

## *A Detective Story*

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How a Boston Criminal Was Betrayed by His Favorite Expression.

I heard on State street an authentic story of detective acuteness. Everybody is familiar with the trick that many men have of capping whatever they hear said, when they do not dissent, with some favorite expression. Thus, one man says "precisely," another "exactly;" and there is a considerable faction for whom the words "just so," or "to be sure," seem to fill the required need. Not long ago, a Boston man stole a large sum of money from his employers, and fled to the West. A description of him was sent to detectives and police superintendents generally, and about a month after his escape, a Minnesota officer telegraphed that he thought he had his eye upon the person wanted. His appearance, however, was very different from that described in the circular. The situation was a pressing one; if the supposed criminal was such in fact, he might at any moment fly to Canada; on the other hand, to arrest an innocent person would cause a great deal of trouble. The object was to identify the man if possible within a few hours. In this emergency the Boston detective in charge of the case examined and cross-examined the thief's employers as to his peculiarities. They could hit upon nothing distinctive till finally the detective inquired—in a moment of inspiration—if he had any particular way of expressing himself. "Yes," was the reply; "I never knew the fellow to talk three minutes without saying 'I believe you.'" In half an hour the information was telegraphed to the West; within four hours the Minnesota detective had a long chat with his man, and before night the thief was arrested. There is a hint here, it seemed to me, for the fabricators of plots. —*Boston Post*.

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