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Criminals who Pose as Detectives.
A detective is one of the last men in the world anyone would suspect of felonious designs, said an ex Scotland Yard official, and that, I suppose, is the reason why some of our cleverest thieves have been able to bring off many successful coups under the guise of an officer of the law.

Not many years ago a man who posed as a detective-inspector called at a West-end house and asked to see the master. "I have called, sir," he said to the latter, "to put you on your guard against a very ingenious thief wearing a uniform similar to mine, who will probably pay you a visit. He will begin by warning you that someone is going from house to house dressed as a policeman and cautioning householders against a certain thief. And then, continued the inspector, approaching the sideboard on which were some magnificent silver candlesticks and a small salver, "he will take up such things as these, pretending to show you exactly what the thief's movements are, and will thrust them into his pocket, so"—suing the action to the word—"all the time warning you against the pretended policeman, and then—he will bolt." And as he said it the inspector made a dash from the room, carrying the silver with him. Need I say that he was never seen again?

In another case a West-end jeweller was victimized in an equally plausible way. A fashionably-dressed man came into his shop, and after purchasing a small gold pencil-case tendered a £20 note in payment, receiving the change. Scarcely had he left the premises when a man in police uniform entered. "The man who has just gone out gave you a £20 note, didn't he?" he asked the jeweller, who, of course, answered "Yes."

"Well! you will be sorry to hear that that note is a forgery," continued the gentleman in uniform. "I have been on his track some time, and now I have got him. One of my men has just taken him off in custody, and I want you now to give me the forged note and follow me to—police station, where he will be charged." Unsuspectingly the jeweller handed over the note (which, as a matter of fact, was genuine enough), but when a few minutes later he presented himself at the station he found that nothing was known there of detective, prisoner or the note—and to this day they haven't declared themselves.

These pseudo detectives often reap a good harvest in holiday time. A few weeks ago two of them presented themselves at the house of Colonel—, a North-country squire, who was away yachting, and announced to the housekeeper that her master was under arrest on a charge of conspiracy, and that they had been sent down to look through and impound his papers.

The frightened housekeeper was, of course, powerless, and allowed the men to ransack the house from top to bottom. When, a few hours later, they drove away they carried with them valuables worth many hundreds of pounds; but the colonel on his return found his papers unmolested. Equally clever was the trick of a couple of burglars who one evening last winter called at a house in a northern suburb of London, and after handing in cards, on which they were described as detectives, explained their mission to the lady of the house. Information had reached them that a notorious gang of burglars had arranged to visit the house that night, and they had come with the object of secreting themselves and catching the burglars in the act.

The story was plausible enough, and the frightened lady of the house not only agreed to the proposal of the detectives, but, with her daughter, sought refuge in a neighbouring house, leaving her three female domestics and their gallant protectors in full possession. When the morning dawned it was evident that the burglars had carried out their programme thoroughly, for the house was stripped of everything that was valuable, but no trace of the detectives could be found. Possibly they were so ashamed of their failure to make an arrest that they did not like to show

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themselves, or, as it gradually dawned on the good lady, perhaps they themselves were the burglars.

A similar case was reported not long ago when a guileless country jeweller actually allowed a so-called detective to spend a night in his shop in order to catch an expected burglar. Of course, in the morning he, too, was nowhere to be seen, although it was clear that a burglary had been committed.

A very heartless case of the kind happened last March. A well-to-do widow lady in Highbury received a call from a detective, who informed her that her daughter, who had gone on a shopping excursion to the West-end, had been caught in the act of stealing lace from the counter of a well-known shop, and her mother's presence was needed to bail her out.

The mother, in terrible distress, rushed to her bedroom to dress for the journey; but when, a few minutes later, she returned to the drawing-room where she had left the detective, she found that he had flown, taking with him a quantity of valuables, including a collection of silver antiques, an old family seal, and many other small treasures. Fortunately, at that moment the daughter made her appearance, and the sight of her, free and happy, was some compensation to the mother for the cruel trick that had been practised on her.—Tit-Bits.

Affairs In Finland.

The national spirit of the Finns has not been crushed by the various measures adopted to effect their Russianization. Reports have just leaked out of a meeting that was held in Helsingfors in the middle of November. Between two and three hundred persons were present, including a number of farmers and representatives of the working classes. Among other resolutions adopted was the following: "That this assembly considers it imperative, for the maintenance of our political and national existence, to continue everywhere, unswervingly, and until legal conditions are restored to the country, the passive resistance against all measures conflicting with, or calculated to abolish, our fundamental laws." What is meant by passive resistance the Russia authorities well know. It implies a dogged refusal to comply with any regulation which is held to conflict with the immemorial rights of the nation. One result of this attitude of the people was the failure of the attempt to carry into effect the new army edict at the army levy last spring, when about 60 per cent. of the young men refused to present themselves. It was predicted in the Russian press that the recent ordinances would quell resistance, but it is plain that they have had no such effect. The meeting also passed a vote of confidence against the Senate for their lack of firmness in withstanding Russification and their misplaced zeal in furthering illegal measures.

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