

CLASSIFICATION AND USES OF FINGER PRINTS

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Classification and Uses of Finger Prints by E. R. Henry

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E. R. HENRY

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FINGER PRINTS

BY
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TO VIMU
AIRBORNE

PREFACE



THE employment of finger prints in many branches of public business, as a check upon false personation, having necessitated the use of a book of reference, this volume has been prepared by order of the Government of India.

It is divided into two Parts, over two hundred diagrams being provided to illustrate the letter-press. Inset headings to paragraphs, and the Index, will, it is hoped, facilitate search for information.

Part I. contains the definitions by means of which any finger impression may be accurately described, and explains, when two prints are brought under examination, the numerous points in each that should be compared with a view to establishing identity or dissimilarity. This Part will be useful to Departments such as Registration, Pensions, Post Office, Survey, Opium, and others who take the impression of a single digit.

Part II. contains an account of the system of classification, the full scheme of which is set forth in

the Synopsis (Plate 5). This Part will be required by the Police Department.

Endeavour has been made to compress the letterpress into the smallest space compatible with clearness and completeness of description.

1st June 1900.

PART I

FINGER PRINTS

PART I

Earlier inquiries into the subject.—The employment during past times of finger prints among various nations is discussed in the writings of Mr. Francis Galton, who finds the significance attached to their use to have been partly superstitious and partly ceremonial. As bearing upon this point he refers to the modern witness who, when sworn on the Bible, is made to hold it and kiss it, and to the executant of a document who touches a wafer or seal and declares "this to be my act and deed." [In 1823, Purkenje, a Professor of Physiology and Pathology, read before the University of Breslau a Latin Thesis on finger impressions, in which he gives nine standard types, and suggests a system of classification, but his labours failed to attract the attention they merited.] Bewick, the reviver of wood-printing in England, appears to have been struck with the delicacy of the lineations, for he made engravings on wood of a couple of his fingers, which he used as designs for his illustrated