

# FAMOUS "GOLD BRICKS" OF HISTORY

Dr. Frederick A. Cook is not the first and very likely will not be the last to offer the public a "gold brick." In the way of great discoveries, says the Washington Post. The fakers have been found in all lands, and in almost all times, and their dealings have been in fake discoveries in science, in medicine, in literature. Some were successful in fooling the public for long periods; others were soon caught and exposed. For three centuries we have had among us persons persistently claiming that Shakespeare was a colossal faker, and palmed off on a credulous public the writings of one Bacon, as being the productions of his own brain and pen. The Baconites are still very strong in numbers and literary ability. Dr. Cook has had many predecessors and will no doubt have many successors in the years to come, and the people will continue to be gullible. P. T. Barnum, the great showman, said the people liked to be humbugged. That may be putting it pretty strong, but when we have once been humbugged it delights our souls to see somebody else get into the same category.

One of the greatest, if not the greatest, commercial fakes ever perpetrated upon the public was that of John Law in his famous Mississippi bubble, during the reign of Louis XV. France at that time was bankrupt, when along came a canny Scotchman, John Law, with his scheme to make all Frenchmen roll in wealth, and presented his plan to colonize Louisiana. Paper money, or rather paper promises, was to be the basis of this wealth, and he flooded the nation with his paper. Princes and peasants, nobles and clergy, men and women fought for the chances to subscribe for this stock. In one day he had all France rolling in wealth and on the next steeped worse than ever in poverty. Before the collapse, however, all Europe was in a craze to buy shares in the Mississippi company, and history says that at one time there were half a million foreigners in Paris eagerly speculating in the stocks and the prices rose to 15,000 francs a share. But the end came, and it came suddenly. No one except Law was looking for a break. He saw it coming and fled the kingdom.

Law found his example in what history knows as the "South Sea Bubble." This was a scheme that found its birth in the active brain of William Paterson, during the reign of Queen Anne. Paterson was the founder of the Bank of England, and had won high fame as a sound financier, so it was easy for him to find buyers for his shares when he placed the glittering South Sea scheme of colonization before the eyes of the people. He selected the Isthmus of Panama as the place to plant his colony. Advertisers of gold mines and other get-rich-quick schemes might find it to their advantage carefully to peruse the flamboyant pamphlets issued by Paterson nearly two centuries ago. After a while the end came: the colonists sickened and died, money became scarce in Scotland, and nobody wanted to purchase any more of the shares, and Panama was left to its fivers.

There have been fakers of history, and the name of Herodotus, like that of Abou ben Adhem, leads all the rest. He has always been called the "Father of History," because he was the first to attempt to put into concrete form the story of what the world had done and what it was then doing. For nearly 2,400 years he has been read with delight by scholars, and they freely admit that his historical "gold bricks" are so well garbed that they are almost as good as the genuine article.

Among the hosts of literary gold brick peddlers, Thomas Chatterton will ever stand at the head. "The marvelous boy that perished in his pride," when only 14 years of age, fooled all the literary people of England. Upon some old parchments he found among the things his father had left he pretended to have discovered fragments of ancient poems, sermons, and articles descriptive of the city churches, all written in the old lettering and spelling. They showed remarkable powers, both for a poet and a descriptive writer, and at once had all literary London agog. It was not long, however, before the literary world found that it had been hoaxed by a boy. Chatterton went to London at the age of 17 to make his way as a writer, but soon fell into habits of intemperance, and at the age of 18 he ended his life by drinking poison.

One of the popular poets of the present day in his early career handed out to the public a specimen gold brick which was so much like the genuine article that most of the literary critics were taken in. James Whitcomb Riley said, in a conversation with a friend, that he could write a poem that would be readily accepted as being an original by that master poetical genius of America, Edgar Allan Poe. A few days later a paper in a small Indiana town announced that among some rubbish in an attic an old book had been found that once belonged to Poe, and on the fly leaf was an

original and unpublished poem by that author. It attracted wide attention, and was almost universally accepted by the critics as genuine, but when an offer of a large sum came for the manuscript by a collector the fake was acknowledged.

It is hard to determine to what class the great Moon hoax properly belongs, whether among those against science or literature. So complete was it as a treatise on science and astronomy that it entrapped the great Arago into accepting it. Its author was a literary genius, with a very large knowledge of science and astronomy. It purported to be the story of how Sir John Herschel had constructed a powerful telescope, and had been able to bring the moon in so close a range of vision as to be able to distinguish animals and men moving on its surface. Known truths of science were so cleverly interwoven with the imaginary that the closest observer had hard work to distinguish between the false and the true.

The people of England have had at least two gold bricks offered them in the shape of spurious claimants to the crown. At least half a dozen claimants to be the Dauphin of France, the son of Louis XVI, who was supposed to have been starved to death during the French Revolution, have appeared at one time or another. In 1603 Otreffel, a monk, pretended to be Demetrius, son of the Czar Ivan, who had been murdered. We know little of any religious impostors prior to the coming of Christ, although the Bible tells us that several false Christs had arisen before the coming of One now acknowledged by the Christian world as the real Redeemer. But since his day claimants of divine rights have been many. Mahomet, perhaps, is clearly entitled to stand at the head, and today his followers are counted by the millions.

Evidently getting his inspiration from the story of Mahomet, Joseph Smith, the father of Mormonism, discovered his Bible written on plates of gold, which had been hidden for ages until the angel guided him to the hiding place. The first book of Mormon did not contain all the present creed of that sect, but was added to from time to time by Smith, who, like his prototype, Mahomet, had visions many, in which he talked with God. In the year 743 one Adelbert, a Gaul, pretended to have received a letter from Christ, which had fallen down from heaven as he walked the streets, and was picked up by him. He soon obtained many followers, who went out into the wilderness and lived as John the Baptist had lived, on locusts and wild honey. They soon fell under the ban of Rome and were put down.

Spain furnished one of the most successful and most impudent of his class of impostors in one Gonsalvo Marten, who in 1360 claimed to be the angel Gabriel who had been sent down to earth to reform the churches and drive out error. Lady Hester Stanhope, the favorite niece of William Pitt, the great minister of Great Britain, withdrew to Syria, and there declared herself to be the bride of the Messiah.

America has furnished its share of religious enthusiasts. Among them William Miller stands out the most prominent, because of the number of converts he made. In these later days we have had Alexander Dowie, Elijah II, with his noted city Zion and his many troubles with the courts. But it would take page after page to tell of all the religious fakes that have led the people at one time or another.

One of the most impudent as well as successful fakes ever perpetrated was that of the Cardiff giant, or petrified man. In making some excavations near the town of Cardiff, in Onondago County, New York, the workmen unearthed this supposed petrification, or at least this was the claim made by those who were engineering the thing. It was taken over the country and put on exhibition in all the large cities, proving to be a drawing card for the exhibitors, who reaped a comfortable fortune from it. The whole thing was a fake. (It had been cut in Chicago out of a block of gypsum.)

Forgeries for political purposes have been quite common in America. The most noted of these is the Morey letter of 1880, when Gen. Garfield was the Republican candidate for the presidency. The letter pretended to have been written in reply to one addressed to him by Morey, in which Gen. Garfield took strong grounds against the exclusion of the Orientals.

A few years later another political letter, which, however, was not a forgery, caused a widespread commotion in this country and resulted in the calling home of the British minister at the suggestion of President Cleveland. Mr. Cleveland was a candidate for re-election, and the tariff was in issue. A pretended former subject of Queen Victoria wrote to Mr. Sackville-West, the British minister, saying that while he was an American by adoption he desired to vote in the way that would do the most good to Great Britain, and asked for his opinion as to what effect the tariff would have on the meth-



DR. COOK'S NOTORIOUS FORERUNNER.

er country. It was a political trap and ought not to have deceived even a tyro in politics, but the minister fell headlong into the trap and replied, advising his correspondent to vote for Mr. Cleveland.

The most infamous of all such forgeries was that perpetrated in May, 1864, by two newspaper men of New York City. The two parties were preparing to enter upon a new political campaign, and the government was putting forth its strongest efforts to put an end to the Civil War. One night, just as all the morning papers were about to go to press, a proclamation, written on Associated Press paper, and purporting to come from the office of the association, was delivered at all of the New York newspaper offices. The proclamation bore the signature of President Lincoln, and was written in the most depressing spirit, giving new details of the horrible slaughter on the Southern battlefields, and calling for a new levy of 400,000 men. The effect of such a proclamation, written in such a vein, may well be imagined.

How many Philadelphia capitalists mourn the dollars which disappeared from their coffers into the cavernous and rapacious maw of the Keeley motor, that mysterious invention that was to revolutionize the mechanical world! A twin brother to the Keeley motor was the Logansport, Ind., lamp that, once lighted, was to go on and on, like the brook, and never need replenishing or trimming. The light went out, and so did the inventor, taking with him the good hard dollars of a hundred or so of his dupes.

Pittsburgh millionaires, Cleveland bankers, New York capitalists and diamond dealers all paid tribute, and heavy tribute, to the brilliant and mysterious schemes of Cassie Chadwick, just as the Parisian money-makers did to the Humbert family.

Since history first began to be written there have been fakers ready to make diamonds out of charcoal and transmute base metal into the purest of gold, and they all found willing dupes.

Americans of the last generations laughed and grew fat over the fakes offered them by that prince of showmen, Phineas T. Barnum. The world will never again see his like. There was Joice Heth, the negress, 161 years old, who had once belonged to Augustine Washington, the father of the immortal George, and who was an eye-witness to the cutting down of the cherry tree. Dis de Bar, with her spirit pictures, has been exposed time and again. Of faking travelers we have had hundreds of them. Witness Americus Vesputius, who gave to our continent its name. He faked the honors which belonged to Columbus, and saw many lands no one else has seen. There was Sir John Mandeville and Marco Polo. They had their believers in their day, but in this iconoclastic age they are put down as fakers.

It is not so many years ago that the false Roger Ticheborne handed out to the English people a first-class gold brick when he set up his claim to vast estates. He won notoriety and a long term in prison. There was Peter Ney, the North Carolina school teacher, who some fourscore years ago had nearly all the people in the two Carolinas ready to back him as Napoleon's greatest marshal, Michael Ney.

There have been deceptions which accomplished a good purpose. Take that of the Cid, who died on the field of battle, and his officers tied him, clothed in full armor, on the back of his war steed, sitting upright with sword clasped in his mailed hand,

Nearly three centuries ago there was a great explorer, who sought the Northwest passage, which was the dream of explorers in the seventeenth century as the North Pole has been the dream of explorers of a later generation. He had made several attempts to find that mysterious and elusive passage to Cathay, and at last had been told of a mighty river far in the interior of the new continent, which would lead him to the salt sea of the West. This great explorer was Samuel de Champlain, the founder of Quebec and the discoverer of the Great Lakes.

At the same time there was another who was ambitious for fame as a great and successful explorer. This ambitious young man spent a winter in Canada among the Indians. One day he suddenly appeared at Quebec, just as a ship was sailing for France. He arrived in France, and had wondrous tales to tell of great discoveries, of hardships endured, of difficulties surmounted and dangers dared. He was received by the King and Queen and all the notables of the kingdom, and again and again told the story of how he had succeeded where Champlain and Cadillac and Cartier and a host of others had failed. He was the hero of the hour, the pet of Paris and of France. Honors were showered upon him. He told how he had paddled up this river in his canoe, and down that; how he had threaded his way through dense forests, and fought with wild beasts, and with wilder and more savage men; how at last he had come to the shores of a great salt sea, a boundless ocean stretching ever and ever westward. All this, and much more, glibly fell from his tongue a dozen times a day, and the King and nobles vied with one another in their haste and liberality to fit out a new expedition under Champlain to complete the discoveries and set up a claim to the land and the ocean for the kingdom of France.

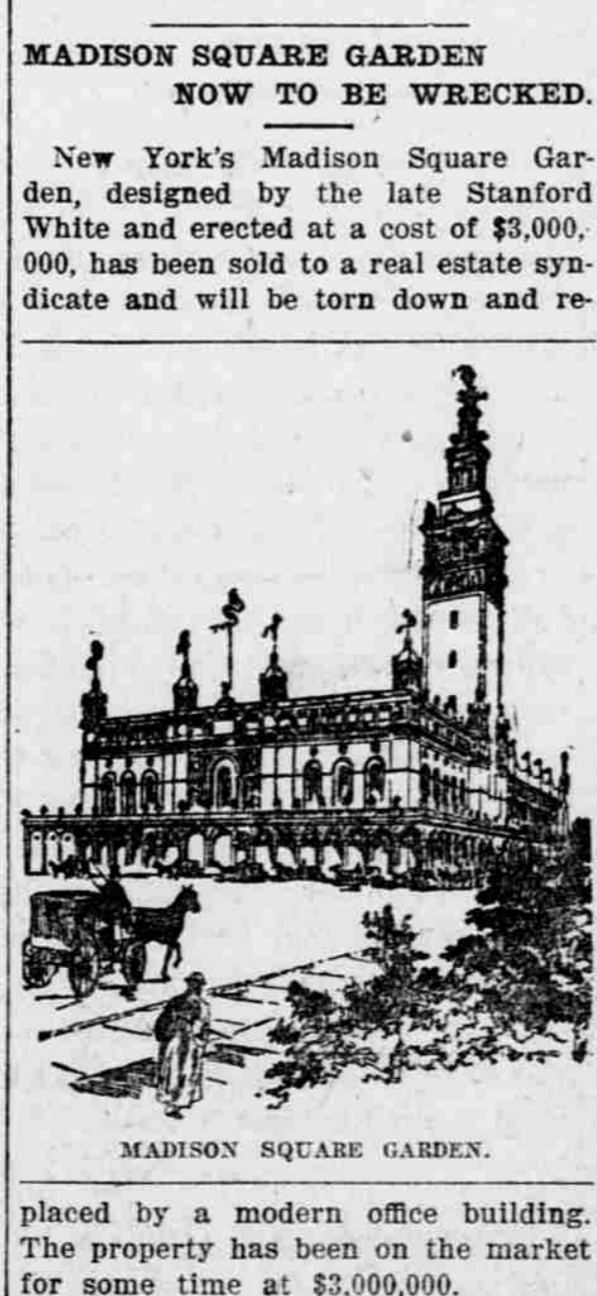
Much against his will, the "discoverer" was forced by the King to go with this new expedition as its pilot and guide. Champlain landed at Quebec, and almost immediately started on his quest for the salt sea. Day after day he pushed his little force through the wilderness, until at last he came to a tribe of Indians, who recognized his guide.

Then came the end. It was developed that the guide had spent the winter with these Indians, and had not been a mile farther west. He had never seen the salt sea, and the Indians themselves had never heard of any such sea within thousands of leagues of where they were. Champlain turned back toward Quebec, and Nicholas Vignau, the great fakir of the seventeenth century, quietly dropped out of sight.

that his soldiers might not know he was dead. Being led by a dead general they won the battle. Had they known of his death they would have been disheartened and lost a victory. Only three or four years ago the good people of Washington and Alexandria were handed a first-class gold brick from the historic Carlyle mansion house, in the shape of a "petrified" head, supposed to be the head of a British soldier. It was pronounced genuine by a distinguished antiquarian of the Smithsonian Institution. The "discoverer" coined quite a few museum dimes before the fake was exposed. Of nature fakers, according to our late chief magistrate, the very woods are full.

**MADISON SQUARE GARDEN NOW TO BE WRECKED.**

New York's Madison Square Garden, designed by the late Stanford White and erected at a cost of \$3,000,000, has been sold to a real estate syndicate and will be torn down and replaced by a modern office building. The property has been on the market for some time at \$3,000,000.



MADISON SQUARE GARDEN.

## GORKY NOW IN DISFAVOR.

Russian Writer to Be Excluded from Revolutionary Party.

The pleasant life led by Maxim Gorky at Capri, beneath the warm Italian skies, does not meet with the approval of his comrades of the Social Democratic or Revolutionary party. They resent the manner in which he



MAXIM GORKY.

welcomed a change from his former extreme poverty. He has been arraigned for a "tendency to good living and a love of comfort," and the former scullion and tramp, who is now the most famous of the younger Russian men of letters, is to be excluded from the party for which he has sacrificed so much. Admirers of Gorky in this country and in England do not approve of the attitude taken by the revolutionists.

Even after he had won literary fame as the "prince of pessimists" Gorky had a hard struggle for liberty and a living. In 1905 he was imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress at St. Petersburg, and but for an agitation throughout Europe would doubtless have lost his head.

## POOL COST OF MEALS

Carthage, Mo., Women Co-Operate and Believe Have Solved Servant Problem.

THEY LIVE WITHOUT COOKS.

Co-Operative Kitchen Where Each Member Shares the Expense Proves a Success.

The co-operative kitchen, founded recently by Carthage women, has passed the experimental stage and will now become a permanent institution, a correspondent of the Kansas City Star says. A number of women who had been troubled by the servant problem decided about three months ago to pool their interests, or rather their troubles, and endeavor by their combined efforts to secure servants and gratify their appetite without contaminating the feminine portion of their several families with the odor of the kitchen.

Many were skeptical when the idea of the undertaking was first suggested, but those even most positive of the failure of the undertaking have now applied for admission to the dreamful kitchen, where servant troubles are only horrid nightmares, delicious meals the regular order and contentment reigns supreme.

It was decided to lease a residence and convert it into the co-operative kitchen. Three large rooms were made into a dining room. Each family furnished its own table and chairs, and every one "chipped in" to furnish the kitchen and second floor, where one large room is used for the children. A nurse is always waiting to take the crying baby while the "old folks" are enjoying their meal. The balance of the second floor is used as the servants' quarters. A regular menu is served, but should any family wish something special it is bought and charged extra. Each member bears her pro rata of the expense.

BOUSTED FROM CHIEF FORESTER'S POSITION BY TAFT.



GIFFORD PINCHOT.

Gifford Pinchot, who was released from the service of the government, has made the study of the conservation of forests his life work. His father was interested in forestry, and it was Pinchot money that endowed at Yale the first chair for the study of forestry established in any American university. He is a man of large means, and it is said that he always distributed his salary among his subordinates, and at various times went into his own pocket to carry out important work for the government. After being graduated at Yale Mr. Pinchot went abroad, where he studied European methods of forest preservation. Upon his return to this country he became chief forester of the great Vanderbilt estate, Biltmore, and, after spending four years in private life, he was in 1897 made special agent of the Interior Department to report on forest preserves. His advancement was rapid, and in 1898 President Roosevelt appointed him head of the forest service. Mr. Ballinger at that time was chief of the land office, and Mr. Pinchot was his superior. When Mr. Ballinger became Secretary of the Interior positions were reversed. Mr. Pinchot is 45 years old.