

The Vast Treasure that Lies Hidden in a German Tower



**\$30,000,000 IN GOLD COIN
CONCEALED IN THE FORTRESS
OF SPANDAU IN READINESS
FOR WAR — IT HAS JUST BEEN
COUNTED AND FOUND INTACT**



THE JULIUS TOWER IN THE FORTRESS OF SPANDAU WHERE A TREASURE OF \$30,000,000 IN GOLD COIN IS HIDDEN IN READINESS FOR WAR

In all the fairy tales of all the world, even in those of savage peoples, the buried treasure plays the greatest part. Even when the hero goes on a quest for the beautiful Princess, his achievement is not complete unless it is rounded out with a discovery of vast wealth stored away in subterranean caverns.

Even in the prosaic life of today dreams of buried gold and silver are ever-present, and actuate many a sober, business-like enterprise.

But, except for that hidden treasure, which lies at the bottom of the seven seas or has been hidden away and lost, there is not much buried wealth in the world now. Even the vast hoards of gems and gold that once were held by the great Indian Rajahs and Hindu Kings have been converted into interest-bearing securities and investments, obedient to the call of that wonderful treasure-seeker, Finance, whose touch is far more potent than ever was the most terrible incantation or the most effective fairy wand.

When it calls the vaults open with more celerity than they did in the days when the magic master word forced them to yawn with terrible thunders and crackings, Finance takes the dead treasure and makes it live. It says "Earn interest" to it, and the gold and silver and precious stones pour out and "spread themselves all over the world."

So it is like getting back into the twilight of story, when there were witches at every crossroads and dragons on every mountain and gnomes in every cave, to hear of a vast concealed treasure that is kept locked up, dead as dead can be, earning nothing year after year, lying in great chests in waiting till a ravening monster, greater and far more terrible than were the monsters of mythology, shall send out its roaring, peremptory call for it.

Gold Filling 1200 Chests.

And that hoard is in the one country that would appear to be least likely to possess such a hoard. Twelve hundred

chests lying filled with gold in a secret vault, guarded day and night by armed men, all waiting for the call of war to release them, might be conceivable in an ancient Oriental empire. But instead, of all lands in the world, that treasure is hidden away in Germany.

It is a great war fund—probably the only one of its kind in any great land on the globe. Although men knew that there was an old law that provides for such a fund, to lock away millions of dollars without letting them draw interest

seems so absurd and contrary to all business and government sense that men treated as a myth the occasional tale that somewhere in Germany was hidden a vast treasure.

In a great, vaulted, windowless room in the massive Julius Tower of the Fortress of Spandau, near Berlin, inclosed by walls six feet thick, lie \$30,000,000 in gold coins ready for instant use should war be declared by or against the German Empire.

The great fund is sacred to war and

nothing else. It was put away 30 years ago, to be left untouched except for that purpose, to serve in time of need and furnish the ready cash so that the Army and Navy could be fitted out without waiting till a war loan could be levied.

If it had been left in circulation it would have far more than tripled itself in the time since it was taken away from the uses of man and buried in the tower. The money is in the form of 10 and 20-mark pieces in gold. The room in which it lies is so built in the great tower that no amount of study or combination from the outside would serve even to give a hint as to its location. Even those who enter the vault now and then cannot point to any particular part of the outer walls and say, "The room lies here or here."

Around the tower there stands a living chain of men day and night. To assure the fact that the sentinels are bright and

constantly on the alert, they are relieved every two hours in the summer and every hour in the winter.

Every morning and night an engineer officer examines all the walls from the deep cellars to the top, both outside and inside.

Once a year two civilian members of the government appear and make an independent examination of the walls.

Making the Official Count.

The official count was made by Herman Pachnicke, a member of the Reichstag, and a Commissioner of the Public Debt. He was received by officers and soldiers and the curator and another civilian official of the castle. An officer carried six immense iron keys and led the way into the mighty fortress—one of the strongest in the world. Arrived in the bottom of the tower, the party climbed up a narrow, winding staircase until at last a massive door, made of riveted plates of iron, barred the way. Two keys were needed to open it. It disclosed a pitch-dark room through which the officer groped until he found a great door of iron gratings, which, as it was thrown open, screeched complaints that showed how long it had been rusted in its hinges. The little party was ushered inside and

the grating locked again carefully behind them, shutting them in from the outer world. Then the escort lit candles and by their light could be discerned another triple-locked door of solid iron more formidable even than the first.

All Found Correct.

This led to the treasure. In a black hole of a vault it lay, inclosed in 1200 great chests, each containing \$25,000. To count this immense sum coin by coin was evidently impossible. It would have taken weeks of unremitting labor. So, after a consultation, the member of the Reichstag first went carefully over all the chests and satisfied himself that the seals were intact. Then he selected several chests at random and officials and laborers hauled them down and weighed them. It was known that the normal weight of each chest should be about 87 pounds. Finding that the weights agreed, more chests were hauled out and opened. The gold coins lay inside, packed away in heavy canvas bags. Each of these bags in turn was laid on a scale that had been "fixed," that is, sealed weights were on the beam and the beam itself was made fast so that the scale could not possibly be made to balance unless each bag was of the correct weight. After the bags had been thus weighed,

some of them were picked out, again at random, and the seals broken and their contents poured out. Careful count of all these sample bags having turned out satisfactorily, the gold was put back and sealed, after which the chests were re-filled, nailed up and sealed in their turn. Then the laborers carried each one back to the exact place in the pile whence it had been taken.

Every step of the count had been watched closely by officers, and elaborate notes made of everything that was done. After the chests had been returned to their places and everything pronounced correct, the officers locked the great doors and the party, still escorted by soldiers bearing candles—for no daylight enters the Julius Tower—climbed carefully down the dangerous stairs into the subterranean vaults. Here it was necessary to stoop, and, finally, to crawl, in order to make the prescribed examination of the walls.

Idle for Thirty Years.

The great war treasure was hidden away from the knowledge of the world on November 11, 1871. The money was taken from the immense war indemnity which Germany made France pay, and when the \$30,000,000 were laid away a law was passed to make it available only for the purpose of mobilizing the Army and Navy immediately in case of need.

But the conditions of war have changed so much in 30 years that, great as the sum is, it would not last for more than a few days. This fact adds to the discontent with which Germany has received the confirmation of the old tale that this huge fortune is actually locked up by the government.

Herman Pachnicke himself voices this discontent by saying in his report: "Is it wise and useful to allow 120,000,000 marks to lie idle and dead and thus to lose annually from 4,000,000 to 5,000,000 of marks in interest alone? The present, with its developed finance systems, will consider this question differently from the way in which it was viewed in the past. Germany certainly is the only power which owns such a hidden treasure. How much would we have today if we had put out this 120,000,000 marks on interest 30 years ago?"



Chauncey Depew.



Henry M. Stanley.



General Lew Wallace.



Henry Ward Beecher.

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