Where Fickett Got Off

By Sewell Ford

Professor Shorty McCabe's Strategy Succeeded in Destroying the Hallucination of a Rich Recluse

BLAMED if I know what there is about this physical culture business that is so much different from other lines; but it seems like when a man comes in here, and I start in to renew his red corpuscles and take the dark brown spots off his liver, he begins to get confidential. Do they tell their troubles to the dentist, or the man in the cigar store, or the old fam'ly doctor? Oh, no; they unloads 'em on Shorty McCabe, and before I can duck I'm all tangled up in some fool stunt or other that I wouldn't have run into by myself in a thousand years.

But I could see right away there wouldn't be any of that kind of nonsense from Chandler Pullen. The minute he drifts in here, with a card from Pinckney, and I looks him over, I sizes him up as one of these airtight aristocrats, that's so skittish about mentionin' their private affairs they don't even let on when the house is afire.

And it was a close guess, too. Why, Chandler'd been one of my reg'lars for most a month before I even locates the club that was his steady hangout. I was gettin' proud of Chandler, just on that account. Now with most folks that I meets in undershirt and gym. trousers it would have been a case of Channy and Shorty inside of ten days; but not with him. When he steps into the front office he plucks his lid as prompt as if he was buttin' into a church. Then there's a John Drew bow and a "Good morning, Professor McCabe," from him, and a "Howdy, Mr. Pullen," from me.

"Is he payin' extra, or what?" says Swifty Joe.

"Ah, throw in the reverse clutch, Swifty!" says I. "That's just our way of admittin' to each other that both of us is real gents. It's somethin' you'll never have any call to practice."

"Ahr, splash!" says Swifty. "Since when?"

Maybe I did have to strain my mem'ry come to keep it up, but it was all just as natural as breathin' with Chandler. I should say the first words he learned was "Beg pardon," and I don't s'pose he ever tucked a napkin under his chin in his life. He looks the part, too, bein' one of these tall, straight-backed chaps, with a figure that seems just built for frock coats and dress suits. He's one of the early old kind, havin' a streak of gray in his forelock, though he can't be much over forty, if he's that.

I gets it from Pinckney that Chandler comes from some old Kentucky fam'ly that's lived in New York for two or three generations and has always been in the swim. Tending out on balls and dinners and teas was Chandler's reg'lar job in life, and it was so he could keep in shape to go against these little 3 A. M. suppers and cotillions that starts in the middle of the night that Chandler calls on me. That's what I'm here for, and on account of Pinckney I've got a sort of a leanin' toward that kind. They ain't any great use in the world, but then again they ain't so bad as some other brands.

Well, Chandler and me gets along fine, and I has braced him up a lot, and it was all strictly business, when one day last week, as we was finishin' up with a little genteel glove work, he breaks his record.

"Professor," says he, "I shall be unable to come on Thursday. I am going to the country for a day or so."

"That's nice, Mr. Pullen," says I.

"Pardon me," says he, "but it's a beastly bore. I detest going to the country."

"Oh!" says I. "Got a string on you, have they?"

"Ah—er—a what?" says he.

"It's a case of drag, eh?" says I. "Somebody out there windin' the winch? Maybe a Lady Angelina?"

"Oh, no, no!" says he. "Dear, no!"

Then to prove his case he tells me about Uncle Lyman. Seems the old boy had been a judge or something, and quite some of a party back in Ward McAllister's times. But when Aunt Elvira, his runnin' mate, had passed in, he took it awful hard. He'd chucked his job, given all his old friends the shake and moved out into the raw edge of Westchester County, where he'd planted himself in a rickety old mansard-roofed affair, and hadn't stirred out of it since. He'd been there a dozen years or so, grown a billygoat beard, and worked up a lot of odd kinks in his gray matter, the way folks will when they go off by themselves.

He tried to drop Chandler too; but Chandler wouldn't have it, bein' one that banks a heap on relation. Accordin' to Chandler's notion, the least he could do was to look the old gent up once a year, on his birthday, whether he was welcome or not. Near as I could figure out, he wa'n't welcome at all, and this year Uncle Lyman had took pains to send word in advance that he needn't come.

"That is due to Fickett's influence," says he.

"Fickett's a chum of his, eh?" says I.

Chandler flushes up and makes a face like he'd tasted something bad. "Fickett is merely his old butler," says he, "who seems to have developed a strong dislike for me."

"Kind of bosses the old man around, does he?" says I.

Chandler admits that he does. More'n that, he lets out that he's almost afraid of Fickett himself. But he's bound to go out and pay the birthday visit, meanin' to make one last try at inducin' Uncle Lyman to give up the hermit act and come back to town, where he can live decent and comfortable on the whackin' big income that keeps rollin' in from his real estate investments.

"I wish, though," says Chandler, "I could have the company of some one on whom I could rely; some one like——" and then his eyes rolls toward me.

Say, it was a bouquet I couldn't dodge. "If it's only a one-night stand, and there's likely to be need of a peace promoter among the hired help," says I, "you can count me in."

"Oh, really! May I?" says Chandler.

Grateful? Say, it's a pleasure to do things for some folks, and while as a general thing I wouldn't jump at the chance of passin' the compliments of the season to some grumpy old duck I'd never seen, I looks on this as a kind of innocent excursion. We starts off that evenin' real cheerful, on a White Plains local, Chandler doin' his best to be agreeable, and at the same time tryin' to post me on what I was up against.

"You'll find it rather a gloomy place in which to pass the night," says he, "and our reception is quite apt to be far from gracious."

"Guess I can stand the gloom if you can," says I, "and as for pushin' in past a stony stare, that's all up to you."

Well, he hadn't overstated the facts any when he said it was a gloomy place. Goin' up the front drive was like ridin' through a tunnel, from the trees that shut it in; and although it was long after dark when we lands on the door mat, there wasn't a light showin' anywhere in front. But after we has hammered the panels and rung the bell for awhile, we hears some one comin'. The gas is lighted in the hall, and the door is swung open the length of a tramp chain.

"That's Fickett!" whispers Chandler.

Maybe you never saw a toad with side whiskers. Well, neither did I; but if I ever do I'll say, "Hello, Fickett!" His face had that dead white look; and the pop eyes, and the wide cut mouth, and the tubby shape around the middle finishes off the likeness.

"He'd look real cute," says I, "under a cabbage leaf."

Fickett, he squints out into the dark and sees Chandler; but I reckon he overlooks me, for after he's grumbled some and took off the chain, he seems mighty surprised when I trails in too.

"The Judge doesn't care to receive strangers, Mr. Chandler," says he.

"Perhaps you will allow my uncle to decide that for himself," says Chandler, real crisp.

"Now will you say da-da for papa; eh, Fickett?" says I, just by way of showin' I wa'n't crushed.

As a matter of fact, the old gent didn't have a word to say one way or the other, and by the hazy look in his eyes I doubt if he knew whether there was two of us or only one. We finds him somewhere in the back of the house in a kind of study room, sittin' in a big Morris chair, readin'. And say, leavin' out the slump to his shoulders, and the ragged growth of white hair on his face and head, he was a fine lookin' old relic. You could easy see he'd been a sport in his day.

But now he acts like he was doped. He don't take any notice of me at all, and not such a whole lot of Chandler either. It wa'n't until he'd been reminded that this was his birthday, and that we'd come out to cheer him up a bit, that he seemed to shake the trance at all.

"And I've brought out a bottle of your favorite old Tippecanoe bourbon, uncle," says Chandler, openin' up the bag and producin' a quart size with a funny label on it. "I propose, sir," he goes on, "that we pull the cork and drink to your health."

Say, you should have seen the change in Uncle Lyman's deep set eyes as his fingers closes around the neck of that bottle and he holds it up to the light.

"Sixty-four Tippecanoe! That is correct, Chandler," says he, pattin' the label. "Why, I haven't tasted that since—Chandler, my boy, would you mind turning the key in that door?"

Who it was he was barrin' out he didn't say; but it wa'n't until the door was locked and the shades pulled that the glasses was produced and they goes through the ceremony. That's what it was, a ceremony. Not bein' in on the proceedin's, I sets back in the shadow and watches.

Must have been more or less kick to that old juice, for after Uncle Lyman had put away three or four fingers he straightens up his shoulders, lights a cigar, and begins to ramble on about old times like this was a fam'ly reunion. He has a good deal to say about Elvira, and how she looked when they was first married, and how chummy they'd always been.

"She was the most charming young woman a man ever had for a wife, Chandler," says he, "and that is why it is my duty and pleasure to stay here, where I can see her at times."

"See her!" says Chandler. "Why—why, what do you mean by that, Uncle Lyman?"

Then, just as straight as if he'd been tellin' of a visit from some of the neighbors, the old Judge goes on to tell how the spook of his dear departed had got into the habit of payin' midnight calls about once a month. Honest, he was so calm about it, and seems so pleased over breakin' the news to Chandler, that you'd almost think he was tellin' somethin' that was really so.

I could see Chandler was all cut up at findin' the old boy gone so nutty all at once; but he humors him along and asks for details. Where did he usually see Aunt Elvira? And was he sure it was her? Uncle Lyman gets real eloquent then. Of course it was his dear Elvira—her figure, her hair, even the way she had of holdin' her head.

The place she always appears was in the long hallway upstairs, the one leadin' from the new L into the main part of the old buildin'. No, she never stopped long enough for him to swap conversation, or ask her how she liked the climate where she was. Her specialty was doin' the swift, silent glide down the hallway, and wavin' her hand as she passed his door. That was a great comfort to him, though; so about the middle of the month, when she was due, he'd leave his door open, and sit up in bed waitin' for a glimpse of her.

"But I do get messages from her," says he. "Messages," says Chandler. "Through whom?"

Uncle Lyman squirms a little uneasy in his chair, as if he didn't want to give it up; but at last he puts his hand up to his mouth and whispers, "Fickett."

"Oh!" says Chandler, like he'd seen a light.

Soon after that we leaves the old Judge and rings up Fickett to show us our rooms. And say, I takes another close look at this gent who had the Marconi company skinned to death on the wireless business. He's lookin' sour and glum, and he don't have a word to say as he pilots us up to a couple of adjoinin' rooms. No sooner has he paddled off downstairs than Chandler comes in, anxious and puzzled.

"What do you make of it, professor?" says he.

"The spook story?" says I. "Why, it looks to me like the old gent has got his belfry full of bats, or else there's a Mrs. Pepper loose around here somewhere. Say, does this Fickett person have kind of a private snap in this ranch?"

Accordin' to Chandler, he did. He just about had the run of the establishment, handlin' all the household funds, and transactin' most of Uncle Lyman's private business.

"And if the Judge should quit and move back to town, it would spoil his graft, eh?" says I.

That was it. Chandler had suspicioned something of the kind all along, but didn't see his way clear to block the game.

"Then there may be spooks, after all," says I. "Let's slip out and take a look over the ground. Maybe they leave some trail."

So we sheds our shoes and sneaks out cautious. Ours was the first two rooms at the head of the stairs. Farther along was Uncle Lyman's, and runnin' right past his door was the long hallway where Elvira was in the habit of doin' her glide. What I was achin' to do was to get a good look at the spook course. There was a low burnin' gas jet in a red globe up there, so I steps along that way.

First thing I notices is that the hallway ain't level, but has a gradual slope down from the L, which was built higher. They'd fixed it that way instead of puttin' in a few steps. Another funny thing was that the hall carpet was laid to one side, instead of in the middle, leavin' about two feet of bare floor the length of the hall.

I goes pokin' along clear to the end, where there's a door openin' into the servants' quarters. Just beside the door was a set of drawers built into the wall, like a linen closet. Bein' as I was investigatin', I take a notion to pull a couple of them drawers out, and in the second one I runs across somethin' that gives me the creeps up my back for a minute. Then I takes another squint and snickers. After that I shuts it and puts back for Chandler.

"Chandler," says I, "if Mr. Fickett had any say in managin' these spook dates, don't you figure that Elvira would be apt to show up tonight?"

"Considering the fact that he would wish to counteract the possible effect of my visit, I should say that he would wish her to appear," says he.

"Then slide in here while I put you next to a little plan of mine," says I.

At first Chandler didn't want to go in for anything of the kind, bein' afraid that if we made a mistake and the old man found out he'd get his back up worse than ever. But when I told him what I'd seen in the drawer, and showed him how we couldn't miss fire if Fickett stuck to his programme, he had to give in.

For an hour we laid low, waitin' until everyone had turned in, and then we sets to work. First we goes down cellar and finds a big wooden washtub. Next we lugs 14 pails of water from the kitchen and fills her full. The last touch was to set it in just the right place and stretch a piece of clothesline across from one doorknob to another. Then we squats down in the dark to see what is goin' to happen, feelin' like a couple of kids on Halloween night.

Ever wait half an hour doubled up on your hunkers, listenin' for the clock to strike? I'd have bet it was near mornin' when the first tap of 12 comes. We counts until it strikes clear through, and then pricks up our ears and strains our eyes up the hall. Maybe we was that way five minutes; but there was nothin' doin'.

Then, just as we're wonderin' if we wa'n't stung, after all, we catches sight of somethin' rushin' down the hall towards us. Say, I ain't ever seen a real spook, and don't want to, because I don't believe in 'em anyway; but if the accounts I've had of 'em has been right, this thing that we sees comin' our way was all reg'lar and accordin' to specifications. Ah, you can grin; but you wouldn't have felt so gay if you'd been there in the dark and seen that white flappin' thing headed for you at the rate of a mile a minute. I had the gooseflesh spine so bad you could have used my back for a nutmeg grater. It bein' sprung so sudden was what rattles me.

"Gee, Chandler!" says I, "it's comin' with bells on."

"Sus-sus-stop it, cu-cu-can't you?" says he, hoarse and excited.

"We-e-e-eou!" says I. And say, what I let out that yell for was more'n I know. It just had to come, and it was a peach.

Next minute there's a sound like hittin' a feather bed with a club, the doorknobs creak as if they was bein' pulled out by the roots, some one uncorks an "Ugh!" that must have started from down deep, and then there's a splash that sends water all over both of us and clear to the ceilin'. It was that cold sprinkle that brings me to.

"Turn on that light!" I sings out to Chandler as I makes a jump for the tub.

But there wa'n't any need to rush, and we hadn't made any mistake. In spite of the lovely long brown wig and the soakin' sheet draperies, we could recognize Fickett. He was jammed in good and solid, too, havin' turned a complete flip-flop when he struck the rope, and landed in the tub as neat as if he'd been practisin' that particular stunt for a year. We was still standin' there, watchin' him tryin' to swab the water out of his eyes, when here comes Uncle Lyman tiptoein' down the hall.

"What—what is it?" says he.

"It's something you've been watchin' for," says I. "Take a look."

With that he steps around where he can get a good view of what we has in the tub. "Why, Fickett!" says he. "What on earth has happened to—" And just then he gets a glimpse of Fickett's feet that was stickin' straight up. Strapped on his shoes was what I'd seen in that drawer—a pair of these rubber-wheeled, bicycle roller skates. Them and the wig and the sheet told the story of that Elvira glide business plainer than a whole raft of expert testimony.

"You—you lying scoundrel!" says the Judge. "Get up from that and clear out, and if I ever see you again, I—I—" He couldn't connect with the words, but by the way he doubles up his fists Fickett understands what he means and tries to splutter out something.

"Not a word!" shoutes the Judge. "Out you go!"

"Come Little Bright Eyes," says I, gettin' a grip on his hands and bracin' one foot on the tub for a hard yank. "It's you for the fresh air. Up you come!"

And say, the wet streak he left as he trailed down the stairs was still there next mornin'. Where it led to, or where he shed the wig and sheet, I ain't heard; but I guess that'll be his last appearance in the Elvira role.

As for Uncle Lyman, he was so broke up over findin' out how he'd been played for a spirit come-on that for awhile we didn't know how he was goin' to act. But it works out all right. Seems it was just some such jar that his system needed. Now I hears from Chandler that he's had the face lambrequins sheared off, booked a suite of rooms in a swell Fifth-avenue hotel, and is goin' to quit the hermit stunt for good.

"Professor," says Chandler, "you have done us a great service."

"Ah, pickles!" says I. "I'm owin' you for the time of my life. It ain't every day I has a chance to give the water cure to a roller coaster ghost, is it?"

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On Government Orders..

True Tales of the Secret Service

By an Ex-Operative.....

Edited by Wm. J. Bacon.

The Affair of the National Bank

"COUNTERFEITERS take advantage of every great gathering of people, and the occasions of the big fairs and expositions are, as a rule, times of laborious work for the members of the secret branch of the Government. Such assemblages are fine opportunities to work off bad coin, and if the records were searched they would show that there has not been a single ambitious exposition since the first of its kind, the centennial of 1876, that has not been signalized by the appearance of a clever limitation of some bill or coin employed by the National Government.'

Captain Dickson and I were again foregathering in front of the cheery log fire at his home, and with the above as his introduction launched into a capital story of counterfeiting in high places.

"I was once stationed in the city of a great international exposition, to watch for culprits that were expected to put out the customary counterfeit. For the first month or so of the fair there was nothing to do but lounge about the office, and, like Mr. Micawber, wait for something to turn up. The four of us who were assigned to this monotonous duty 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.

"The coin was a beautiful piece of work, bearing the small 'o,' the symbol of the New Orleans mint, and it was so perfectly executed that it would have passed current almost anywhere. There were scores of them in circulation before the counterfeit was detected, and even after it was reported by the teller of one of the banks, the bogus coins continued to pour into the stream of the city's circulation at a rate that threatened to flood the nation. Altogether the gang must have put out some $10,000 before we secured the slightest clew to the probable source of the spurious pieces, and even the slight bit of information we picked up seemed absolutely worthless, for it pointed to the president of one of the largest banks of the city, a man whose reputation was the best and whose character was above suspicion.

"This gentleman owned a large factory in the outskirts of the city, where several hundred men were employed. These men were paid by the week, and they were chiefly Germans or persons of German extraction. They lived in a portion of the city where there were many beer gardens and corner saloons, and it was the bad coins were finding their way to through these places that the bulk of the banks. Investigation showed that the factory operatives were receiving the queer money from the cashier of the factory in their weekly pay envelopes, it long having been a custom of the factory to pay its employes in gold, and it was easy to trace it from the factory to the bank where the payroll was made up each week upon the requisition of the cashier of the factory.

"Saunders and McGrath, two of my companions, by means of a miserably scrawled, anonymous note to the chief of police, secured information of mysterious boxes coming by night to 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 bank, was the central figure, regardless of his high social standing, his reputed fabulous wealth and his irreproachable character.

"Murphy and I, the other two assigned to the case, did not accept this theory. For my own part, my most successful work has resulted from following suggestions of my intuition, what newspaper men call the sixth sense, and while I have often been carried far afield by this inward monitor, I have won out by following it more times than I have failed thereby and, in consequence, I have come to rely implicitly upon it. Somehow, it didn't seem to me that the solution of the case required the implicating of the bank president, and although suspicion pointed generally in his direction, I was not satisfied, nor was Murphy. So we set out upon an entirely different tack.

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

"Morton, the cashier of the factory, was a handsome young fellow about 30 years of age, and a man of most engaging manners. He was a favorite with the ladies, and possessed to the fullest degree that easy grace of manner which I have often known to serve as a shield for the most dangerous criminal. Tarley, the teller, was a man of the same stamp. In the 10 days that we had these rare birds under surveillance, they led us an amazing chase. It was a round of calls and social functions and dropping in at clubs and things of that character which taxed the ingenuity of both Murphy and myself to the fullest extent. During all this time we gathered nothing of consequence, except the information that both men were inveterate gamblers. Either of them would stake magnificent sums upon any proposition of chance that offered itself, whether it was a poker game at the club, a horserace or the probabilities of a change in the weather. They had the reputation of being real sports, and it was said of them, by their admirers, that nothing was too big or too stiff for them to tackle if it possessed an element of chance.

"But in all our pursuit and in all the lavish expenditures of these young spendthrifts, not once did either of them pass or attempt to pass one of the counterfeit coins, so far as we could gather. I don't think they could have done so without its being discovered, so thoroughly did we track 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 table was of the best and their wines of the rarest vintages.

"All of these things argued that we were on the right track, and we realized that our game was to be of the waiting kind, for we were now thoroughly convinced, by that self-same sixth sense, that Morton and Tarley were the individuals to whom we must look for the clearing up of 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 over a long trail. He had left the city soon after they began to pay him such particular attention, that one or the other of them was 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 dawdled about one of the coast resorts of California, fished for sharks and sea bass, and paid rather particular court to some of the budding beauties that were summering at this point. Never a suggestion of anything 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 the money could have been manufactured nor was there the slightest trace of chemicals or metal of any kind. 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 surrounding 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 duties. About this time Saunders and McGrath came tagging home, convoying the bank president, tuckered out and disgusted with their fruitless journey.

"The night of their return Murphy and I held a conference with them, at which it was 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.

"This was risky, of course, for if the bank president were, in fact, one of the gang, this move would certainly queer our game beyond repair. With our knowledge at his disposal, if he were in on the deal, he would be in a position to so muddy the water that all hope of capturing the culprit would be lost for good and all. We had no evidence that would be accepted in court, and it seemed to be this or nothing.

"The next morning I waited on the bank president and spent an hour closeted with him, during which interview I imparted to him information that made his eyes bulge out like those of a crawfish. When I left him, it was with his hearty assurance of rendering every assistance in his power, and with the firm conviction on my part that he knew absolutely nothing about the case except what I had told him.

"My plan of action had already been figured out, so the following morning the janitor at the bank was transferred to the factory, and I took over the vacant job. Saunders was given a confidential berth in the manufacturing plant to watch that end of the game.

"The queer coin had ceased to be put in circulation for some time now, and, except for occasional 'floaters,' as we called them, the steady stream of false gold, which had flowed so steadily from an unknown source for the past month, had stopped as abruptly and completely as a wet-weather Spring when a bad drought sets in. This had added to the difficulties which surrounded the case, for it had taken away from us the only sure means by which the gang might be run to earth.

"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 single coin in the lot which had not been given birth legitimately at some one of the Government's mints. Saunders made sure of this before the sack reached the factory.

"Here, again, we were baffled. As a last resort, I went to the president and asked him to direct me to clean out the big chrome steel vault where the cash reserve of the company was stored. I had previously examined the last statement of the bank's condition and the daily cash slips, which showed the amounts of coins and currency and sight exchange on hand, but these records had showed little that was valuable further than that there was something more than $190,000 of money in the vault, of which more than $50,000 was in gold coin. It was this gold that I wanted to get at.

"The cashier, a man named Powell, and the teller both kept close watch upon me while I worked in the big vault, as was their duty, and this gave me scant opportunity to investigate the sacks of gold piled away in a pretentious row on a low shelf. In moving them, I thought that some seemed lighter in weight than others, and as this would be valuable information if true, I hit upon what I thought was a rather ingenious way of determining if my surmise was correct.

"Concealing my penknife in the hollow of my hand, with the blade open, I selected one of the sacks of ten-dollar coins which seemed to be lighter than some of its mates, and, as I moved it from the shelf, I cut the cord which fastened the mouth of it while the attention of the inquisitive cashier and teller was directed elsewhere.

"Having shaken the mouth of the sack open and frayed the ends of the cord so that my ruse would not be detected, I purposely stumbled and fell as I crossed the vault. The coins poured out upon the steel floor of the big vault in a bright yellow stream, rolling hither and yon, while I sat dejectedly in the midst of the golden flood and rubbed my knee and cursed.

"The two bank officials showed lively concern at my stupid accident, and both set about gathering up the coins. I assisted them as much as possible, but my pulse was beating too fast for my help to amount to much. My ruse had fully served my purpose. The ring of the coins upon the steel floor of the vault had not been true. They had rung dull and heavy, and I knew them at once for their real false character. The verification of this fact came when I fingered them deftly, as I restored them to the sack whence they had come. There was no mistaking the feeling of them. They were greasy and slick; that slimy touch which discloses the spurious coin in the dark as well as in the light. Every one I touched had that slippery, soapstone surface which counterfeiters cannot overcome except by the use of metal of the same fineness as that of the genuine coin.

"As I replaced the sacks, after cleaning the shelf, I was careful to weigh each of them in my hand. There were fifteen sacks, each containing a thousand dollars in half eagles, which were light in weight.

"I now felt sure of my ground, but it was still necessary that we secure proof against the teller. I had not suspected the cashier until his evident trepidation when I spilled the sack of gold, but after that incident I decided to have an investigation of him made at once.

"The mystery was now more complex and interesting than ever. While I had discovered the big reserve of the counterfeiters I had no evidence against any one, and was still afraid to make arrests. I wanted the makers of the coin and their machinery, and wanted them badly, for this was the biggest case that I had thus far in my career been engaged upon.

"That night I did some tall thinking, and also made a secret trip to the banker's residence, which I carefully examined from the outside, going over the extensive grounds about the house and the outbuildings at the imminent peril of being shot for a burglar. Here I discovered only one thing of importance. In the stable I stumbled on an empty champagne case, which was of the same brand as one I had noticed in the vault of the bank. It might mean something or nothing, but I had long ago learned to take particular notice of small things, and many is the valuable clew that this habit has given me.

"Since the return of Saunders and McGrath, they had been working on the clew of the anonymous letter, and the information it contained about the mysterious boxes which had been seen to arrive at the bank at night. They had located the author, a discharged messenger, who bore a grudge against the teller to whose instance he attributed his discharge. From the messenger they learned that the boxes had been delivered at the back entrance of the bank late at night. They had been brought to it in a one-horse express wagon, but the wagon had not displayed a license number and the driver, although muffled in a great coat, had evidently not been a regular expressman, so the messenger informed them. He gave 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 seemed to be employed in hauling feed for the extensive stable of the banker, as it had been filled with sacks of oats and bales of hay when I saw it.

"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 janitor 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 cold suspicion, while he read the note from his employer, and, it seemed to me, he rather reluctantly accepted me as his assistant. I verily 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 smooth individual, however, and I had served in my new capacity for three days without discovering anything worth mentioning, when he set me at the task of wheeling out the ashes from the big bin in the cellar. The bin was situated at the rear of the furnace, near the entrance of the basement, and in passing to and fro at my task, I noticed several wine-cases piled in a dark corner of the basement. I took advantage of the first opportunity to examine them and, while the lids were securely nailed down, I found, by lifting them, that they were as heavy as chunks of lead.

"That night I burglarized the banker's statement, while two of my companions kept watch outside to see that I was not disturbed. In the champagne cases I found the molds and other accessories of the counterfeiters, and a large quantity of metal and newly manufactured coins.

"Before we left the banker's residence the gardener was a prisoner, and before the night was over we had nabbed Mason and Tarley and Cashier Powell. The gardener turned state's evidence and gave the whole thing away. The three society men held out firmly to the last. They were convicted only after considerable difficulty. Except for the assistance of the gardener in securing evidence, we should never have been able to have made out against them anything more than a strong circumstantial case. We recovered about $10,000 from the culprits, and in the bank's vault was more than $18,000 of the counterfeit money. The night watchman at the bank was also implicated and convicted.

The gardener, who had many aliases, was an old offender. He had worked at one time in the Frisco mint, and was regarded as a skillful workman. After leaving the mint he had put out a gold coin of the twenty-dollar denomination, but had been caught and had served a prison term for it. He had drifted East, after serving his term, and had figured out the plan which he had there put in operation. He had manufactured the coins, using the big furnace at the banker's residence for that purpose, and had secured the three society men, all of whom were heavily in debt and therefore ready victims, to palm off the money. Their method was to take good money from the bank vault and replace it with the bad, which they worked off at the factory in the weekly payroll. The cashier at the bank had secured the place for the counterfeiter at the banker's residence, but this had not been with any particular design further than it was a place that was especially suited to the necessities of the counterfeiter."

(Next week Captain Dickson will relate the story of "The Katydid Mine.")

Books Added to Library

The following new books may be examined at the Public Library during this week, and will be ready for circulation Monday, November 30.

BIOGRAPHY.

Buckingham—The romance of George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham, and some men and women of the Stuart court, by P. H. Gibbs. 1908.
Terry—Ellen Terry, by Christopher St. John (pseud.) 1907.

BOOKS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

Asbjornsen & Moe—Eventyrbog for born.
Balzac—La Cousine Bette.
Bazin—Le bie qui leve.
Dahl—Johan Sverdrup at Storthingsbilledr. 2 volumes.
Decken—Die Elken von Elkenheide.
Flor—Haandbog i den Danske literatur.
Jacobson—Im dienst.
Maeterlinck—La vie des abeilles.
Riehl—Ein ganzer mann.

DESCRIPTION AND TRAVEL.

Hendersen & Watt—Scotland of today. 1907.
McKenzie—The Unveiled East. 1907.
Sayce—The archaeology of the cuneiform inscriptions. 1907.

FICTION.

Bazin—The Nun.
Booth—The Post Girl.
Church—Lords of the World.
Litchfield—The Moving Finger Writes.

FINE ARTS.

Maris—The Brothers of Marie; ed. by Charles Holme, text by D. C. Thomson. 1907.
Elliott—Pottery and Porcelain. 1878.
Murillo—Murillo, a Biography and Appreciation; by A. F. Calvert. 1907.
Patterson—Chats With Music Lovers. n. d.

HISTORY

Acton—History of Freedom and Other Essays. 1907.
Margoliouth—Cairo, Jerusalem and Damascus. 1907.

LANGUAGE.

Bonilla—Spanish Daily Life, a reader. 1907.
Buehler—A modern English grammar, with composition. 1906.

LITERATURE.

Aflalo, comp.—The Call of the Sea; a prose anthology. 1907.
Jessopp—Frivols. Simon Ryan and other papers. Ed 2. 1907.
Trent & Hennemann, comps.—The Best American Tales. 1907.

SCIENCE.

Campbell—Modern Electrical Theory. 1907.
Hessler & Smith—Teacher's handbook to accompany the essentials of chemistry. 1902.
McCook—Nature's Craftsmen; popular studies of ants and other insects. 1907.
Rich—Feathered Game of the Northwest. 1907.
Serviss—Astronomy With the Naked Eye. 1908.
Strasburger and others—Textbook of Botany. Ed 3. 1908.

SOCIOLOGY.

Cronson—Pupil Self-Government; its theory and practice. 1908.
Hall—Youth; its education, regimen and hygiene. 1907.
Lowell—The Government of England. 2 v. 1908.
Perry—The Management of a City School. 1908.

RELIGIOUS.

Balzani—The Popes and the Hohenstaufen. 1901.
Gwatkin—The Arian Controversy. 1903.
Programme of Modernism; a reply to the encyclical of Pius X. 1908.

USEFUL ARTS.

Audel's Gas Engine Manual. 1908.
Barton—Terriers, their points and management. 1908.
Carr—Open hearth steel castings. 1907.
Creighton—The steam engine and other heat-motors. 1907.
Hasluck—Practical metal plate work. 1907.
Lodge—Electrons. 1907.
Oswald—German cookery for the American home. 1907.
Practical Upholsterer, 1891.
Schofield—The Force of Mind. 1908.

BOOKS ADDED TO REFERENCE DEPARTMENT.

Brynildsen—Dictionary of the English and Dano-Norwegian Languages. 2 v. 1902.
Heck—The steam engine and other steam motors. 2 v. 1905-1907.
Hiscox—Modern steam engineering in theory and practice. 1907.
Verity and others—Flats, urban houses and cottage homes. 1908.

BOOKS ADDED TO JUVENILE DEPARTMENT.

Adams & Baker—Harper's electricity book for boys.
Baldwin—Second fairy reader.
Brown—Star jewels and other wonders.
Knapp—Raphia and reed weaving.
Madden—Two Royal Foes.

The Drop of Water and Grain of Sand.

Said the little drop of water to the little grain of sand,
"Do you hear what they are saying? Do you really understand?
We 'make the mighty ocean and the pleasant land,' they say.
We are a famous couple—let's work no more today."

So down they sat together and sang upon the sand,
"We'll make no mighty ocean, we'll make no pleasant land!"
The other drops of water beheld what they had done—
They whispered to the sand-grains and beckoned to the sun.

The sun gazed fierce and angry upon the wicked pair,
And dried the drop of water, which vanished into air.
Then came a laughing wavelet, as frisky as could be,
And washed the little sand-grain away into the sea.

But still the sea was mighty, with just as loud a roar,
And still the land was pleasant, as it had been before;
For no one drop of water and no one grain of sand
Can make or mar the ocean nor change the pleasant land.