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**Great Cases of
Detective Burns:
The Monroe-
head Counterfeit**

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By Dana Gatlin

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"The detective has got to have God-given quantities of patience and endurance," said William J. Burns, "and then he's got to cultivate them some more. He is tested nearly every day. Now, the famous mystery of the counterfeit Monroe-head hundred-dollar silver certificate,"—Burns paused to hitch himself forward in his chair,—"that was the cleverest and most baffling counterfeit that was ever made. It was the only time that counterfeiters succeeded in making a note so perfect that all of the government experts except one— W. H. Moran—declared it genuine. After we had located the criminals, it took us over a year to get the evidence necessary to convict them.

"Late in '97 the counterfeit was discovered, by chance. While the receiving teller of the Sub-Treasury at Philadelphia was counting money, one day, he happened to lay his dampened finger on the carmine seal of a Monroe-head hundred-dollar silver certificate, and noticed that the ink blurred. He made a microscopical examination of the note, and reached what he considered was the proper solution. He figured that the note was genuine, but that the seal was counterfeit, and that the notes had probably been stolen while in transit from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to the Treasury Department. All notes were then printed and completed at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Washington, with the exception of a small carmine seal, which was placed on the notes at the Treasury Department.

Government Experts Declare Counterfeit Note Genuine

"After reaching this conclusion, the Philadelphia Sub-Treasury teller took a train for Washington, and called on the Secretary of the Treasury. He laid the whole matter before that official, who immediately sent for the experts in the Redemption Division. After an examination, they declared the note to be genuine.

"The matter was then taken up by the present Assistant Chief of the United States Secret Service, W. H. Moran, who has been connected with the Secret Service Division for over twenty-five years and is acknowledged to be the greatest expert the government has. He soaked the note in water, and found that it was printed on two pieces of paper, which separated after being placed in the

water. It was then determined for the first time that the note was a counterfeit. The Secretary of the Treasury immediately issued a circular recalling the entire issue of that particular currency, amounting to over twenty-seven million dollars.

“A scare then went through the entire banking world, because every banker felt that he might find thousands, or hundreds of thousands, of dollars’ worth of these notes in his vault. Nobody knew how many counterfeits had been issued, and consternation reigned.

“At this particular time I had been lent by the government to the State of Indiana to make an investigation of a series of murders wherein five men were taken from the jail at Versailles, Indiana, and hung. Just about the time I was finishing up this investigation, I read, one morning, the startling account of the discovery of this hundred-dollar Monroe-head silver certificate. We had been fearing new developments in counterfeiting for a year previous, or from the time I learned that a number of young men were becoming experts in the photo-mechanical process of engraving. I had suggested to the Chief then that we ought to take up the matter of investigating the progress of the art of photo-mechanical process work. We did intend to go into it, but we were occupied with other matters that seemed to us of more importance, and so this particular matter was delayed.

Burns Works Out a Plan for Tracing the Counterfeiters

“However our fears had been realized. That night I did not sleep. Hour after hour, I went over the problem of how to locate the counterfeiters. By morning I had formed my theory, and I then wrote a long letter to the Chief of the Secret Service at Washington, stating my view of the matter. My theory was that, in the absence of any of the ordinary clues by which we were able to trace counterfeits back to their makers, we would have to locate all the engravers in the country who were able to do such good work as had been done in this case. The perfection of the note showed that a camera must have been used, and the printing was so expertly done as to indicate the use of a steel plate. The deduction I made from these two facts was that the counterfeiters were able to take a perfect photograph of a genuine note, transfer it to a steel plate, and then etch and engrave the plate successfully. My idea was to locate every expert who could engrave portraits and other portions of the note, and who were at the same time expert with the camera and the photo-mechanical process of engraving. Among them we would find the counterfeiters.

“As soon as possible, I finished my work in Indiana and hurried to Washington. There I found that the Secret Service was undergoing the investigation that all the other divisions of the Treasury Department had passed through, by a committee appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury. The Chief of the Secret Service had been relieved from duty at the office in Washington, and was told by the Secretary to confine his efforts entirely to the capture of the Monroe-head silver certificate counterfeiters.

“On meeting the Chief, he informed me that he had not carried out my suggestion. He insisted that he had a good clue at Chicago, and told me to proceed to that city and join Operative Matthew F. Griffin. Upon investigation, I found this clue led nowhere, and I wired the information to the Chief at Washington, and asked for instructions. I was somewhat surprised to receive a telegram directing me to report at once to Washington, and signed, “John E. Wilkie, Chief.” This was the first intimation I had that a change had been made in the head of the service. I immediately proceeded to Washington, met Chief Wilkie, and informed him of my letter to the former Chief. He directed me to proceed in the matter according to the theory I advanced, but asked me first to run out a story that was furnished him from Philadelphia. This proved another failure.

“Acting on my own theory, I immediately visited the leading engraving establishments, first at Philadelphia, and, without disclosing the purpose of my visit and under a proper pretext, ascertained the names of all the expert engravers who could have done the work on the counterfeit plates.

Running Down the Suspects by a Process of Elimination

“After getting the names of all the engravers possible, I visited the plate-makers in New York, and, meeting their traveling men, got a list of the firms to whom they sold plates that might possibly take a chance of making a counterfeit note, and learned whether or not the suspected persons had been in the habit of purchasing plates of suspicious sizes.

“I then returned to Philadelphia and visited a number of concerns that used the photo-mechanical process, and from them received much valuable information.

“I then began my process of elimination in running out the persons under suspicion, and finally placed the crime upon three men—Arthur Taylor, Baldwin

S. Bredell, and a third man whom I afterward eliminated. All of these, I learned, had formerly been employed by one of the largest engraving establishments in Philadelphia, that of E. A. Wright & Co. Arthur Taylor had the reputation of being the best portrait engraver that firm had ever employed; not only that—he was qualified to engrave any other part of a bank-note. In addition to this, he had been experimenting for years on a new scheme for etching on steel, and had partially succeeded. Of course, I had to secure this information without arousing any suspicion that a criminal investigation was going on.

“On further investigation, I found that Taylor and Bredell were operating an engraving and printing plant on the fourth floor of the building on the southeast corner of Ninth and Filbert streets. Their plant, its location, their method of doing business, and the prohibitory prices they were charging for their work, convinced me that these two men fitted my theory perfectly. I felt so elated and so sure of this that I at once wired Chief Wilkie and told him I had located the makers of the hundred-dollar note. The Chief immediately came on, by the first train. He was somewhat crestfallen when he learned that I had absolutely no evidence against these men, but that I had reached my conclusion solely upon the theory I had.

“The first question was, how I proposed to secure the evidence. My reply to the Chief was that we must wait for the men to go back to counterfeiting; that if we were to search their place we would not be able to find a scintilla of evidence tending to show that they were the counterfeiters of the Monroe-head hundred-dollar silver certificate. My idea was that men who had succeeded in making a counterfeit note so perfect that government experts declared it genuine would not entirely cease their operations simply because of this temporary scare; that, sooner or later, they would return to their work; that we would hold them under constant surveillance, and eventually catch them red-handed.

“The Chief, having full confidence in my ability to carry out this suggestion, directed me to proceed on these lines.

Burns “Takes ‘Em Out of Bed in the Morning and Puts ‘Em Back at Night”

“I knew this would be a long, tireless chase; I also knew that these men were constantly making tests to find out whether or not the government was on their trail. So we had to proceed with extreme caution. We placed operatives in rooms near the residences of Taylor and Bredell, and across the street from their plant.

In the words of Secret Service circles, ‘We took ‘em out of bed in the morning and put ‘em back at night.’ This unceasing vigil was kept up from February, 1898, until April 18, 1899.” (Burns does not have to stop to look up his dates; his complete memory of every detail is amazing.)

“Not long after this watch was begun,” he resumed, “and we had thoroughly investigated the antecedents of Taylor and Bredell, one morning they took a train at the Broad Street station and went to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, followed by Operative Griffin. There they communicated with W. M. Jacobs and W. L. Kendig. Jacobs was operating a large cigar manufactory in Lancaster, and Kendig was in charge of what was supposed to be a large tobacco warehouse.

“When Chief Wilkie was notified of this connection, he made an investigation of the revenue stamps used on the boxes of cigars manufactured by Jacobs, and discovered that counterfeit stamps were being used.

“When the Secretary of the Treasury learned that these men were making counterfeit revenue stamps, he naturally wanted their immediate arrest. He was at once shown that there was no evidence to convict Taylor and Bredell at Philadelphia. After a consultation with the Hon. James M. Beck, who was then United States Attorney at Philadelphia, it was decided to continue the investigation, and we therefore permitted Jacobs and Kendig to use their counterfeit stamps until such time as the evidence could be gathered that would involve Taylor and Bredell with the counterfeit Monroe-head hundred-dollar silver certificate.

“The operations of Jacobs and Kendig were thoroughly ‘covered’ just as the Philadelphia plant was ‘covered.’

The First Find

“It was extremely necessary that I should obtain surreptitious entrance to the large three-story warehouse of Jacobs and Kendig at Lancaster. Secretary Gage was pushing for proof that was beyond doubt, and I had to make good my suspicions that the engravers were experimenting with an improvised paper-making apparatus to counterfeit the distinctive fiber paper used by the government. I found out that during the noon hour Jacobs and Kendig went to lunch at the same time, leaving the place unoccupied, and that there were side doors from an alley, the upper half of glass, and shuttered at night, but merely

locked at noontime.

“One day, at noon, I watched the men leave. I was provided with a baseball and a small boy that I’d brought from Philadelphia,—couldn’t trust a local product who’d be about all the time,—and, after breaking the glass out of the window with the ball in a nice, natural manner, I boosted the lad through. He went around to the front and opened the spring door from the inside.

“Then I got in and made a hasty examination. I found twenty-seven tons of blue internal revenue stamp paper on the second floor, packed in tobacco-boxes. To the ordinary observer it would look like leaf tobacco. Up here I also found the improvised paper-making machine, while on the top floor was a partitioned-off corner, securely locked. We subsequently learned that the press for printing stamps was in this little room, and that they also had there a paragon paper-cutter, with which they were able to cut their paper as accurately as the government did.

“When the proprietors returned, the place was tight locked, and everything in order but for a weeping little lad and a broken window.

“‘It went through,’ he sobbed; ‘but I’ll pay for the glass if I can have my ball.’ And it is perhaps as much to their credit as anything they ever did that the revenue crooks told the boy not to mind, and let him come in and find the ball that I had so carefully aimed an hour before.

“I was having my hands full in Philadelphia now; Secretary Gage was insisting that there must be some proof that Taylor and Bredell were doing the work at Ninth and Filbert streets. Somehow or other, I had to get into that engraving establishment; and, as I said, it was on the fourth and top floor of the corner building.

Burns Breaks into the Counterfeiters’ Engraving Plant

“There was a fire-escape here on the side,” said Burns, getting up and marking off the location, “and about three-thirty one morning I paid it a visit. Operative John E. Murphy, now deceased, but in his day the cleverest of operatives, boosted me up. Just as I reached the top window opening out from the counterfeiters’ plant, I looked down and saw Murphy accosted by a policeman.

“‘What are you doing hanging around here at this time of the morning?’ said the

cop.

“‘I couldn’t get to sleep,’ replied Murphy, ‘and thought I’d walk around a bit.’ He went on talking to the policeman, and walked him around the corner. I didn’t mind seeing them depart, for I had a lurking idea in my head that I might be seen and shot for a burglar, and the whole investigation would go up in smoke. After cultivating the policeman’s acquaintance and probably giving him a couple of drinks, Murphy returned.

“‘In the meantime I’d tried the window and found it locked. I edged my way across the coping to another window, and found that locked; then I climbed down to think up some other method.

“‘The counterfeiters had a young boy in their employ who flagged customers in the front office, and who swept out and cleaned up the office in the morning. I thought of a plan. I went to a costumer’s and rented a velvet masquerade suit that’d about fit the boy.

“‘Next, a Secret Service man accosted the boy about five blocks from Taylor and Bredell’s place:

“‘‘Want to make a half dollar, son?’

“‘‘Yes,’ said the boy.

“‘‘Then take this bundle up to Guy’s Hotel and give it to Mr. Matthews.’

“‘The boy did so—not knowing that Mr. Matthews was also Mr. Burns.

“‘‘What do you do nights, son?’ I asked.

“‘‘Nothing,’ he replied, and I asked him how’d he like to be a ‘super’ at the Walnut Street Theater. I then invited him up to see the manager, another Secret Service operative, and told the boy to try on the clothes.

“‘The boy was taken in to another room, where he put on the clothes, and was then taken to see the manager. While he was gone I extracted his keys from his pocket. With them I whirled away in a carriage, which had been waiting, to the Yale Lock Company, about six blocks away, handed the proper key to the man in charge, and asked for a duplicate, which was promptly given, whirled back, and

returned the boy's keys to his pocket without his knowing.

"The next morning about three-thirty I again visited the offices of the counterfeiters, this time armed with a key and two operatives. When I opened the door we were nearly scared to death by some sort of racket in an inner room. On investigation, we found it to be only a buzzer set off by opening the door, a contrivance for notifying the counterfeiters when anyone was coming, so that they could hide away any contraband articles that were in sight. We didn't get out of the building until six in the morning. The outside street door, which had heretofore been left unlocked, was, for some reason or other, on this particular night locked. I opened it all right with a skeleton key, but in locking the door the key stuck. And we had to get out without leaving a trace, or there'd be no chance of future work and all our past work would have been in vain.

Discovery of the Counterfeit Plate

"After that, every day at noon, when Taylor and Bredell went to lunch, I visited their place. As I turned the corner of Ninth Street, I got my cue from the way the window-shade was arranged at the window where the operatives were watching: if it was pulled down very low, the coast was clear, and I would go to the counterfeiters' plant and examine the situation.

"At noons I always found a small locker locked, but at nights unlocked and empty, from which I deduced that the plates were carried home at night, but left in this locker when the men went to lunch. I secured a blank key, and worked at noons on the lock, and finally succeeded in making a key to fit the locker. There I found a counterfeit plate for a Lincoln-head hundred-dollar note, almost completed.

"These visits were not without their ludicrous incidents. One day, at noon, I received the 'clear' signal, and immediately started up to my usual haunt. As I was preparing to open the door, Bredell stepped out; it was a scratch of an escape.

"'Is this the Eagle Printing Company?' I asked.

"'No; the Eagle Printing Company is on the second floor,' answered Bredell.

"I excused myself, and turned to descend the stairs, thinking on the way that the men on watch ought to have a good scare for their carelessness. So, after had

gone down a few steps, I stopped to tie a shoe-string and gave Bredell a chance to pass me and go on out. As I had foreseen, our men across the street saw him, and then looked for me. They knew I had gone up.

“I kept a man near the door downstairs to start a fight, on some pretext or other, should the counterfeiters return unexpectedly, and thus warn me and give me an opportunity to escape. He knew that I hadn’t come out. They were an uneasy and badly scared lot by the time I had gone back, made my usual examination, and come out and down again.

“The fluke had been simple enough, and our operatives were not really to blame. There was a saloon on the ground floor of the building, and its rear door opened into the hall that led upstairs. The counterfeiters had left the shop and gone to the corner all right, but then, when our men were a little off guard, Bredell, evidently having forgotten something, went through the saloon and up the stairs. He got what he wanted, and came down and out, none the wiser.

“Another time, when I made my usual midnight visit, Chief Wilkie and Operative J. E. Murphy were acting as lookouts. It was my custom to flash an electric searchlight, ‘All is well,’ when I reached the plant. They watched for the light, but it didn’t come. Time went by, and they speculated fearfully on what might have happened. They were just on the point of starting for the plant, when the flash appeared. When I came down, I found them waiting in breathless excitement for my explanation.

“It was a thriller. I had rapped when I reached the door, as was my custom; I was always cautious. There was no response, and I opened the door and went in, approaching cautiously. I had to go through four rooms to reach the room where the actual work of counterfeiting was carried on.

“I was well into the fourth room when I saw the form of a man lying on a couch. The one question that flashed across my mind was whether he were really asleep or feigning sleep. If he were awake, the thing to do would be to arrest him then and there, and raid the place at once. If he were asleep, I would go out as quietly as possible, without disturbing him.

“I stood still for some time, watching, but couldn’t determine. The matter was of so much importance that it was necessary to know positively whether or not he was asleep. So, cautiously, on my hands and knees, I crept across the floor to

hear him breathe. I knew it would be impossible, if he were awake, for him to breathe naturally. I reached the sleeping figure, and strained my ears. To my horror, I couldn't hear any breathing at all. I wondered if I'd scared him to death.

"Driven to desperation, I lifted my hand and felt his body. What I felt brought me to my feet in a hurry. It was an old working coat.

"But, nevertheless, this was the night I made a big find—even though it turned out not to be a man. At the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington, before the money is printed, the paper is subjected to a process of dampening by placing it between wet sheets of muslin. The counterfeiters had been carrying out the methods of the Bureau. A bolt of muslin had been straightened out, and the coat was thrown over it—the sleeve of the coat was so thrown as to form a perfect outline of a man's head. In the dark the white cloth looked like a face; and the cloth and coat were rumpled up so that they looked like the form of a man.

Arrest of Taylor and Bredell

"I went on visiting and watching. Finally the time came for the arrest. (Officials throughout the country have said that the arrangements for this raid were the most perfect ever made. Elaborate precautions were taken against every possible slip.)

"In my room across the street, two towels were hung in the window, as if they were hung there to dry; but one represented Taylor and one Bredell. I waited with an operative until the two men had gone to lunch, then went up to their door to watch for their return by looking out of the window at the towels in the window opposite.

"I saw Taylor—that is, the towel representing him—withdrawn. So, when he got upstairs, I was ready for him.

"‘These are for you, I believe,’ said I, indicating some shirt-boxes I had provided myself with as a pretext.

"Entirely thrown off his guard, Taylor opened the door and invited us in. He then looked at the boxes, as if wondering what they contained. I reached into my inside pocket.

“‘No, it’s not there, Mr. Taylor,’ said I; ‘here it is,’

“‘What?’ said he, in surprise.

”’ A warrant for your arrest.’

“‘My arrest?’

“‘Yes, your arrest’; and I offered to let him read the warrant; but he was so dumfounded that he couldn’t have read it if he had wanted to.

“We handcuffed him to Murphy and led him into another room, and then I watched the Bredell towel. Before long Bredell appeared, and we went through the same process. Maybe you think Bredell wasn’t astonished, when he was escorted into the back room, to see his partner there, handcuffed to a Secret Service man. Almost immediately the full scene was set by the arrival of Chief Wilkie and his assistant, W. H. Moran, and, one by one, a number of Secret Service men—at least twenty—among them W. J. Flynn, now a deputy police commissioner in New York City, who had come from New York to take part in the round-up.

“Bredell said, ‘What does this mean?’

“‘You are under arrest for counterfeiting,’ I replied.

“I then stated, as was our custom in Secret Service: ‘I want to inform you of your rights in this matter. You do not have to make a statement, and you must bear in mind that anything you say will be used against you. However, if you conclude, now that you find yourself caught red-handed, that it is best to save the government all further trouble, and desire to make a statement, it will be conveyed to the District Attorney.’

“Bredell coolly replied (he acted as spokesman always): ‘We do not desire to make any statement.’

The Counterfeiters Decide to Make Full Confession

“Now, at this point it will be demonstrated how essential it is that a detective should always be alert to take advantage of every opportunity afforded him. On opening the drawer in their work-bench, I found the Lincoln-head hundred-

dollar counterfeit plates about finished, and, in addition, a genuine hundred-dollar Lincoln-head note, which had been used as a pattern piece in making these particular counterfeit plates.

“Turning to Wilkie, who stood beside me, and within the hearing of the two counterfeiters, Taylor and Bredell, I said: ‘There is only one of these notes; Jacobs stated that he sent them two.’

“On hearing this, the two counterfeiters simultaneously heaved a half-groan. Bredell, speaking for the counterfeiters, said: ‘Mr. Burns, may I ask a question?’

“I told him that he could.

“He then asked: ‘Have you made any other arrests in this case besides ours?’

“‘Oh, yes; we have arrested a number of people.’

“‘May I ask who they are?’

“‘Yes; Jacobs and Kendig and Burns (there being a man by that name, but no relation to myself, who acted as confidential workman for Jacobs and Kendig), and an attorney by the name of Hewitt.’

“When I said ‘Hewitt,’ the two counterfeiters asked in chorus, ‘Who?’

“This was a cue to me that they did not know Hewitt in the matter, but knew his partner, Bingham. Bingham and Hewitt were two very prominent attorneys in Philadelphia who had been retained by Jacobs and Kendig to assist in ‘fixing’ me so that I would permit the counterfeiters to carry out their scheme. When I discovered that Hewitt was not the man they knew, I at once concluded that it must be Bingham, so I immediately said, ‘It is a man that doesn’t hear well.’

“They said, ‘That’s right; his name is Bingham, not Hewitt.’

“‘Well,’ I said, ‘I thought that was Hewitt.’

“‘No, that’s Bingham; we don’t know Hewitt.’

“Bredell then said: ‘Well, we are satisfied that you have us red-handed, and we may as well make a clean breast of the whole thing.’

“I then said: ‘If you care to do that voluntarily, without any promises of reward or immunity, we will be glad to take your statement.’

“They said, ‘That’s all right,’ and added that they thought it their duty to make a clean breast of it.

“I then asked for the other genuine Lincoln-head hundred-dollar note.

“Bredell then took an ordinary pin, went to a cycloid machine, to what I had supposed before to be a solid iron wheel, touched a point in the bottom of the wheel, which connected with a spring, lifted the top off, exposed a hollow interior, and pulled out the hundred-dollar note and a proof of one of the best counterfeit fifty-dollar notes ever made.

“‘Where are the plates?’ I asked.

“‘In Camden, New Jersey,’ said Bredell, ‘buried in the foundation of my house there.’

“‘How do you get to them?’

“‘Go to the front of the house, and to the left of the cellar window, remove the stones from the top of the foundation—and there you are.’

“You may be sure that Chief Wilkie and I lost little time in proceeding to Camden. There we followed directions, and found the fifty-dollar plates. In a safe in Taylor’s house we found a numbering machine that had been used to number the counterfeit hundred-dollar Monroe-head note.

Taylor’s Story of How He Became a Counterfeiter

“Taylor made a statement that, early in 1896, he was approached by an engraver named John Gratziana, and asked if he would undertake an important piece of work, provided he was well paid; the pay, in fact, was \$25,000.

“‘Poor Taylor’” sighed Burns, with his ever-ready sympathy. “His price had found him out. You can see how a man like him might have gone on for the balance of his life as an honest man, had he not been tempted by this great sum of money.

“He yielded; he was introduced to Jacobs and Kendig, and the arrangements were made for engraving a plate for a counterfeit cigar stamp.

““Jacobs and Kendig bought out Gratziana’s engraving establishment,’ said Taylor, ‘setting apart a small office and a couple of rooms for me. I insisted on taking in Bredell.’

““We finally finished the plates for the revenue stamps. With a transfer machine we succeeded in executing a set of perfect die-rolls just like those used by the government; the machine enabled us to make new plates from the die-rolls whenever the old ones got dim. It was then up to Jacobs and Kendig to obtain the distinctive blue paper used by the Internal Revenue Department. water-marked “U.S.I.R.,” and their method in doing this was one of the cleverest I ever heard about.

Cheating the Government Out of \$260,000 a Year

““They went about it in this way. They proceeded to the paper-mill in Connecticut which furnished the government with the genuine paper. They made friends with one of the important workmen, and unfolded a fanciful story.

“““We wield a powerful influence in Congress,” they said, “and are sure to get the contract for furnishing this paper at the next letting. But we want your services. How about taking an interest in our paper-mill and a big salary?” And they whispered an extravagant sum.

““It was his price, all right; he yielded.

“““We’d like,” they went on to explain, “to furnish paper of the same character in quality and color as the kind this concern is giving now.” Thus they induced the man to give them a sample of the paper then in use, and also a copy of the formula used for mixing the color.

““Then Kendig went to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, to an honest old man who conducted a paper-mill there.

“““I’m the proprietor of a patent medicine,” said Kendig. “I’ve dissolved partnership, and want to keep my partner from manufacturing and disposing of an inferior article. To protect myself I’ve thought it a good scheme to arrange for a special wrapper than can’t be counterfeited. Water-mark the paper with the

initials of the medicine; its name is 'Uncle Sam's Indian Remedy.' ("See?" grinned Burns. interrupting his narrative. "Pretty good, eh?")

““I know just what kind of paper and color I want,” Kendig told the old man; “I’ll attend to that feature myself.” (“And he did,” chuckled Burns.)

““He finally arranged for the entire output of the factory for six months. As fast as the paper was made, it was packed in ordinary paper boxes and shipped to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. There it was transferred to large leaf-tobacco boxes, and shipped on to Lancaster; and the ordinary observer would naturally take it for leaf tobacco.

““The paper was on hand, and the plate; the next thing was to get a printing-press. They bought one of the finest in the market, and installed a small printing plant on the top floor of their warehouse. Here they could print their own stamps.’

“And cheat the government out of about \$260,000 a year,” added Burns. “So fascinating did beating the government become that they wanted to play larger. It was in 1897, Taylor said, that Jacobs and Kendig suggested the idea of counterfeiting Mexican money. Later they decided on United States currency. ‘Kendig and I,’ said Taylor, ‘visited Washington, and made many trips to the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, where we carefully noted the methods of the government in printing their money. We then went to Philadelphia and opened up the plant at Ninth and Filbert streets, and started the engraving of the hundred-dollar Monroe-head silver certificates.

The Counterfeiters Change a One-Dollar Note into a Hundred-Dollar Note

““The arrangement was that Bredell and I should make the plates in denominations ranging from \$5 to \$500, but that nothing further should be done until they were successfully finished; then an effort would be made to secure the distinctive fiber paper used by the government. Jacobs and Kendig undertook to get the paper. They went up to Dalton, Massachusetts, and visited the Crane paper-mill, which manufactures the distinctive fiber paper for the United States currency. But they found themselves up against it this time. The establishment was so perfectly conducted that they found it impossible to secure a scrap of the paper, or the slightest information as to how it was made. As ordinary visitors, they had to note the character of the stock from a distance, without getting to see

how the fiber was distributed in the pulp.

“‘But Bredell’ (‘Bredell was a mechanical genius,’ interrupted Burns, ‘and could conjure up almost anything’) ‘he built an improvised paper-machine on which we experimented in manufacturing distinctive fiber paper during the summer of 1898.

“‘In the meantime Bredell conceived the idea of bleaching the green from a number of one-dollar notes,’ continued Taylor. ‘It’s hard to do, but Bredell did it. Then he split the dollar notes, and pasted the two pieces with the bleached sides together. The outside was perfectly white, and on this we printed the hundred-dollar Monroe-head silver certificate.’

(‘It was a devilish piece of ingenuity,’ said Burns, ‘for it gave them the government paper. During my investigation I had called on the Hon. Murray Crane, at Dalton, Massachusetts, and showed him a spurious note. He made a minute and careful examination of the paper. ‘It beats me,’ he confessed. ‘It bears every ear-mark of our stock, but I am absolutely sure that it never came from our mill.’ It did, however, although in an elaborately roundabout way. His tribute to the paper only made the thing more serious; it was really government paper, and the only other places in could be obtained were at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, or where the paper is stored in the Treasury Department. A thorough investigation here deepened the mystery, as the stamp of the government showed that every sheet of paper was checked—not a possible chance of a leakage.)

“‘We printed one hundred of the notes,’ went on Taylor, ‘and as fast as we made them we deposited them in the bank and checked out in the ordinary way. Meantime Bredell had succeeded so well with his fiber-paper experiments that we were getting ready to go into it big. Just before you arrested us, we bought a paper-mill near Lancaster; we could have printed large amounts of the money.’

“Just think of it!” exclaimed Burns. “Caught in the nick of time, and kept from flooding the country with millions of dollars in bad money so well executed that the counterfeiters themselves could scarcely distinguish it. Devilish ingenuity! But we got them.

Rounding Up the Accomplices of the Two Counterfeiters

“After I got all this from Taylor, we left him under guard at the shop in

Philadelphia, and went to Lancaster with the keys for the Lancaster warehouse that I'd found in Taylor and Bredell's office. At Lancaster we immediately proceeded to the warehouse of Jacobs and Kendig, and all of us, including Chief Wilkie and every operative, went in to spend the night.

"About six-thirty in the morning we got a signal from one of our operatives that an important man was approaching. It was James Burns, an employee in the warehouse. He came in, opened the office, went to the window, and was about to raise the blind.

"'Good morning, Jim.'

"More from fright than anything else, he mechanically turned and struck at me as I stepped out from the rear and addressed him. He was scared tremendously, and none the less so when we overpowered him, handcuffed him to a Secret Service man,—who, no doubt, looked like a desperate outlaw to poor Jim,—took him into the back room, and all sat about—silent.

"In about half an hour Kendig appeared; the same scene was enacted.

"'Good morning, Mr. Kendig.'

"The man had never seen me in his life, but he turned pale, because he recognized me from descriptions. In great agitation he answered: 'That is all right, Mr. Burns. I'll make no trouble; I understand what the situation is.'

"Kendig and Jacobs had had a scare about their stamps a few months before. That's a little story by itself, but the sum of it was that a crooked deputy revenue collector had warned them that I was investigating their stamps. He didn't know any more than that, so he couldn't tell any more, and Kendig and Jacobs were soon led to believe that he was blackmailing them. They had posted themselves, however, as to my personal appearance.

"Kendig was handcuffed and seated with an operative," Burns went on, "and once more we sat about—silent.

"It was Jacobs we were waiting for. So far, not a cog had slipped in the carefully prepared plan. But now we waited and waited. I knew it was Jacobs' custom to come to this place the first thing every morning; but I didn't know that on this night his child had been sick, that he'd been awake much, and that he didn't get

up until so late that he decided not to come to the warehouse, but to go straight to the cigar factory, about a block away.

Arrest of the Chief Conspirator

“We had reached the supreme moment of the whole situation. Every part of it had been pulled off with precision. Everybody had been landed except the arch-conspirator, W. M. Jacobs. After waiting for some time, I determined to go to the cigar factory. Some men were left at the warehouse with Kendig, and the others were placed about the factory in such a way that they wouldn’t be noticed; Chief Wilkie stood in a position where he could command a view of the entrance. At the proper time I was to give the signal, and they were to come up slowly.

“One man went with me—Schuyler Donnella, an old seasoned Secret Service operative, and one of the best that ever lived. He is still in the service, now in charge of the Louisville, Kentucky, district.

“Now, I had been up some forty-eight or fifty hours, and was dressed in old clothes, so I did not make a very favorable impression on a stranger. When I presented myself at Jacobs’ office and inquired for that gentleman, the clerk, naturally enough, viewed me with some suspicion.

“‘Have you a card?’ he asked languidly.

“I wrote ‘James W. Martin’ on a piece of paper, and the same was carried in to Mr. Jacobs. The offices proper, several in the suite, were partitioned off by an iron grating from the reception-room in which I waited. To a window in this grating came a fresh, breezy young man.

“‘What is it you want?’ asked he.

“‘Mr. Jacobs,’ said I.

“‘Well, tell me the nature of your business,’ he said. ‘I can attend to the matter.’

“I saw that my looks were against me, and decided not to parley about it. So I quickly brought him to terms another way.

“‘Why,’ I began in an offended tone, ‘I was negotiating with Mr. Jacobs yesterday for the purchase of a large number of cigars, but —’

“At this point, however, I was interrupted by the clerk’s opening the iron door and politely inviting me in. I stepped in, determining quickly the character of subterfuge necessary to bring Jacobs on the scene.

“The young man began to show me samples of cigars.

“‘How much is this brand?’ I asked; and, when he told me, I contradicted him, saying that Mr. Jacobs had offered me this brand for some dollars less. It was my purpose to pick a quarrel with the clerk, start a fight, and thereby bring Jacobs out.

“‘No,’ said the young man, ‘you’re mistaken. Mr. Jacobs never offered them for that price.’

“‘You’re a liar,’ I returned promptly, and evidently much to the clerk’s surprise.

“‘What do you mean?’ he asked. ‘I won’t be insulted in that way.’

“‘And I don’t intend to have my word doubted,’ I retorted. ‘Supposing you go and see what your boss has to say about it.’

“He started off to find Jacobs. I followed. He went right through the string of offices, and reached Jacobs in the extreme rear. I noticed a window that opened into a court, from which it would have been so convenient at any time for Jacobs to drop and walk down to the alley, and out to the railroad station. Jacobs was sitting at his desk as the clerk entered.

“‘There’s a—man outside,’ said the young man, characterizing me with an adjective, ‘who claims he has been offered this brand of cigars at a special price.’

“‘He’s a damned liar; throw him out,’ said Jacobs, without looking up from his desk, and going on making out the deposit slip for a pile of checks and currency on the desk, which he was evidently preparing to take to the bank. From the corner of his eye, however, he noticed the shadow of a man in the doorway. He looked up suddenly; then rose from his chair.

“‘Burns!’ he gasped.

“That was the first time that he had ever seen me, but he had been carrying the

description of me around in his guilty mind. And, when I came, he knew me.

“‘Go,’ he said to the clerk, and pointed to the door.

“‘Let this man stay where he is,’ I said. ‘This is a pinch. Jacobs.’ The man quickly got back his nerve.

“‘Now, don’t be foolish,’ he said meaningly. ‘Let this man step out. I want to make a proposition to you.’ I shook my head. He pointed to the money on the desk and named a large sum.

“‘Don’t be foolish, now, Burns. This is the greatest opportunity you ever had in your life. There’s \$14,000 there, and I can double it in ten minutes if—’ and he glanced significantly toward the window.

“‘Sit in that chair,’ I commanded the young man; and then I whistled for Donnella. Jacobs went on pleading with me to accept his proposition. Then he started crawfishing.

“‘I don’t quite understand this,’ he said. ‘I can’t imagine what has happened.’

“‘Suddenly a commotion was heard in the outer office, and a demand to open the gate. One of the clerks came running in.

“‘There’s a crazy man out there!’ he gasped. ‘He’s trying to break in!’

“‘Have the gate opened,’ said I to Jacobs.

“‘Open the gate and let him in,’ he ordered the clerk. When Donnella came in, I walked over to Jacobs’ desk and pulled open the bottom drawer. There lay the die-rolls I described a while ago. There were several safes in this office, and we searched them all; but there was no trace of the plates from which the Monroe-head hundred-dollar silver certificate had been printed. These were the principal objects of the search, as it is always most important to get hold of the plates from which counterfeits have been printed and put in circulation.

The Contest for the Hidden Counterfeit Plates

“I put Jacobs through a severe grilling for over an hour. But he’d make no admissions, except on condition that some consideration be given him for the

surrender of the plates. This was promptly refused.

“Everything having failed, I played my last card.

“‘We have twenty-eight men in Lancaster, Jacobs,’ I said; ‘and we’ll send for that many more, and tear down your factory and your houses, brick by brick, if necessary. We’re going to find those plates.’

“‘Go ahead and do as you please, Mr. Burns,’ replied Jacobs coolly. ‘You probably know your business.’

“I then said to Wilkie, ‘Come on.’

“He said, ‘Where?’

“‘To see Kendig.’

“The Chief said that he was exhausted for sleep, and would go to the hotel and go to bed; but, if I found anything, to let him know. I informed him that I would not sleep until I had recovered the plates.

“When I entered the door of the warehouse, Kendig was in a most abject mood. He was still handcuffed to the operative.

“‘For God’s sake, Mr. Burns, won’t you please have these handcuffs removed? It is the first time in my life that any such thing ever happened to me.’

“‘I am sorry, Kendig,’ said I; ‘but if you feel so badly over this I am afraid you will be greatly shocked at what I am going to tell you.’

“‘For God’s sake, what’s that?’ said Kendig.

“‘We are compelled to arrest your poor old father.’

“‘My God, don’t do that!’ Kendig replied. ‘You can kill me, or lock me up forever, but don’t do that.’

“I then said that we had not yet recovered the counterfeit Monroe-head silver certificate plates.

“He said, ‘If you will unlock me I will lead you to the hiding-place.’

“He did—to the top floor of the warehouse. He pulled aside some bricks, and there, in the side of the wall, we found not only the Monroe-head hundred-dollar silver certificate plate, buried in paraffin, but also some reserve stamp plates. They were turned over to me.

“The counterfeiters were taken to Philadelphia and all placed in jail. They realized the utter hopelessness of a legal battle before a court of justice, and especially before a federal court. At once they announced their intention of pleading guilty; all made a full confession.

“These men had accomplished a great deal, and had surmounted obstacles innumerable, but”—and Burns readjusted himself in his chair, and the look of anticipation on his face betrayed that he was approaching the climax of his story—“all pales into insignificance in the light of what subsequently happened.

Taylor and Bredell Make a Perfect Counterfeit Note in Prison

“After Taylor and Bredell had been safely incarcerated in Moyamensing Penitentiary for some months, awaiting trial, a perfect counterfeit twenty-dollar note again appeared in circulation. This discovery brought about great excitement. One was sent to Chief Wilkie at Washington, who immediately wired me at New York to meet him in Philadelphia. He showed me the note.

“‘What do you think of it?’ he asked.

“‘It’s a good one,’ I replied.

“‘Who could have done it?’ he asked.

“‘Arthur Taylor.’

“‘Impossible. He’s in prison.’

“‘He executed it in prison.’

“Of course the Chief thought I was crazy, but I took the note to Moyamensing prison, sent for Taylor and Bredell, and, while I discussed immaterial things, studied their faces. I satisfied myself that they knew the purpose of my visit.

“‘By the way,’ said I, in a careless manner, ‘I have a new counterfeit here that

we've just discovered; it's a twenty.'

"They took the note and examined it with eager interest.

"'It's a beauty,' they agreed.

"'Have you any idea who could have made it?' I asked.' They had none. Then I exploded. I told them just how they had made it, just how they had put it in circulation, and I succeeded in frightening them into a partial confession; for the facts I told them—which were only points in the theory I had formulated—proved to be the facts sure enough.

"Their plan was based on a Sunday newspaper story which appeared about this time, giving the history of the makers of the Monroe-head silver certificates, and of the capture of the great counterfeiter, William E. Brockaway, by William J. Burns in the early '90's. The statement was made that the ten-year sentence Brockaway was then serving was the first time he'd ever been imprisoned by the government for counterfeiting, as always before he'd been able to make the government capitulate, receiving immunity for the surrender of his dangerous plates.

"The confession revealed that this last chance had caught the attention of a cheap lawyer who had achieved some notoriety in certain directions, and this lawyer had appeared at the jail and prevailed upon Taylor and Bredell to let him represent them, saying that he would be able to make better arrangements and secure less time for them. He quoted the Brockaway article, and won them over to his plan.

"The attorney then went up to Trenton and interviewed Brockaway, who told him that unquestionably the government would be forced to capitulate and let the counterfeiters go in return for the surrender of their plates, if they hadn't surrendered them.

"He returned to Taylor and Bredell, and suggested their getting out on bond, making another plate and putting more counterfeit money in circulation, and then holding out the plates on the government. But, on investigation, they found that their fifty-thousand-dollar bond would probably be raised to one hundred thousand dollars, and they couldn't possibly meet it.

"It was here that the wonderful ingenuity of these counterfeiters showed itself.

They concluded to carry out the scheme in their prison cell.

How the Prison Authorities were Hoodwinked

“Piece by piece, they managed to get the implements for engraving from members of their family who visited them. They discovered a method of bleaching the entire one-dollar note, obviating the necessity of splitting the bill. In a subsequent confession they stated that the attorney had secured a large number of new one-dollar bills for them. They fastened a blanket covered with black paper muslin across one corner of the cell, and one would work behind this shield, with the aid of a tiny alcohol lamp, while the other slept. All was dark and quiet; and, when the guard came, there was the bed occupied by one man and a dummy, and he would hear the sound of steady breathing. Every night for two months this continued, and a perfect twenty-dollar note was engraved.

“But first they had to take a photograph of an original, and they had no camera. They discovered a method, however, and seemed the photographs *without a camera*.”

“But how?” I asked, mystified.

“Ah, no,” Burns replied, with a smile. “I’d be making a counterfeiter of you, perhaps.”

There were many details of this case that Burns could not testify to, even at the trial; his general statements were taken, as the truth would have let loose dangerous information.

“They also succeeded in printing the note—these wonderful men,” he continued. “But that process, too. I must not explain. After the notes were completed, Taylor gave them to his brother to distribute; also, so he said, he gave a number to his attorney, who purchased a gold match-box for himself with three of the notes.

“In this first interview the counterfeiters made only a partial confession. While they admitted making the twenty-dollar note, they insisted that it had been made and printed previous to their arrest, and that the plates had been thrown into the Delaware River.

(“I don’t know what could have been the matter with them,” commented the

detective, almost sadly. “They must have been rattled; they were far too clever and ingenious to fall down on a little point like that. It really hurt my feelings to have them try to work that on me.)

“‘Oh, come!’ I protested. ‘That’s too hard on me. You’ve admitted your scheme was that your lawyer should negotiate with the government and surrender plates on condition you two be treated leniently; and now you say they were made months ago and destroyed.’

“‘Why, Mr. Burns,’ they said, ‘it’s impossible to engrave plates in a prison cell.’

“‘Not for Taylor and Bredell,’ I answered.

“‘I reported the result of my interview to Chief Wilkie to the effect that they had admitted making the plates.

“‘When?’ said the Chief.

“‘Well, they claim previous to their arrest.’

“‘That so?’ the Chief remarked, not being willing to admit the possibility of their making these cleverly executed counterfeit plates in a prison cell.

“Chief Wilkie and I then repaired to the office of United States Attorney James M. Beck, to whom the matter was explained, and Mr. Beck and the Chief and myself visited Taylor and Bredell at Moyamensing prison.

“We spent a couple of hours with Taylor and Bredell. They repeated, for the benefit of Chief Wilkie and Mr. Beck, just what they had previously told me. So emphatic and earnest was their manner, in detailing their confession, that the other two were thoroughly convinced.

“In order to impress Mr. Beck and the Chief, Bredell fell on his knees and declared that they had told the whole truth, but that they had lied so often to Mr. Burns he would no longer believe them, no matter what they told.

“When we passed out to the prison yard, I said to the Chief and Mr. Beck: ‘Now, I am thoroughly convinced in my mind that these men made those plates in prison, and I am going back to remain with them until I get a confession.’

The Counterfeiters Send for Burns to Ask Him a Question

“I went back, knowing the impossibility of securing a confession by appealing in any way to these men, and concluding it would be only by working a ruse. And this I did by first sending for Taylor. I told him he need not pat himself on the back with the idea that he had convinced the Chief and Mr. Beck with the truthfulness of their story; that I had told them certain facts in my possession that convinced them beyond a doubt that the plates were made in prison.

“‘Now, I have not come back to get a confession from you, Taylor, but only to point out the result of this whole situation and what is going to follow. The whole Taylor family—your poor old widowed mother and your brother and yourself—will go to prison, they for a long term and you for your life; but only Bredell from his family, because you have been a piece of putty in his hands, and all that has happened is due to his dominating stubbornness.’

“I then went as far as I dared, according to my theory, in suggesting who had carried the various parts necessary to make the counterfeit to the cell, and the guilty mind supplied the balance, and Taylor was convinced that we had secured a confession from either his brother or his mother.

“He then said, ‘Well, Mr. Burns, will you let me have a half hour with Bredell?’

“I said: ‘No; just as soon as he comes here he will beat you out of the position you are about to take.’

“‘No,’ he said; ‘I promise we will make a full confession.’

“He called Bredell in, and after a half hour’s conference they sent for me and admitted that they still had the plates.

“I got Chief Wilkie, and we went to the cemetery and dug up the plates, which were hidden in the grave of Taylor’s father.

“When the facts—as many as could be given—were given to the public, the prison authorities were made the laughing-stock of the whole country. They felt it incumbent upon them to insist that the counterfeiting had not been done in the cell, and endeavored in every way to prove it. They even went to the length of copying the visitors’ book, and leaving out a number of visits that were known to have been made by the attorney.

“They had arranged, in the trial of the case, to introduce the testimony of Professor Ives, inventor of color-photography, showing that it would be a physical impossibility to take a photograph in the cell’s limited light. When they learned that the photograph had been taken without the aid of a camera at all, they dismissed Professor Ives. They also had an expert printer to testify that, in order to get the impression, it would be necessary to use a printing-press weighing at least eighty pounds. But when I pulled from my pocket the counterfeiters’ printing-press, made on the principle of a clothes-wringer, they withdrew their expert testimony.

“At length all the men concerned pleaded guilty, except the two attorneys, and both of these were convicted.

“After all was over, the counterfeiters sent for me.

“‘There’s just one thing we’d like to know,’ they said. ‘How did you know about that two hundred dollars, in that letter mailed from Jacobs to Taylor? Jacobs had prepared it so that it couldn’t possibly be tampered with without discovery.’

“The letter read like this,” explained Burns:

“‘Be extremely careful in your movements. Watch and see if you are shadowed; also watch your mail closely and see if that is being tampered with. Note the time the letter was mailed, the time received, and see if there is any discrepancy. Also return this envelope to me, that I may see whether it has been tampered with.’

“This letter, with two hundred-dollar notes, was placed in an envelope which would have turned from black to blue had the flap been opened by steam or the dampening process. The envelope was then addressed and put in a second envelope, and a thin strip of white paper was placed along the covers. A peculiar wax seal on the outside of the flap warned Taylor, so he took out his knife and opened the end of the envelope carefully. He then examined the envelope, held it up, and looked at it. It was all right. So he mailed the two envelopes back to Jacobs, and inspection showed conclusively that the envelopes had not been tampered with in transit.

“‘How did you get that information?’ asked Taylor.

“‘You’re a counterfeiter,’ I replied; ‘I mustn’t tell you.’”

“But how did you know?” I persisted.

Burns smiled his happy, jolly smile.

“You might want to become a counterfeiter,” he laughed. “I mustn’t tell you.”