

GREAT CASES OF THE WORLD'S GREAT MINDS

BY GEORGE BARTON No. VII. Chief Wilkie and Gold Certificates

John E. Wilkie, chief of the secret service division of the United States government, has not only spent the high traditions of that very responsible post, but has won special laurels by his personal success in several big cases. He was born in Klein, Ill., 47 years ago, and before accepting the headship of the secret service had made an enviable reputation as a working journalist. While connected with the Chicago newspapers he made a specialty of criminal investigation which probably accounts for his unusual success as a detective. During the Spanish-American war he organized a special emergency force of men to checkmate Spanish spies in this country. As a consequence he succeeded in arresting their best spies and driving most of the others off the soil of the United States.

ONE Monday morning, not many years ago, a smartly dressed man strolled down lower Broadway and entered one of the trust company buildings in the heart of the financial district of New York. He was what is known to the patrons of the turf as a bookmaker, and he had called at the bank for the purpose of securing a roll of bank notes that he had left there on a previous Saturday night for safe-keeping. It was promptly handed to him, a roll as big as both of his fists. He counted it over rapidly to see that the amount was correct, and when he got near the end of the roll he paused long and looked earnestly at a \$100 gold certificate that lay there conspicuously among the bills of smaller denominations. He continued his study of the "yellow back" for a considerable period, and finally thrusting the balance of the bills in his pantaloons pocket, walked over to the cashier and handed him the bill.

"What's the matter with this note?" he asked.

The bank official looked at it casually and handed it back with a smile.

"Nothing," he answered, "except that it's counterfeit."

The bookmaker gasped with astonishment. "He went over his roll and found three or four more notes of the same kind. That morning he notified his fellow-bookmakers, and before 24 hours had passed 20 or 30 of the counterfeit notes had been located in New York City. Samples were immediately secured by the authorities and forwarded to John W. Wilkie, the Chief of the Secret Service division of the United States Treasury Department. That night urgent public business compelled Chief Wilkie to go to Buffalo. The following morning when he was seated in the office of the United States District Attorney in that city a man from the Knickerbocker race track entered the room and showed the District Attorney a \$100 counterfeit note that had been given him on the track the previous day. Wilkie began to do some hard thinking. The note was a companion of those that had been located in New York City. It looked very much as if it had been made by a conspiracy to circulate these hundred-dollar notes simultaneously at the race tracks in all of the large cities of the United States.

The chief dropped the business in hand and immediately turned his attention to the new developments in the hundred-dollar counterfeit. Telegrams were sent to the agents of the secret service instructing them to visit the race tracks in their vicinity and look out for bogus bills. These instructions applied particularly to Cincinnati, Louisville, Memphis, New Orleans and St. Louis.

At St. Louis Captain John Murphy, the secret service agent in charge of that district, secured a copy of the counterfeit note and posted the bookmakers to look out for any \$100 bills that might be offered them. Agents of the service were posted in various parts of the track, and it was

agreed that if any of these certificates were offered by any of the patrons the bookmakers should at once give the secret service a prearranged signal. In less than two hours one of the agents received a signal and hurried to the bookmaker. He made a careful examination of the bill that had been given to the "bookie," and found that it was one of the counterfeits. The agent immediately took a train for St. Louis, and after a number of interviews with his associates in that city, began to consider how to reach the weakest link in the strong chain of

ordinates by wire, determined to take hold of the case in person. He immediately took a train for St. Louis, and after a number of interviews with his associates in that city, began to consider how to reach the weakest link in the strong chain of

probability with which Mr. Crahan was surrounded. One of the earliest movements made in the investigation was to discover the exact hour at which the electric lights were turned on in the Union Station. The engineer of the electric plant was consulted and his records showed that on this particular date the switch which kept the lights into operation had been turned on at 5:40. Wilkie next sent to the

newspaper office which had printed the found "ad" and requested a report upon the exact time at which the advertisement was accepted. The clerk who received the notice was finally located, and he remembered distinctly that he had stopped work on that af-

among Crahan's effects was a number of programmes of races at Gravesend and two or three of the Eastern tracks, not to speak of one particular programme which contained the entries of the races where the first bookmaker had received the \$100 bill which



"CRAHAN," SAID WILKIE, "YOUR CONVICTION IS AS CERTAIN AS THAT THE SUN IS SHINING THIS MORNING."

in banknotes, which owner may have, after proving property, by applying to B-34, Herald office."

It is hardly necessary to say that by this time Mr. Wilkie had several specimens of Crahan's handwriting. After the ad had been located by the secret service, a copy was found in the records of the office, and it was in the handwriting of Marcus Crahan.

The secret service was now in possession of sufficient evidence to convict Crahan, both of passing and having in his possession counterfeit money, but the authorities did not know where the plates were, and how the money had been printed. The big problem was to locate the plant, to pull it up by the roots, and effectually stop the circulation of these spurious notes. Crahan, a man of moderate and his trial and conviction, while important in itself, would be a very incomplete satisfaction for the Government. One morning after the plates had been pending for many weeks, and after Wilkie had all of the facts in his possession, Crahan was brought to the office of the secret service division in St. Louis, and Mr. Wilkie, placing his prisoner under parole, invited him to go out and take a bite to eat with him. The prisoner had already begun to feel the effects of his confinement, and was delighted to even obtain temporary liberty, and the satisfaction of a good meal at a first-class hotel.

The two men sat down together, and Crahan was given a breakfast that would have delighted the palate and warmed the heart of the most confirmed epicure. It was topped off with coffee, milk, cream, and then, this normally reserved delicacy, a slice of pie. Crahan had never tasted Crahan the "third degree." But this "third degree" was called, differed as widely from the popular conception of the operation as the day differs from the night. To begin with, the two principals sat down as man to man, and not in the relation of policeman to prisoner. Wilkie, then as now, was far removed from the type of detectives so often found upon the stage and in the pages of the romance. He did not threaten, did not brow-beat, nor talk like a detective. On the contrary, he presented the outward aspect of a social and cultured gentleman, and with an intellect far above the average. He was quiet and self-contained, and at no time during the two hours they remained together, did his voice raise above a conversational tone. A close observer, though, might have noticed that this gentlemanly person had a positive note in his voice and an unusual alertness in his manner. Crahan, on his part, looked like a prosperous business man engaged in the discussion of some contract affecting his mercantile interests.

Where All Army Officers Are Able to Ride

In European Armies the Tests Are Severe and Frequent.

CONGRESS will be urged to enact legislation calculated to improve the quality of army horses and to raise the standard of horsemanship in the Army. At the direction of President Roosevelt, the Secretary of War will send to the House military committee a communication proposing legislation for mounting infantry captains and for the establishment of a permanent corps of officers of high standing, properly equipped for practice marches and the horsemanship required in time of war. The test created surprise among Army officers. To the public it was something unheard of in the discipline of the horsemanship test in an established feature of the army regulations of all European countries.

Improve our military mounts is to pursue the method adopted in foreign armies in obtaining remounts. They purchase young horses, send them to remount stables where they are trained for about a year and finally assigned to the service, well broken and trained for military use. This has proved to be cheaper in the end by making horses last much longer in the service.

(Spec. Referring to such officers, young students of riding institute have a peculiar saying: "His bread basket will buy him a top-hat before long." meaning that the brigade commander will write the officer's report to a most courteous note thanking him for the splendid service he has rendered the fatherland for so many years, saying he would always hold in the highest esteem for his efficiency. Whereupon the recipient forwards his application for retirement. The way officers who really love their profession struggle against "stoutness" and incapacity for field work, which means that they must go, is said to be pathetic. It is astonishing what wonders dogged perseverance in practice can effect. By this perseverance some officers who, because of their size, look out of place on a horse, ride, not only well, but hold their own in daring and keenness with the youngsters. In the Italian army every mounted officer is required to ride from Minister to junior subaltern."

Some of the European Tests.

General Bell's report follows in part: "At the French cavalry school at Saumur a course in equitation exists for field officers of the French cavalry. The officers vary in age from 20 to 55 years, and in weight from 135 to 250 pounds. The course lasts two months and includes cross-country work, involving a great deal of jumping of all kinds of obstacles, consisting of fences, ditches, walls, hedges and water jumps. They ride the ordinary school horse and change horses each day. In this course each officer spends an average of about four and one-half hours a day in the saddle. At each officer also has two or three private mounts which he must keep in fit condition by exercise outside of school hours. They are required to ride at all hours of the day, and in this manner the average officer, who is mounted, takes his recreation. In the French army the horse spirit has been developed to a very high degree among all mounted officers. Steeplechasing is frequently indulged in and encouraged by the government in every possible way. Mounted captains in every European army are required to ride, and it is not an uncommon thing to see gray-headed majors or lieutenant-colonels indulging in this sport.

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The German Tests Very Severe.

It becomes very clear, even to a casual observer, that every mounted officer in the German army must keep himself in condition to make hard, hard riding at all times. It is a matter of common report that many officers of captain's rank and higher are annually called out of the army for deficiency in riding or endurance in the saddle. When he has been and divisions frequently march 26 miles a day the major part of the time at night, it can be seen that a very considerable demand is made upon the endurance of the rider. He lives in continual anxiety over the regular inspections and annual maneuvers seems apparent from the regularity with which all infantry captains in European armies are mounted, an infantry officer in our service has little opportunity to practice riding until he becomes a field officer. The only practicable way in which we can

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Suspender Buckle Saves Life.

Pittsburg Leader. Beaver, Pa., who was attacked by two robbers with knives, was saved by a suspender buckle, which turned the point of one knife.



Grafters Abound Along the Chinese Coast

Ports Where Adventurers of All the World Meet and Are Certain to Find Victims.

THE Chinese coast from Singapore to Vladivostok is the pasture for the gentleman adventurer, the confidence man and the beach-comber from every parallel. They take in the coast coming and going. If ever there is a bit of unpleasantness with the police of Berlin, St. Petersburg, Chicago or San Francisco, the gentled highwayman makes for the coast, and there he will find a man, there to come to a sure reward that is golden and take a little pleasure in passing.

All this comes about because the colonies of Europeans scattered from the Straits up along the coast to the frozen circle are always gullible, owing to their insularity. Provincial, from long living away from the whirl of things in Europe and America, the people who constitute the little foreign colonies in the various ports of China, Japan and the Straits Settlements fall easy prey to the suave and polished manners of the wayfarer who plunders.

After one colony is fleeced the discriminating rogue moves on to another, leaving behind a long trail of bitter memories. There is the instance of the polished gentleman who dropped into Yokohama a few years ago with a batch of letters of introduction from hypothetical persons in India.

This Captain Blank was so dashing a fellow that the English set in Yokohama took him up with gusto. He lived at the best hotel, ordered expensive suits from Tom the Chinese tailor, and was dined on the bluff with all the colonial elite that is of the English colony colonial.

Then Captain Blank consented to take the leading part in some private theatricals. He wooed the daughter of a bank manager at rehearsals, borrowed \$500 from the bank, and on the eve of the performance eloped with the daughter, the diamond ring and the money. He cast the girl off at Hongkong and traveled light into the unknown waters beyond.

Hardly had Yokohama society recovered from the shock of this experience when Mme. Nemo (the name will fit as well as any other) dropped into town. It was during the Russo-Japanese war.

Mme. Nemo said that she was accredited as a correspondent of the London Mail to write some of the real inside history of the war. She bore a letter, subsequently found to be forged, from a London editor to Mrs. Hugh Fraser, the well-known writer on things Japanese and wife of a former Minister of Great Britain to Japan.

Mme. Nemo came to town in November. It was chilly, but the engaging lady with the slight Scandinavian accent wore her summer lawn. Shortly after she arrived the story crept up the coast that her trunk had been held for a board bill by the Astor House in Shanghai.

Mrs. Frazer and others who had accepted the lady as genuine flouted the story and she obtained a temporary advance from some of her admirers among the ladies of the English colony. Her faded beauty was brightened by the change. She was a woman of exclusive functions given in Yokohama and Tokyo and was high in the social world when suddenly she left town.

BOUGH RIDING IN ITALY—A CAVALRY DRILL NEAR ROME.