

simple, ingenious, and certain method of personal identification first used in India by Sir William Herschel, but fully elaborated in this country by Mr. Francis Galton—that called the ‘finger-mark system.’ In the House of Commons, on June 26, the Home Secretary announced that the recommendations of the committee had been adopted. Simple and insignificant as in the eyes of all the world are the little ridges and furrows which mark the skin of the under-surface of our fingers, existing in every man, woman and child, they have been practically unnoticed, until Mr. Galton has shown, by a detailed and persevering study of their peculiarities, that they are full of significance, and amply repay the pains and time spent upon their study. It is not to be supposed that all the knowledge that may be obtained from a minute examination of them is yet by any means exhausted, but they have already given valuable data for the study of such subjects as variation unaffected by natural or any other known form of selection, and the difficult problems of heredity, in addition to their being one of the most valuable means hitherto discovered of fixing personal identity. The *Tichborne Case* hung upon an issue which might have been settled in two minutes if Roger Tichborne, before starting on his voyage, had but taken the trouble to imprint his thumb upon a piece of blackened paper. It was not until the hundred and second day of the first trial that attention was called to the fact that Sir Roger Tichborne had been tattooed on the left arm with a cross, anchor, and a heart, and that the Claimant exhibited no such marks. The case broke down at once. The second trial for perjury occupied the Court 188 days. The issues were, however, more complex than in the first trial, as it was not only necessary to prove that the Claimant was not Tichborne, but also to show that he was someone else. The confidence that is now reposed in the methods of anthropometry or close observance of physical characters, and in the persistence of such characters through life, would have greatly simplified the whole case; and all who have nothing about their lives they think it expedient to conceal should get an accurate and unimpeachable register of all those characteristics which will make loss of identity at any future period a sheer impossibility.