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OBSERVATION.

The notes on observation which follow have been compiled for the use of officers who may have had no practical experience in observation work. The notes are not intended to be taken as an exhaustive treatise on watching, but as an introduction to the subject and as indicating some of the more important elementary principles to be observed. Success in observation can be achieved only through long and arduous experience, but the principles here indicated will put the beginner on the right lines and may help him to avoid some of the more obvious difficulties which may otherwise bring him to grief.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

'S' SUSPECT.

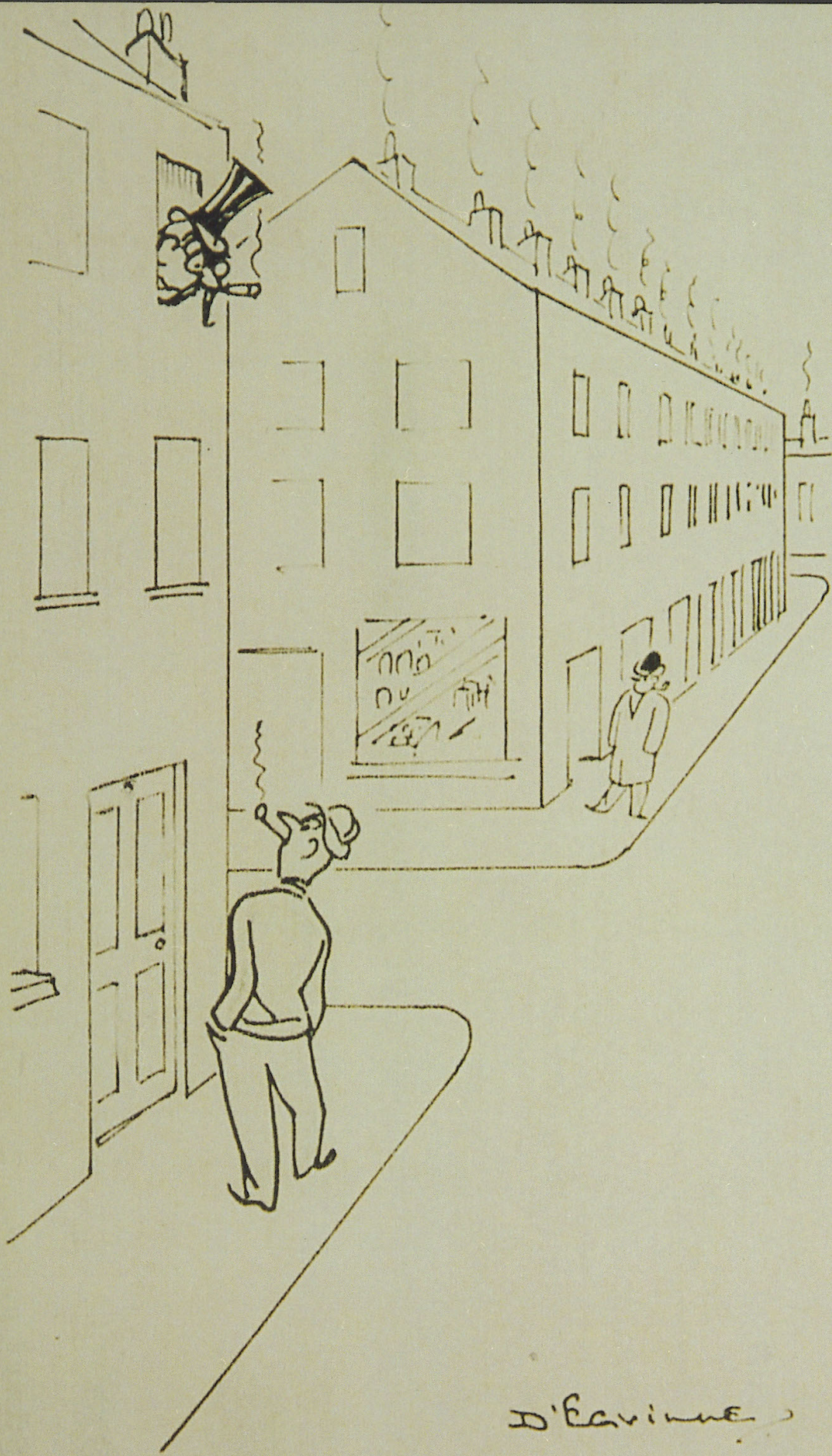
'A' } OBSERVERS.
'B' }

FRONTISPIECE 'S' at home.

CENTRE PAGES—1. 'S' leaves home.

2. 'S' takes a walk.

FACING PAGE 10.—'S' pays a call.



D'Ervinne

OBSERVATION.

OBSERVATION is a very onerous and exacting profession. Screen sleuths of the Secret Service thriller or detective novel appeal to the uninitiated, but in actual practice there is little glamour and much monotony in such a calling as "observation." A successful watcher is a rarity, and though 'many are called, few are chosen,' and even then not more than a very small proportion of those engaged in such work can be considered first class.

After many years' experience of watching and following, the writer is forced to the conclusion that the ideal watcher is born and not made, and unless he has a natural flair for the work he will never rise above a mediocre standard. At various times hundreds of men have been interviewed as prospective trainees but very few have been accepted, for the reason that when tried out they are found to lack the one essential qualification, viz., patience, and to have engaged them would have been unfair to tried men who would be called upon to carry passengers every time a tricky spot of watching became necessary.

The ideal watcher should not be more than 5ft. 7ins. or 5ft. 8ins. in height, looking as unlike a policeman as possible. It is a mistake to use

men who are too short as they are just as conspicuous as tall men. A watcher should be of rather a nondescript type; good eyesight is essential, also good hearing, as it is often possible to overhear a suspect's conversation. He should be active and alert, as it frequently occurs that a suspect hastily boards, or alights from a fast-moving vehicle. Above all a watcher must be a quick thinker, capable of acting on the spur of the moment.

A watcher must adapt himself to the locality in which he is called upon to keep observation, *e.g.*, he must wear old clothes, cap, muffler, etc., in the slum quarters, and be better dressed for the West End where he frequently has to enter hotels, blocks of residential flats or office buildings. In short, it is the watcher's job to carry on in such a manner as not to bring undue notice to himself from local residents.

The use of facial disguise is not recommended. It may be considered essential in Secret Service films but in practice it is to be deplored. A false moustache or beard is easily detected, especially under the high lights of a restaurant, pub, or in a tube train.

In many cases close observation is the only means of discovering a suspect's contacts and obtaining the essential evidence for prosecution, BUT the watching must be conducted with

care in *every* case. Careless watching is not only useless but may result in serious harm to an important case. Unskilful observation is of the greatest benefit to the suspect when he is aware that he is under observation, for, if he is clever, he will cover his tracks by assuming the actions and demeanour of an innocent person, and as a consequence the chance will be lost of obtaining incriminating evidence. On the other hand the accurate reporting of a suspect's movements has sometimes re-acted to his advantage at his ultimate interrogation, when, in any case, it will be realised such reporting is essential for testing the accuracy of the suspect's statements.

OBSERVATION TIPS AND WRINKLES.

PICKING UP THE SUSPECT.

From his address.

If a full description is available together with a recent photograph the job is simplified. If there is no description, then one must adopt a process of elimination to find the right person from among all the residents—often a long procedure.

Take up a position some distance from the address, on the same side if possible, or some distance away on the other side. Be careful to be out of view of the suspect's rooms.

FOLLOWING IN THE STREET.

Keep about 25-30 yards behind the quarry, and when on the move by foot it is preferable to keep on the opposite pavement, except in very busy streets. Whenever possible, have two watchers, one on the same side of the street, and the other on the opposite.

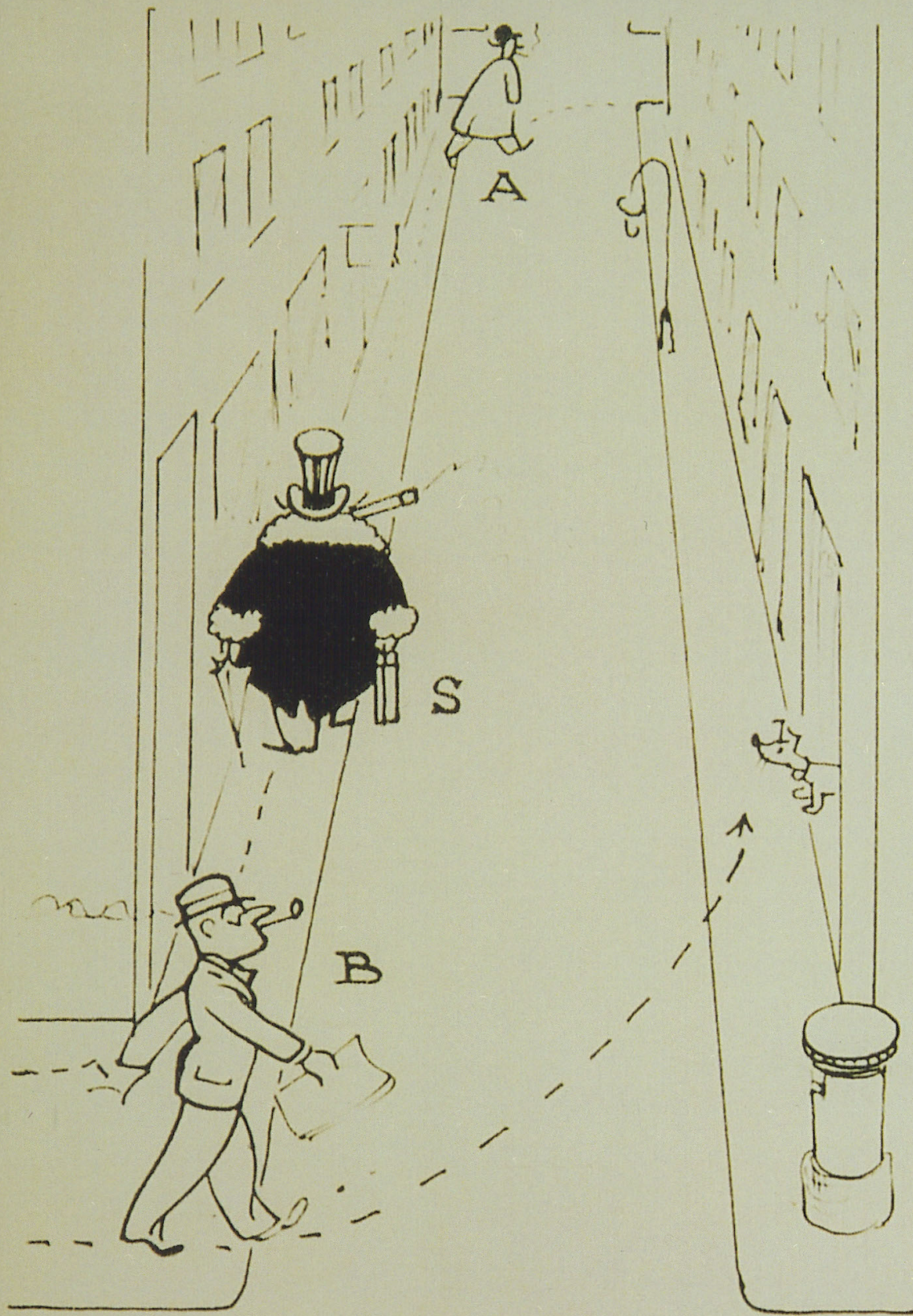
Shorten the distance from the suspect before reaching a corner, and at the corner make a detour, wide, if possible, in order to avoid the suspect if he halts suddenly and turns round.

Be prepared for the suspect to board a moving vehicle such as a bus, tram or train, or hailing a cruising taxi, or any other such device to shake off a 'tail.'

The watcher must be prepared to think and act one jump ahead of the suspect, and if the latter does board a bus and mounts to the top, one watcher should take a seat or stand just inside the platform. If the suspect goes inside a bus one watcher should take a seat immediately behind him if possible, even at the risk of being noticed, and the second watcher should then be prepared to cover the first and carry on alone if the first is obliged to drop out.

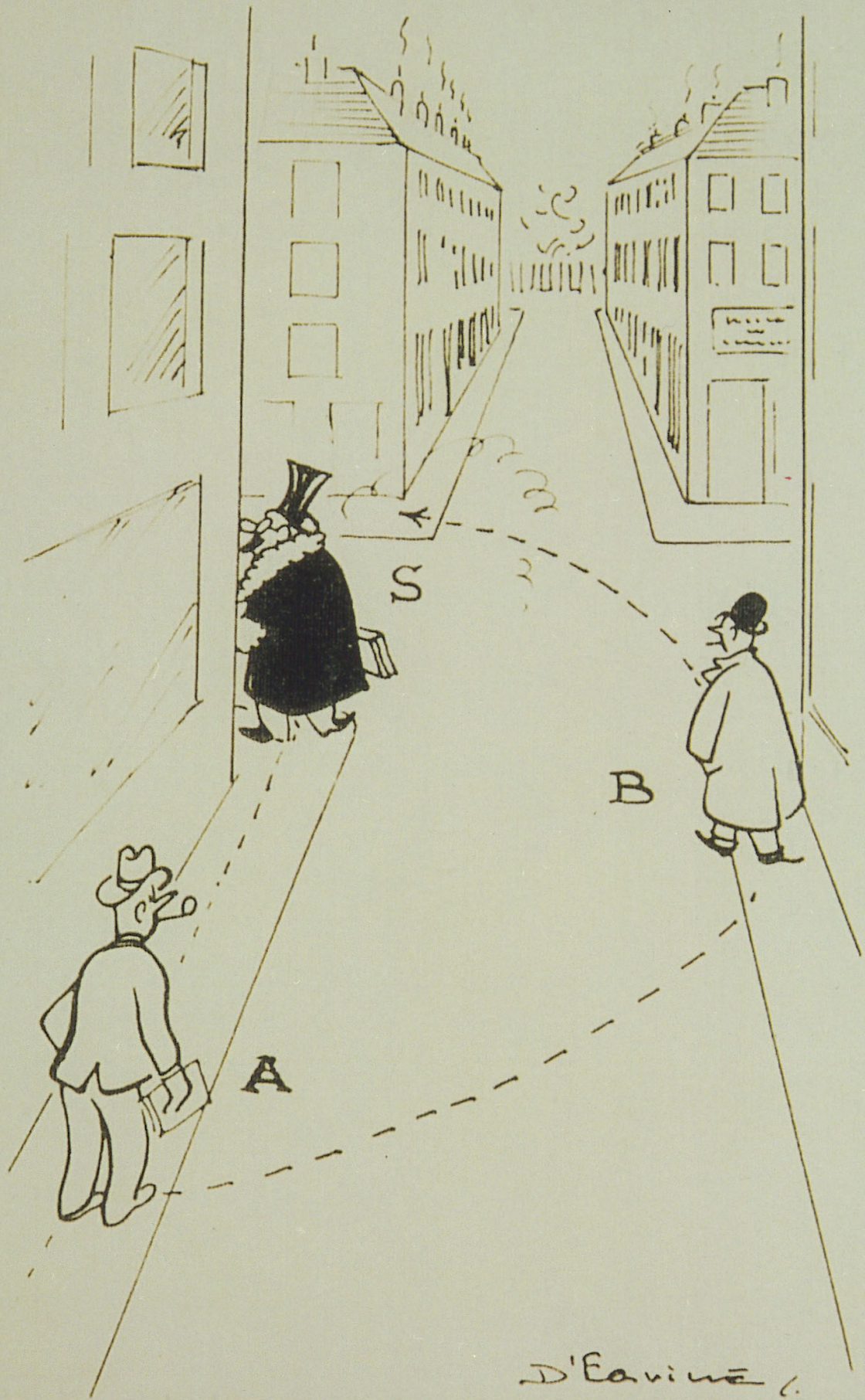
ON THE UNDERGROUND.

When travelling by Underground and booking a fare, if the suspect's destination cannot be overheard, take a ticket from a slot machine and have



D'Ewne,

'A' spots him coming—walks on apace,
'B' crosses over to take up the chase.



D'Eavine

'S' turns the corner, 'B' takes the lead.
'A' watches 'B' till its safe to proceed.

plenty of spare change ready at the other end to pay the excess if necessary: pay the collector a little extra rather than argue with him and lose your suspect. On escalators, especially where they lead directly on to platforms or street exits, gradually close up to the suspect. When he is suspicious a suspect will often board a train just before the doors close, making himself the last one on the train, or he may alight at the last moment: so do not give him any rope on such occasions.

ENTERING BLOCKS OF FLATS OR OFFICES.

When entering buildings or blocks of flats, again use common sense. If possible precede the suspect, enter the lift and take a position at the back; do not accompany a suspect in a small lift or where it is worked automatically, but judge the floor he uses from the action of the lift and the place at which it stops, or by making a rapid mounting of the stairs. A subsequent observation with the knowledge thus acquired will often get the suspect housed.

IN A RESTAURANT.

If a suspect uses a restaurant or café it is essential to see his contacts. If he feeds alone then entry and exit should follow each other rapidly. If he makes a contact, then a full description of the person should be memorised with a view to subsequent picking up from such a

description. If it is necessary to remain in a hotel, restaurant or café, be sure to be in a position to make a hurried exit—have such exits noted, have the bill ready for payment with plenty of loose change—don't be delayed at the cash desk.

HOUSING SUSPECTS.

When housing contacts of suspects be certain of the number, name of the road or street, and the district—this is not easy in these days of black-out. Ascertain if possible whether the contact entered by key, knocking or ringing, or by communal doorway, as this may give some indication whether he resides at or visits this address; be prepared to take up observation early next day to confirm your suspicions. If the address is in a quiet street, observation has to be maintained from a distance, so be in a situation to keep watch on a definite mark or be able to get a silhouette of anyone leaving the doorway.

FOLLOWING BY TAXI.

If a taxi is used to follow a suspect or contact, then it is desirable immediately to take the number of the cab being followed. Choose, if possible, a modern cab for following and entuse a little extra activity into the driver in order that he may avoid the suspect's detecting the following cab in mirrors or from the rear window; keep

your driver keen at traffic lights or traffic congestion, and generally co-opt his help. Concoct a suitable tale which may go down with the cabby, such as a divorce case, absconding husband or wife, and promise the driver a good tip.

TRAVELLING BY TRAIN.

Travel by train in wartime is difficult, but much the same procedure should be adopted as in the free and easy times. If possible, overhear the suspect's destination when he books and be guided accordingly as to booking a ticket, position to be occupied in the train, and the tactics to be used at the destination. Close or free observation will depend on the circumstances of travel, but invariably it has been found that close observation on the heels of the suspect produces the best results.

If the suspect gets away or has to be picked up by a relief at his destination, take note of the time of departure of the train, its scheduled time of arrival, how the suspect is travelling, *e.g.*, what class, how near from the front or rear, his baggage, whether light or heavy and any other encumbrances; and a full description of him, including his dress.

IN THE POST OFFICE.

There are excellent opportunities for investigation which may have important bearing on the

case. If the suspect goes to a writing desk it is often possible to get a brief glance at the name or address of the addressee should the suspect write a telegram, address a letter or postcard. If he goes to the counter the watcher can learn a lot if he gets close behind him.

OBSERVATION REPORTS.

The utmost care should be exercised in writing up observation reports. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that success or failure of a case depends in great measure on the exact times of a suspect's meetings with contacts, and the time spent in his or her company.

In instructions to watchers the following points should be brought out for their daily reports.

- (1) The hours when observation was commenced, interrupted, and finished.
- (2) All incidents, etc., however trivial.

- (3) The addresses of people contacted—these are important.
- (4) Suspect's demeanour under observation.
- (5) Full description of contacts.
- (6) Follow up enquiries as soon as possible after locating a contact
- (7) The daily reports should be written out at the first opportunity after the duty has been completed. When two watchers are employed on the same case they must compile their reports without collaboration.

AVOIDING RECOGNITION BY SUSPECTS.

Perhaps to wind up, it would be as well to mention the best methods experience has found to counter observation. Frequently a watcher has been 'dogged,' and here once again a watcher will use his common sense. He will probably leave home, walk round a block, return home, leave again and start off in another direction from his most direct route. He will know his own neighbourhood intimately and use such knowledge to alternate his means of conveyance by bus, tram or train, but always gradually making towards his objective and ascertaining at the same time if he has a 'tail.' If he finds he has, then it is his best plan to act normally but not to go anywhere near to his particular 'job.' A good



*This is a small lift—watcher beware
'S' does not spot you—best use the stair!!*

watcher will change his clothes daily if possible; change his route to and from home frequently; will not form habits such as that of drinking at any one public house at a particular time; will not frequent a particular restaurant or café; will be discreet on the telephone and will not mention names or addresses unless told to do so; he will make his notes with care, and above all will cultivate a good memory.

Finally, **REMEMBER**:—

Observation cannot be mastered from textbooks or lectures. Hard practical training in the street is the only way to bring out a man's aptitude for the job—generally a long process.

DON'T BELITTLE THE PERSON YOU ARE FOLLOWING. IF HE DOES APPEAR SIMPLE APPEARANCES ARE OFTEN DECEPTIVE.

