

Ninety Million Dollars in Ready Money

(Copyright, 1902, by Waldon Fawcett.)

IN the panic of 1893 there was a sudden call for bank notes from banks in all parts of the country. The demand, beginning in moderate terms, presently increased to enormous proportions. It wiped out the \$5,000,000 supply of bank notes in the treasury vaults in no time and still the call continued. The issue division of the Treasury department was set to work double tides in the effort to keep up the supply. It fell behind hopelessly from the first and at one time there were frenzied requests for some \$30,000,000 more than could be supplied. Naturally this increased the panic and aided in bringing about disaster and the authorities at Washington came in for severe criticism. Their answer was that the \$5,000,000 in bank notes on hand took up all the space available for such storage. "Provide more space, then," said the banking interests, and the government set about it.

The result of that complication is a wonderful new vault, just now completed, which will store \$90,000,000 in money. With this enormous sum on hand it is not probable that any demand will be able to exhaust the immediate resources. The new vault is twelve feet square and its walls rise to a height of twelve feet. The lining of Uncle Sam's new money chest is composed of Bessemer steel plates three-eighths of an inch in thickness, and these are securely fastened by means of huge screws and bolts to a frame work of steel, which is built into the masonry. All the pigeonholes, nearly 6,000 in number, are of steel and there is not an inch of inflammable material in the furnishings of the vault.

This receptacle of the nation's wealth is doubtless an object of deep longing to some thousands of gentlemen who make a living by helping themselves to other people's money in ways not sanctioned by the law, but it would be a very remarkable crack-

man, or array of cracksmen, for that matter, who should get anywhere near the \$90,000,000 securely nested in the new vault. This new vault can be entered only through the old vault and its location is impossible to determine from the outside of the building. The government has even gone so far as to put in false windows, heavily curtained, to deceive anyone who might try to determine the resting place of the treasure from outside. Two special guards who have for years done sentry duty over the bank notes guard the new vault as they guarded the old. But even if these guards could be overcome the bank robber who had reached the entrance to the vault—which he could never do, by the way—would be able to get no further, for the doors are practically impregnable. It was not so always. There was a time when a committee of investigation invited a delegation of bank burglars to experiment on the doors. The committee believed that the place was pretty secure. The gentlemen of the jimmy examined the situation carefully, smiled, did a few minutes' work with their tools and said to the investigating committee, "After you, gentlemen," as they bowed before the opened entrance. Now there are duplicate locks on those doors and the whole construction is so compact that nothing but dynamite would have much effect upon it.

Aside from this passive protection in all its various forms the gigantic storehouse of wealth opposite the White House has the benefit of one of the most complete systems of guards ever devised. About seventy watchmen are employed and they work in three reliefs, patrolling the entire building at all hours of the day and night. In the office of the captain of the watch are recording instruments to which each watchman must send an automatic report once every half hour while on duty. The captain's office is continually in communication with the chief of police of Washington, the commandant at Fort Meyer and the com-



LOADING GOLD ON UNITED STATES TREASURY WAGON.

mandant of the Washington arsenal, so that in the event of an emergency the police or a cavalry force could instantly be summoned.

Stacked in the various parts of the building where money is stored are sufficient weapons to arm over a thousand men and quantities of ammunition. The interior of the building is also honeycombed with wires to facilitate quick communication and should any foolhardy robber attempt to intimidate the treasurer, assistant treasurer or cashier, the official would only have to press a button under his hand to bring an armed force to his assistance in less than thirty seconds. At 5 o'clock each day all the doors of the Treasury building are closed save those at the main entrance, and by 6 o'clock every person save the watchmen must have left the building and the keys to all the various doors been delivered to the captain of the watch. Assisting the guards on the inside are a number of outside watchmen stationed in sheltered posts or watch houses, so disposed as to command every foot of the exterior of the building and its approaches.

The transfer of the newly printed currency from the Bureau of Printing and Engraving to the Treasury department and the dispatch of consignments of bank notes from the national treasure house to the railroad stations is characterized by watchfulness equally thorough. Some of the wagons employed are virtually great iron

safes on wheels. Two guards occupy the seat with the driver, two others have places on top of the van, and a trio of employees stand upon a broad step at the rear. All are, of course, fully armed. For the delivery of express shipments of coin and currency there are employed wagons with heavy iron screens, and these, like the vans just mentioned, are protected by armed guards on the inside and outside. No attempt has ever been made to hold up one of these wagons. Nothing less than an artillery company would have much chance of success, as the wagons are practically fortresses, as well as safes.

The guarding of the national treasure, in which such a marvelous precautionary system is employed, in reality commences at a point in the governmental money-making long before the currency has come into existence as such. The mill at Dalton, Mass., where is manufactured the "distinctive" paper on which the United States currency is printed, is hedged about with safeguards designed to prevent not only the theft of the precious fabric, but also to insure the secrecy of the chemical and mechanical processes whereby there are provided the two lines or bands of loose colored silk fiber which appear in each specimen of paper money and upon which the government relies largely for protection against imitations. An amazingly intricate and complex system of safeguards prevails at the Bureau of Printing and Engraving at

Washington, where are printed all the currency, government bonds and other securities, particularly as regards the engraved plates, as the theft of a package of bank notes would be a small matter compared to the loss of plates which would print the face and reverse of a bank note, and which would confer upon their possessor a virtually inexhaustible fount of riches.

The responsibility for the safety of the printing plates really rests upon three men. Each of the large doors of the vaults contains three combination locks, one of which is operated by each member of the trio of trusted employees. It is necessary that all three men be present in order to open any door and should one of them be absent all work in the big printing establishment would be at a standstill unless he had deputed some person to represent him and informed him of the combination of the lock over which he has custody. In more than a quarter of a century not a single plate in use at the Bureau of Printing and Engraving has been lost, but a few months ago some persons succeeded in securing several sheets of printed currency and it has not been possible as yet to apprehend the culprits. However, in view of the relentless, untiring policy which the United States secret service always follows in such cases, it may be taken for granted that it will only be a matter of time until the thief is placed behind prison bars.

WALDON FAWCETT.



TREASURY EMPLOYE WHO HAS CHARGE OF MILLIONS.

Episodes and Incidents in the Lives of Noted People

A FRIEND of William C. Whitney the other day spoke of the latter gentleman's lavish style of entertainment. Mr. Whitney said in reply: "I have the money and can afford the expenditure. It is the duty of every rich man to spend as much as he can afford, and that is my way of helping those less fortunate than myself. Better give employment than give alms."

Stuart Robson, the actor, was once a page in the United States senate, his appointment having been due to the efforts of such distinguished southerners as John C. Calhoun, Jefferson Davis, Henry Clay, Robert Toombs and Alexander Stephens. He and his playmate, Arthur Pue Gorman, went from Baltimore to Washington and the man who is now senator from Maryland succeeded in being appointed page at once, but Robson was kept waiting for a time.

Rev. Peter MacQueen of Charlestown, Mass., says that in a small town in Scotland he recently came across an old man seated by the roadside, apparently in much distress. Believing a helping hand could be given, or the monotony of his own travel relieved, he approached the old man and began conversation. The latter, on learning that the pastor was from America, became interested and several times during the conversation asked of several people whom he had known to leave the town for America. Among other names mentioned was that of Andrew Carnegie, of whom he had evidently heard little since his departure for this country. Mr. MacQueen said he had heard of Mr. Carnegie. "They tell me 'Andy' is doing quite well in America," said the old man. "The poor old fellow was a schoolmate of mine," he continued, "and many a day we spent fishing together. He never had much sense."

It has just been announced that General H. W. Carpenter was the donor of the \$100,000 presented to Columbia university some time ago for the founding of a chair of Chinese language and literature. The note which accompanied the letter of donation said that the money had been saved from

tobacco and whisky. General Carpenter says that that expression has been greatly misconstrued. Most people, he asserts, have construed the statement to mean that the money had been earned in the tobacco and whisky trade, while he intended to say that he had saved the sum donated by total abstinence from the use of tobacco and whisky.

Comment has been made on the small amount—between \$30,000 and \$35,000—left by Sir Walter Besant. It may, however, be safely asserted that, except Sir Walter Scott, no novelist has ever made such sums as would be regarded by men in the money market as wealth. Scott's income averaged for years \$50,000 a year. Dickens left \$400,000, Thackeray less, Bulwer Lytton, with a very keen eye for the main chance and a considerable but incumbered estate, \$400,000.

He was christened George Brinton McClellan Harvey when he was born up in Vermont, relates the Brooklyn Eagle. That was in the days when General McClellan had intense admirers and when there were men who did not admire him a little bit. He carried the name with him to the Springfield Republican when he told Samuel Bowles, who wanted him to work for nothing and board himself, that he would go back to Vermont before he would accept such terms. He still had the name when he came to New York. But when he bought the North American Review he dropped part of it and put his name on the front page as "George B. Harvey." He has just cut it still shorter, for it appears as "George Harvey" in Harper's Weekly, with the title of editor annexed. The next change will doubtless be to "G. Harvey" and then it may be cut to "G. H." and if he keeps it up he may write it simply "H—."

Although Maxime Gorki has been known as a writer only eight years, more criticisms have been devoted to him than to any Russian author except Tolstoi. He is only 33 years of age, was born in Nijni Novgorod, lost his father and mother before he was 9 years old and set out to make his way in the world at a very early age. He wandered

all over Russia, undergoing such privations and sufferings that on one occasion he tried to commit suicide. At last, after herding with rogues and vagabonds and tramps in both Europe and Asia, he discovered his vocation.

No one in the house is a better authority on fish than Representative Minor of Wisconsin. He is a disciple of Izaak Walton and during the summer spends much of his time with rod and line. Mr. Minor is said to be so expert with the rod that he can tell the difference between the bite of a black bass and a brook trout. Before coming to congress Mr. Minor was engaged in the shipping business.

"The late John T. Raymond and I had been matching dollars all the afternoon and he only ceased because of having to play that night, and the one sport that fascinated him completely had already kept him overtime," said William St. John to a Washington Times reporter.

"I went to hear him, as I always did when there was an opportunity, and chanced to sit in the very front row downstairs. After awhile Raymond came on and it wasn't a minute before he spied me. I saw him fumbling in his vest pocket while he was speaking his lines and noted a smile on his good-humored face. Presently, getting as close to me as he could, he said in a voice quite audible to all around me, while he held up a silver dollar: 'Heads or tails, Saint?'"

"I put my hand up to my head, which he translated in a flash, and, with the remark, 'You win,' went on with the performance. It was certainly as curious a by-play as was ever seen and the only time I suppose in the history of the stage when an actor actually gambled during the production of a play."

Senator Proctor owns nearly the whole town of Proctor, Vt., where he employs over 2,000 men in his vast quarries. He also owns the only store in the place—an enormous emporium, where almost anything may be purchased. Mr. Proctor pays good wages, but most of his earnings come

back to him through the store, though he sells goods more cheaply than they can be had elsewhere in that region.

Governor Crane of Massachusetts, who has just been re-elected by a vote the greatest in years, is a tall, quiet and reserved man. He is the head of a firm of papermakers who make the paper on which the United States bank notes are printed.

As chief executive of the state, relates the Saturday Evening Post, he has had a keen eye for the saving of expense and he found an excellent opportunity to exercise his economical bent at the time the state determined to assume control of the waterworks of the city of Boston and negotiations were on foot for the adjustment of the purchase price.

The very first day negotiations opened lawyers began to flock in to see both the governor and Mayor Hart of Boston and before a month had elapsed about half of the bar of the state were lined up, waiting for a retainer and expecting big fees to follow from settling the case for either one side or the other.

The governor became disturbed at the sight of it and at the prospect of the fees ahead. Yet there was a serious question in dispute between the city and the state and lawyers' fees seemed an unavoidable evil.

At the last moment, however, he called Mayor Hart by telephone and the two talked together. The next day there was a personal conference and the lawyers were told to wait a while. There were meetings each day and at length the lawyers were informed that a settlement had been reached between the two executives. The governor and mayor carried on all the negotiations. It was a matter of millions, but the best part of the affair was that they had saved about \$1,000,000 in fees—enough to run the plant for a year.

John D. Rockefeller is following the example of Gladstone and chopping wood merely as exercise on his road to health at his country seat in Pocantico hills. Mrs. Rockefeller herself looks after the preparation of her husband's meals. The lat-

ter can hardly eat a full meal as yet, for he is suffering considerably from indigestion. Beside his woodchopping Mr. Rockefeller exercises with dumbbells and in outdoor walking.

Pointed Paragraphs

Chicago News: The weak thing takes things easy.

Sense and beauty, like truth and novelty, are rarely combined.

Postage stamps are egotistical when they get stuck on themselves.

Actions may speak louder than words, but they don't lie as loud.

The pessimist is always throwing cold water on the optimistic fire of genius.

A wise man speaks well of his friends and of his enemies he speaks not at all.

Wrinkles tell the story of age to those who are able to read between the lines.

A man who loved and won says that the best man at a wedding isn't the groom.

There is a vast difference between second thoughts and second-hand thoughts.

Much of man's unhappiness is due to his getting what he expects, but doesn't want.

When people fly from the ills they have they should not fail to secure a return ticket.

Time is money to the unfortunate wrongdoer who is engaged in working out a fine.

It's a lucky thing for the average man that he doesn't know some of the things that other people know about him.

Feline Depravity

Chicago Tribune: "Oh, Horace!" wailed his wife, "I have just found out that Ajax, our beautiful Angora cat, has been leading a double life!"

"That makes eighteen, I suppose," said Horace. "What has he been doing?"

"You know I let him out every morning, because he seems to want to go and play out of doors. Well, I have discovered that he goes over to the Robinsons and lets them feed him and pet him!"