

"ONCE a Thief, Always a Thief," Has Been Disproved in Thousands of Cases, According to Mr. William A. Pinkerton

Copyright 1911 by the New York Herald Co. All rights reserved. "Do criminals ever reform, really turn over a new leaf, and become good citizens?" I fired the question at random, little dreaming what a wealth of interesting and convincing anecdotes it would evoke. I expected the time honored cynical reply, something to the effect of "Once a thief, always a thief." But I was disappointed—agreeably disappointed. For my answer was a quick, emphatic, earnest "Yes."



he was going to call at seven o'clock. There was a banquet on for that evening, and hundreds of police officials from every part of the United States were there. I wondered if he knew what sort of lion's den he was walking into. Sure enough, he came into the hotel and spoke to me. "Don't you know that you are surrounded by policemen, some of whom are sure to spot you? I asked him. "You're the only man in the world who knows me," he said. "My name now is So and So—giving me a fictitious name—and I'm a respected and prosperous citizen. I just wanted to let you know before you found it out for yourself, for I knew you'd be on the square with me." And I was. So far as I knew he was not "wanted" for anything, and what good would have come of exposing him?

Probably no living man knows more intimate details about the individual members of the underworld, those who are active criminals to-day, as well as the notorious crooks of the past than the head of the Pinkerton Detective Agency. And every crook will tell you, what every honest man who knows Mr. Pinkerton will tell you, that when he says "Yes" there is no possibility that the correct answer should be "No."

"I know what the average man thinks—that a crook never turns straight. But it isn't so. Thousands of crooks—and I don't mean one time offenders, but men in the class we call hardened criminals—have become honest men to my knowledge. It is not true, as some recent writer said, that as many crooks turn honest as there are honest men turn crooked. But I believe one of the reasons is that so few men are willing to lend a helping hand. I don't mean that every crook is ready to reform if he is encouraged, but I do mean that society makes it hard for any man who has once been a criminal to lead an honest life.

"And I'll tell you another thing," continued Mr. Pinkerton: "I'm proud of the fact that I have helped a few criminals to become honest men than of all the work I have done in putting criminals behind the bars. I'm proud of the fact that every crook knows that Pinkerton will deal squarely with him if he will deal squarely with Pinkerton—that I believe it is as important to keep faith with a bank thief as with a bank president.

"I know a score of business men in Chicago—not saloonkeepers, but reputable merchants—who have criminal records. These men have done time and have paid their debt to society for their crimes. I cannot tell you their names, for it would be unfair to them and to their wives and families, many of whom have no suspicion that there is anything wrong in the pasts of their husbands and fathers. Besides, when society discovers that a man is a former criminal it is not content to cancel the debt, no matter how much imprisonment at hard labor the former crook may have given in expiation of his sin.

"I know men in trusted positions in New York who were convicts. In many cases only the man himself and his employer know the secret, and sometimes the employer does not know it. I know men scattered all over the West—business men, professional men, many of them wealthy and prominent citizens—who have seen the inside of Joliet, Moyamensing, Sing Sing or Leavenworth. They have sons and daughters who never have suspected and never will suspect the truth.

"These are good men—as good men as any living. They have turned away from their old ways, in many cases have changed their names, and who shall say they are not as much to be respected as the honest man who never was tempted, never was forced into crime? I'll tell you about some of them.

"When I was a boy in Chicago there were two brothers, neighbors, about the age of myself and my younger brother, and we were friends. When the civil war broke out I went into the army scout service at the age of fifteen, and the older of these two boys, John, enlisted in an Illinois regiment. Jerry, the younger, was not old enough, but a little later, when the government began offering a bounty for soldiers, he became a bounty jumper. He would enlist, get the bounty money, then desert and enlist over again under another name. He was with a band of young fellows who were engaged in that way of getting easy money, and who would do it so easy that they turned to other kinds of crime.

"When the war was over John came back to Chicago and settled down as a rather plodding sort of mechanic. He tried to get Jerry to straighten out, but the younger brother was too far along on the road to prison. "In those days the Northwestern Railroad used wood for fuel, and the wood agent of the road was Amos Snell—the same Snell who was later murdered by 'White' Inscott. He lived in a suburb of Chicago, and one night Jerry and his crowd went but there and 'stuck up' the whole family—robbed them of everything they had. John was along with them, lying in the bottom of the back. The police got a clew through the back driver and rounded up the whole band. All of them, including John, were sentenced to five years each except Jerry. When he came into the hands of the police a citizen who had been held up on the street some time before identified him as the hold-up man, and on the strength of that the Judge gave him fifteen years. It was an unjust sentence, for Jerry had not committed the hold-up—that was found out later. "Well, John's old Colonel and some other army men and my father got together and got a pardon for John, who had merely gone along with the crowd and had taken no part in the robbery. He went back to work at his trade of brass finisher, but Jerry stayed in Joliet, rebelling against those long unjust years of his sentence. "Jerry was put to work in the engine room at the prison and soon displayed great aptitude for machinery. He served out his term, with time off for

good behavior, and finally got out. I met him in Chicago. He was despondent. He felt that he had no chance to be anything but a crook, but he knew the terrible chances a once convicted man runs if he returns to crime. I told him the best thing for him to do was to go to New York, and I sent him on to my brother Robert, who had also known him as a boy.

Reform of Jerry. "Now, here's a part of this story that will interest you. Robert had a friend who was chief engineer of a building in Ann street. He told this friend about Jerry, and the engineer said he'd take a chance on him. He put Jerry at work stoking the boiler at a dollar and a half a day. After a year or so there was a vacancy, and Jerry became assistant engineer. A little while later the chief engineer resigned and Jerry, the ex-crook, became chief engineer. He left there after a while to take charge of a big plant on Long Island, and he sent for his brother John and gave him a job.

"A few years later the two brothers called on me in Chicago. They had saved about \$6,000 between them and were on their way to a new town in the West to start a manufacturing business of their own. Each had married a girl who knew nothing of their prison record and had children. They prospered exceedingly. John died several years ago, but only a few years ago, when my brother Robert died, an old man, whom nobody but myself recognized, came from the West for the funeral and shed tears at the grave. It was Jerry. He is still living, and is the leading citizen of his town and worth at least half a million dollars.

"Criminals who reform? There are thousands of them. I remember a little Liverpool Irishman who was a pickpocket around New York. He was known as 'Jimmy the Nibbler.' The police picked him up in Tennessee, where he lifted somebody's pocketbook, and he was sent to Nashville for seven years. In the prison they put him to work in the hospital. Then the cholera epidemic broke out. 'Jim' helped the doctors and nurses, and when the doctors got sick he nursed them and the warden and his family and helped save a good many lives. After the epidemic

"I've Cut That All Out," He Said. "I'm Not Going To Be a Gun Any More."

was over the warden and the Prison Board were so grateful they got 'Jim' a pardon and made up a purse of \$300 for him. With the money in his pocket he came right to Chicago to see me. I began to lecture him on the futility of going back to the life he had led before. "I've cut that all out," he said. "I'm not going to be a gun any more. I've been studying medicine down there in Nashville. The doctors have been telling me things and giving me medical books to read, and now I want to get into one of these colleges where I can get a diploma quick." "There were a number of diploma factories, as the lower class of medical colleges were called, running

in Chicago then, and Jim found he had money enough to go through one of them—in the front door and out the back. But he got his diploma and license to practise and started for one of the new towns in the West. I looked him up there a while ago. He comes pretty near to being the most prominent citizen of the town. He is a director in a national bank and the leading physician, and has officiated at the births of half the present population. Moreover, he is an enthusiastic church member. But how long do you think it would take for the whole town to turn against him if they should ever learn out there that he is 'Jimmy the Nibbler'? "Crooks that turn straight? Your next door neighbor, your family physician, even your clergyman, may be one of them. The world is full of them. There was one man, a professional thief, a fellow who had done time in half a dozen State prisons and penitentiaries, whom I used to labor with earnestly every time he got out, but he apparently never tried to reform. He was always doing time, it seemed. "I lost track of him for several years. Then, two years ago, when the National Association of Chiefs of Police was in session in Buffalo, I found a note in my box in my hotel signed by this man's name. He said

The Quarrel of Fishermen With Motor Boats

As the farmer hated the first automobile so the fisherman hated the motor boat. The farmer waived some of his prejudices when he began to ride in his own automobile, and the fisherman to some extent changed his viewpoint as he added the auxiliary to his sails. But there is even yet a feud between farmers and motorists, and the fishermen have a serious quarrel with the motor boats. They have also (the fishermen) a serious quarrel with the navy. They have made such complaints of the noise of gun practice by the battle ships that in some localities they induced the Navy Department to remove the ships. They charged that the fishing in certain bays or shore waters was entirely ruined at some seasons because the fish were frightened away by the firing of guns, and now everywhere along the coasts and in the big lakes and lower waters of the rivers they claim with equal force that another noise is a cause when fishing is poor.

So much of an issue is this motor boat question that on the treaty coast of Newfoundland, a scene of fishermen's strife for years, new difficulties have arisen over the Gloucester fishing boats with motors, and Canada has refused to license them. We must admit some sympathy with this outcry. Except our neighbor's car, which chugs away under our window most any hour of the night, there is nothing more hateful than the incessant pop of the little naphtha vehicles that infest the water when we are out for a sail or are guiding our graceful canoe. Small wonder the poor fish should find his life quite unendurable and forsake his native shores!

exceedingly noisy seven horse power motorboat exploding above him. With the escape pipe in the air, the sound was faintly audible under water. With the escape muffled under water, the sound was even fainter. But neither muffled nor unmuffled did the thing like the human ears under water with anything like the force of penetration with which it affects the people on shore. This, of course, does not prove how loud the sound might be to a fish's organs of hearing. But Professor Parker then penned up some fish in the "heart" of a and forth while he watched the fish. Not a sign of disturbance did they give, no matter whether the explosion were muffled or unmuffled. "Then the fishes were tested with baited lines. While backed up from a distance of about fifty feet. Not until the boat was six feet away did the nibbling stop, and as soon as the boat withdrew about six or eight feet more, the fishes returned to the bait. They might have been frightened away by the churning of the water and not by the noise. But however that was, almost upon them.

Observations disclosed that when the bass viol string was sounded the fish jumped, or otherwise showed that it was disturbed. This was because the sounding board, in direct contact with the water, vibrated, and communicated its vibrations to the water, whence the fish received them on his lateral line, his scales and skin, or his ears, or all of these together as might be. So also when the tuning fork took the place of the bass viol string. But if the sounding board were discarded and the tuning fork merely sounded in the room where the aquarium might be, or if two balls should be clicked together over the tank, the fish would be found to pay the very least bit of attention, if any, provided he had been blinded and could not see what was happening.

And there is the crux of the matter. It is not that the fish can not hear, but that they are out of reach from which sounds are reflected. Let two persons stand in the water and one of them ring a bell or fire a pistol. Their ears are deafened by the sound almost. But let one of these people plunge his head under water when the noise occurs, and he will hardly hear it; or let the bell be rung under water when the listener's head is above, and again the sound will be nearly lost.

The fishermen's case against naval gun practice has not been so thoroughly demolished, for it has been difficult to find a time and a way to carry out the tests. But Professor Parker did find that the effect of a saluting charge of two pounds of powder from a six to elicit any notice from fishes on a revenue cutter Gresham failed away. A fowling piece discharged a few feet from fishes in a cage caused them to forsake some bait they were nibbling, but they returned to it in half a minute. Thus, according to Professor Parker's findings there is very little scientific evidence to support the fishermen's complaint. The motor boat question, particularly under water comes with such gradual force, from a distance, and never sharply and suddenly, that the little fish, hear gives them no alarm. But even in the case of the guns it is not probable that fish would be permanently driven away if they were disturbed. They return at once to the place where their food is to

And there is, of course, classic authority for the fishermen's contentions. Did not Isaac Walton himself tell how necessary it was for the angler to be quiet lest his talk or his movements on shore give alarm to the fish he was trying to catch? And if there were still doubt that fishes note noises there is that Austrian monastery, where the fish in the ponds came up to be fed when the monks periodically rang the bells. Only the ruthless scientist would attempt to upset such facts. But the world is developing ruthless scientists, along with its big guns and motorboats. The fishermen, having existed from time immemorial, do not

eration of Labor, have lifted a hand to help us in cleaning up the big dynamite conspiracy either before or after the McNamara confessions at Los Angeles today," said Oscar Lawyer, special government prosecutor for the district of southern California. He and John D. Fredericks, prosecuting attorneys of Los Angeles, conferred with Charles W. Miller, U. S. attorney, before the federal grand

jury of this district today resumed its inquiry into the alleged country-wide dynamiting plot. RECORD OUTPUT AT GLACE BAY MINES. GLACE BAY, January 3.—The past year was a record one for both the Dominion Coal and the Dominion Steel companies. The Coal Company had not only a record output of four millions of tons of coal, but the output for December was a new record for that month in any previous year by a big increase. The output in December was approximately 321,000 tons, which is 55,000 tons better than the best December figures since 1897. The Steel Company also broke all records for output in December in

Baffling Hotel Robberies.

"Several years ago there was a series of hotel robberies in New York that baffled the police. The thief always worked with keys, opening doors and then unlocking baggage left in rooms, and he always got away with the goods. At last one night the word came to headquarters that a man had been caught in one of the big hotels who was suspected of being the author of all the robberies. I was visiting Chief Devery at the time and he asked me to go with him to the West Thirtieth street station to look the man over. "The man arrested was a well dressed, respectable looking little man, with a white beard—the last man who would be taken for a thief if seen in a hotel corridor. His face was vaguely familiar to me, but I had some difficulty in placing him. Finally it struck me. I had seen him nearly thirty years before on the occasion of a big prize fight in New Orleans, when he had been arrested for the same trick. It came over me like a flash, and I told him I knew him. "What's the use of making trouble?" he asked. "These fools don't know anything about me unless you put them wise."

"I told Chief Devery what I remembered about the man, who protested violently that he had never been in New Orleans in his life. Then another thought struck me. "You've been in New Orleans more than once," I said. "The last time was about six months ago, when you got Denman Thompson's diamonds in the St. Charles Hotel." I remembered the report of that case, but it was a chance shot on my part, for no one had seen the thief. The old fellow denied this vigorously. "He was wearing a new derby hat. I don't know what impulse prompted me, but I took the hat off his head and looked inside. It bore the mark of a New Orleans hatter. "The Chief and I left the station and had just turned into Sixth avenue when I remembered the old fellow's name. We went back to the station house and I confronted him again. I told him his name. He denied that it was his. "What's the use of making trouble, Mr. Pinkerton?" he pleaded. His inadvertent use of my name, which had not been mentioned there, gave him away. "I don't know what kind of a case the police here have on you," I told him, "but we are retained by the Jewellers Protective Association, and if you get after any jewelry drummers I'll make it hot for you." And as a precaution I got his photograph from the New York police. They didn't have much of a case on him and he got off.

"Not long after a jewelry drummer was robbed in a Chicago hotel of about three thousand dollars' worth of diamonds which he had carelessly left in his grip instead of putting them in the safe. The same day a friend of mine who was stopping in another hotel lost his new overcoat and told me about it. I thought of the old man in the first job, and found a chambermaid and bellboy who had seen him on the floor, but didn't connect him with the second because he had never stolen anything but very valuable articles, so far as I knew. My friend had to leave for New York that night, and some time in the evening I got a telegram from him which had been filed in Fort Wayne. "Positive man who got my coat is in same sleeper, ticketed to New York," it read. I wired my friend at a point farther along the line to get off at Pittsburg and hold a white handkerchief in his hand so he could be identified and be prepared to point out the thief. Then I got in touch with Pittsburg by wire, and sure enough back came the man who had been identified, and found on him besides the overcoat about \$3,000 worth of diamonds. I asked for a description, and the one they wired fitted that of the man I had seen in New York. I referred Pittsburg that week in a police periodical, and they were sure they had the same man. And so it proved. He was brought back to Chicago and convicted of the jewelry theft. He served a short sentence, and when he got out he came to me. "Mind you, this was an old man, who had been a thief all his life—I had known him as a thief more than thirty years before. It is criminals of that kind that are commonly regarded as the most difficult to reform, but even hardened and lifelong offenders like this man will go straight if they get the right kind of encouragement. I found this old man apparently anxious to be honest, but he had never had a chance after his first slip as a young man. I determined to do what I could for him and I got him a job in New York. He is more than seventy years old now, but he is still holding that job, and he hasn't made a false step since he got out of prison the last time. "Do criminals ever reform? I think I have told you enough to prove that they do—and I could tell you of hundreds of other instances if you needed any further proof."

OPPER JOHN HENDERSON was hurried at sea. Shortly after leaving London, Captain Henderson developed a slight cold, which rapidly became serious, developing into pneumonia. Despite the ministrations of the many friends he had made among the passengers, all efforts to save the captain, John Henderson, at sea, on December 30th, of acute pneumonia, body was committed to the sea, all present joined in repeating prayers for the dead.

NO HELP FROM THE LABOR LEADERS. INDIANAPOLIS, January 3.—No union labor leaders, not even Samuel Gompers, head of the American Fed-

eration of Labor, have lifted a hand to help us in cleaning up the big dynamite conspiracy either before or after the McNamara confessions at Los Angeles today," said Oscar Lawyer, special government prosecutor for the district of southern California. He and John D. Fredericks, prosecuting attorneys of Los Angeles, conferred with Charles W. Miller, U. S. attorney, before the federal grand

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of their various steel departments, particularly at the blast furnaces and the coke ovens and plants. "Goff & Co's traveler has gone East with Nobby samples of spring Boots. He will be West in a couple of weeks. 1-644.