

# THE DESERET WEEKLY.

Truth and Liberty.

No. 9.

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH, FEBRUARY 13, 1897.

VOL. LIV:

Written for this Paper

## A FIFTY MILLIONAIRE.

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NEW YORK, January 3rd, 1897.



HAD an hour's interview last Saturday with Russell Sage in his private office in the old rat trap of a building known as 71 Broadway. Everyone has heard of Russell

Sage. He is said to be worth somewhere between fifty and one hundred million dollars. He has more money on call than any other man in New York, and he is ready to loan a million or so at any moment on low interest, provided he has good security. There are few men living who have handled so much money as he. Starting life a poor boy, he was a millionaire way back in the sixties, and for the past thirty years he has been turning his millions over like a snow ball, gathering more and more at every roll. Mr. Sage is one of the remarkable characters of this century. He is now eighty, but he does not look to be sixty, and during my talk with him he told me he had been at steady work for more than sixty years. All of this time he has been in the very thick of things. He was a big money handler during the war, and he has been associated with nearly every great capitalist of the past generation. He and Jay Gould were hand in glove in great enterprises, and he is a director in so many banks, trust companies and railroad companies that it is said his fees for attending directors' meetings would make a good salary for an ordinary man. I have seen newspaper statements representing Russell Sage as an illiterate man. I have not found him so. No one can be with the biggest men of this country for sixty years and not become educated. Mr. Sage started life with a public school education. At the age of twenty-five he was elected as one of the aldermen of Troy, and before he was forty he was one of the most prominent members of Congress. Long before he was fifty he was worth a million, and now, at eighty, he has as bright an eye and as quick a mind as any of the men of half his age who borrow money of him to play the great game which is always going on here among the Wall street gamblers.

I met Mr. Sage in his office. His New York establishment looks more like a prison than the workshop of a millionaire. It is to a certain extent a fortifica-

tion. You remember how a crank came within an ace of blowing him into eternity with a dynamite bomb a couple of years ago, because Mr. Sage would not write him out a check for a million odd dollars. As it was, he was very badly hurt. Now, the average millionaire, after such an attack, would have given up business and retired from danger. That, however, is not the kind of a man Russell Sage is. As soon as he recovered from his injuries he went back to work, but he put some guards about him to keep off the cranks of the future. Today you cannot walk into his office without you are known. You cannot see him unless you have good credentials. My introduction was through a letter from Mr. Henry Clews, the famous Wall street banker. With this I climbed to the second story of 71 Broadway and entered an office, upon the painted door of which were the words "Russell Sage." Passing through this, I found myself in a narrow hall or cell, as it were, walled with boards to a point high above my head. Above these boards there was a latticework of iron, almost as heavy as that which surrounds the bullion in the vaults of the United States treasury. There were two doors leading through the board wall, but these I understand shut with a spring lock. In the wall there were two little holes guarded with brass bars. Standing before them, you can look in and see the clerks who manage Mr. Sage's business. Through these holes is the only means of getting at Mr. Sage. You present yourself at them, and Mr. Sage's cashier, a gray mustached young man, with a critical eye looks you over. If he is very sure that you are all right and that your business is of importance you are presented to Mr. Sage. This was what was done with me. The investigation seemed to be satisfactory, and a few minutes later the door in the wall was unlocked. I was conducted through an ante-room and shown into the plain but comfortable furnished private office of the millionaire.

As I entered, a straight, well-formed, smooth-shaven man turned about from a desk in one corner of the room. He rose to his feet as though his joints were well oiled, and a pleasant smile came over his grave features as he told me that he could give me a few moments only, and asked me to be seated. He did not look at me at all critically, and during the talk he chatted with me as freely as though there was not an anarchist in the world. Though he told me that he could see me for but a few moments, I remained with him for more than an hour, while brokers and other business men were waiting outside. He became interested in the conversation, and then leaned over and tapped me on the knee as he laughed over some story

of his career or became especially interested in some subject he was discussing.

My first question was as to his health and how he managed at eighty to keep so young and bright. The old millionaire laughed as he replied:

"I don't know how I do it, but I am here six hours of the day, six days of every week, year in and year out. My good health in old age is, I think, largely due to temperance. I sleep from seven to eight hours every night, and I don't allow myself to be dragged about to dinners and clubs. When I first came to New York I was persuaded into joining the Union League club, and I was a member of it for years. I never attended more than two or three dinners there, however, and I seldom went to the club rooms. Then my friends wanted me to give up my membership to some one else. I was asked to sell it. You see, there were a number of men who wanted to get in, and I could have gotten as much as \$200 for it. But I told them that I did not want to make money that way, and that I would hold the membership until it ran out. This I did.

"Speaking of money making, Mr. Sage, how did you get your start? How did you make your first thousand dollars?"

"There is no particular story in that," replied Mr. Sage. "When I was sixteen I went to clerk with my brother. Then I had a store of my own. I never had a great deal of trouble in making money. My first thousand probably came from saving, and was made on much the same principle that I have followed throughout life."

"But are there any fixed principles by which a man can make money, Mr. Sage?" I asked.

"It depends a great deal on the man, of course," was the reply. "But there are two things which any and every man must have who makes any permanent success in this world. In the first place, a man must be honest in spirit and in deed, and, in the second, he must be industrious. I should also add he must be economical and invest his money so that it will work for him."

"What do you think of New York as a field for money making? Should country boys come to the city?"

"The man who has it in him," replied Russell Sage, "will succeed anywhere. You can't keep the right country boy down and the city boy with the right stuff in him is bound to get up. The chances in New York are perhaps greater than in the country, but the temptations are also greater. I tell you I don't like what I see about the clubs here in New York. You may go to them any night and you will see young fellows who have less than a thousand dollars a