personal characteristics.

In writing, the muscular and nervous systems—governed by the directive function of the brain—all are acting in unison to produce legible writing. The breaking down or impairment of any of these functions is reflected in the writing. If we once admit that no two individuals are exactly alike or possess the same individuality, it naturally follows that the writings of no two individuals will be exactly alike.

Argument against the possibility of any two individuals writing exactly alike can be carried far into the field of mathematical probabilities, but this writer believes that the most conclusive argument is the fact that since the beginning of handwriting evidence no two such samples have come to light. If such had been the case photos would have been distributed world wide to confound the evidence of handwriting identification.

The great value of expert evidence as to handwriting is that the expert's experience makes him quick to detect points both of similarity and dissimilarity, which might escape an untrained observer. If these points are substantial, it is seldom that a Judge and Jury—especially with the aid of carefully prepared photographic charts—cannot follow the evidence and see for themselves how far it affords safe material for a conclusion.

There are cases of doubt, but if the examiner is conscientious he will refuse to give an opinion in such cases. Document Examination no longer is in the class of "Opinion Evidence" but has progressed to the stage of "Demonstrative Proof" supported with adequate reasons for the opinion expressed. (See fig. 1). It is the policy of the R.C.M. Police Scientific