

COUNTERFEITERS OPERATE IN A NATIONAL BANK

By an Ex-Operative of the Secret Service

Here Is a True Story of the Uncovering of the Country's Worst Gang of "Shovers of the Queer."

Champagne Cases
Furnish Secret of
Odd Plot Unearthed
by Captain Dickson
— Becomes an Assistant Gardener and
Expose of Workings
of System Quickly
Follows— Cashier Is
Placed Under Arrest.



CAPT. DICKSON and I were once abroad together. I was in front of a cherry log fire at his home. He launched into a confidential conversation in high places.

"It was one stationer in the city of the International exposition, to watch for culprits that were expected to participate in the customary counterfeit.

"For the first month or so of the fair there was nothing to do but lounge about the office. Like Mr. Micawber, wait for something to turn up. The four of us who were assigned to the monotonous job soon grew weary of the inactivity and were on the point of asking for a transfer, when an excellent imitation of the ten dollar gold piece made its appearance in large numbers. After that, none of the four of us had any cause for complaint on the score of stagnation.

Saunders and McGrath, two of the men, were merely in the bank, and it required but a small flight of the imagination to evolve a plot in which the great financial magnate, the president of the exposition, in large numbers. After that, none of the four of us had any cause for complaint on the score of stagnation.

"I selected the cashier at the factory as my man, and Murphy took the payroll for the bank, the other for the payroll each week. For ten days we shadowed them with dogged persistence. They were both men of the town and were members of the better class of clubs and moved in the most exclusive circles of society. These matters rather strengthened that weakened our suspicion for neither of the men was wealthy and playing society is an expensive game at best.

"But in all our pursuit and all the lavish expenditures of these young spendthrifts not once did either of them attempt to pass one of the counterfeit notes. I don't think they could have done so without its being detected, so thoroughly did we shadow them in every turn and move they made during the period we had them under observation. They lived together in a handsomely furnished flat, with a small army of servants, and they entertained lavishly. Their work was of the best and their wines of the rarest vintage.

"All of these things argued that we were on the right track, and we realized that our game was to be of the wide kind, for we were not thoroughly convinced, by that selfsame sixth sense, that Morton and Tarley were the individuals to whom we should look for the clue to the mystery surrounding the appearance of the bad gold pieces.

"Saunders and McGrath had confined their attention to the bank president, and he had led them by the trail. He had left the city soon after they began to pay him such particular attention that I thought they were as constant a companion to him as was his shadow. Both had followed him. He had announced that he was going west for his health, and they tagged along in secret attendance on him while he crossed the continent. They kept him under watch while he looked about the coast, and the sorts of California, fished for sharks and sea bass, and paid rather particular court to some of the budding beauties of the coast. Never a suggestion of any suspicious did they pick up in all this monotonous wandering.

"By a ruse that need not be detailed, Murphy and I gained access to the apartments of our precious social luminaries, and although we ransacked every nook and corner, we found absolutely nothing that confirmed our suspicions regarding them. There was no place about their flat where they would look for the clue to the mystery. In the drawers of a secretary in Morton's bedroom we found a large amount of money, but it was the genuine article and paper-money, besides.

"There were no suspicious papers, in fact, nothing beyond what might properly be met with in the apartments of two young men of fashion and wealth.

"My suspicion had now become a certainty, for the more tantalizing became the pursuit and the less of suspicious circumstances surrounded the teller and cashier, the more firmly did my intuition point to them as in some way connected with the counterfeiting job. I did not believe they were the manufacturers of the coin, but rather that they were the

hands of the gang; that their business was to put it into circulation.

"We decided that nothing was to be gained by shadowing them further, so we left them to their frivolous social parties. About the time Saunders and McGrath came tagging home, conveying the bank president, tucked under and disguised with their flustered journey.

"The night of their return Murphy and I held a conference with each other in which we were practically agreed that the bank president was innocent, and that there was nothing else to do but take him into our confidence and make the bank itself our point of operation.

"I watched the teller very carefully that week, and especially on the day when he made up the payroll for the factory, which was called for by Saunders. The sack contained both gold and silver, but there was not a particle of counterfeit money in it. He had given birth legitimately at some one of the government's mints. Saunders made sure of this before the sack reached the factory.

"The cashier, a man named Powell, and the teller both kept close watch upon me while I worked in the vault, as was their duty, and this gave me scant opportunity to investigate the sacks of gold piled away in the vault, which I directed elsewhere. I thought that, if I could get some seemed lighter in weight than others, and as this would be valuable information, I was rather ingenious way of determining if my surmise was correct.

"Concerning my peep into the teller's vault, which I directed elsewhere, I selected one of the sacks of ten-dollar coins which seemed to be lighter than some of its mates, and as I thought it was the one I wanted, I had it taken to the bank at night. I had located the author, and I dispatched messenger, who bore a grade against the teller to whose instance is attributed the theft, and in my appearance, the messenger learned that the boxes had been delivered at the back entrance of the bank late at night. They had been brought in by a man who had been given the name of 'The Messenger.' The messenger informed me that he was a fairly accurate description of the wagon, which had been of peculiar construction.

"I had seen just such a vehicle at the banker's residence, a sort of delivery wagon, which had been employed in hauling feed for the extensive stable of the banker, as it had been filled with sacks of oats and hay, and I had seen it in my appearance at his residence. The gardener didn't seem to like my appearance. He regarded me with a suspicious eye, and he read the note from his employer, and it seemed to me, he rather reluctantly accepted me as his assistant. I really believe he would have driven me away on some pretext, if it had not been for the explicit terms of the note the banker had written at my dictation.

"The gardener was a tough looking customer. There was an atmosphere of suspicion about him which put me on my guard and caused me to watch him with caution. He was a middle-aged man, with a few strands of white hair, and a somewhat heavy nose. He was dressed in a dark suit, and he had a serious expression on his face. He was standing in the rear of the furnace, and the entrance of the basement, and I had a suspicion that he was the man who had been given the name of 'The Messenger.'

"That night I did some thinking, and also made a secret trip to the banker's residence, which I carefully examined from the outside, going about the extensive grounds about the house and the outbuildings at the moment of being shot for a burglar. Here I discovered one of the most important of the counterfeiters, and the information it contained about the mysterious boxes which had been seen to arrive at the bank at night. I had located the author, and I dispatched messenger, who bore a grade against the teller to whose instance is attributed the theft, and in my appearance, the messenger learned that the boxes had been delivered at the back entrance of the bank late at night. They had been brought in by a man who had been given the name of 'The Messenger.'

"The next morning I reported sick at the bank, but my service with the banker was not at an end. I had shifted my position from helper at the bank to assistant gardener and general factotum at the president's residence. Armed with a note from the banker to the gardener, I put in my appearance at his residence. The gardener didn't seem to like my appearance. He regarded me with a suspicious eye, and he read the note from his employer, and it seemed to me, he rather reluctantly accepted me as his assistant. I really believe he would have driven me away on some pretext, if it had not been for the explicit terms of the note the banker had written at my dictation.

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IN THE CHAMPAGNE CASES! FOUND THE MOULDS AND OTHER ACCESSORIES OF THE COUNTERFEITERS.

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Real Estate Exchange

OF WHITEHEAD & MITCHELL
Exchange Bank, Birmingham, Mich.

The following is a partial list of Farms, City and Village Lots, and Real Estate generally which we have for sale. As our list is constantly changing, we request that parties will write us if they do not see what they want in this list.

- 227. Fine new just outside the corporation limits of Birmingham, about 1/2 mile from Woodlawn on Woodlawn road, 1/2 acre, with a fine view of the city. Price \$10,000.00.
- 228. A pleasant good building lot 1/2 acre in Woodlawn, 1/2 mile from the Northwestern station. Price \$10,000.00.
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Unless otherwise specified, all lots are in Birmingham, Ala.