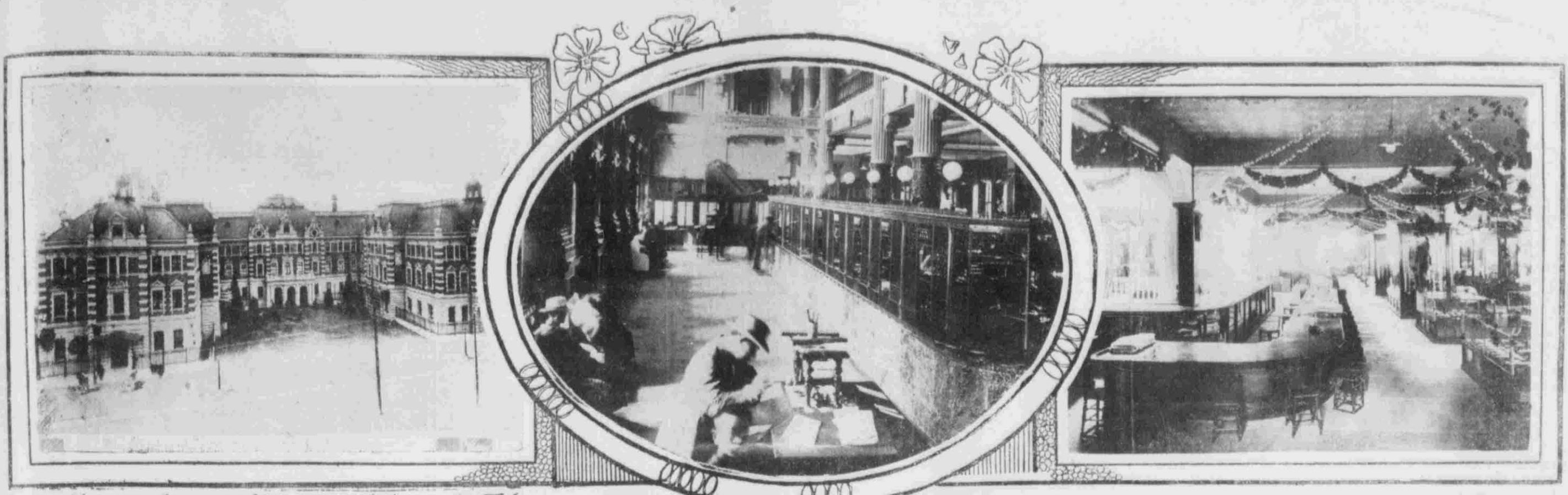


## THE MITSUI MILLIONS

ALL ABOUT JAPAN'S RICHEST FAMILY AND ITS VAST UNDERTAKINGS



The Mitsui Office Buildings in Tokyo.  
(Right) Mitsui Bank, (Middle) Mitsui Bank,  
(Left) Mitsui Mining Company

Inside The Mitsui Bank. This Bank Has \$35,000,000 of Deposits.

Interior View of Japan's Biggest Department Store

Special Correspondence.  
TOKIO, Japan, Jan. 2.—Have you heard of the Mitsui family? It is the richest of all Japan, and one of the richest in the world. What the Rothschilds are to Europe and Rockefeller to the United States, the Mitsui family is to Japan. They may also be compared with the Astors and the Vanderbilts, and their undertakings include such as have made the fortunes of Krupp, Marshall Field, Stephen Girard and John Wanamaker. They are famous as merchants, miners, manufacturers, exporters, bankers and financiers. They have a capital running high into the tens of millions of dollars, and they do a business of hundreds of millions a year. In some years the foreign trade of this family is equal to one-seventh of the whole foreign trade of Japan. Its coal mines produce about one-third of all the coal mined in the empire, and they supply a great part of that used in the ports of east Asia. The Mitsui own great cotton mills and furnish about one-third of the Japanese exports of cotton yarn. They also have other factories and foundries throughout the empire, and their trading and banking institutions are in all the big cities. This family has also its branch establishments in the leading seaports of China, and in Hongkong, Manila, Singapore and Bombay. It has branches in Australia and Java, and also in San Francisco, New York and London. In some years it ships as much as 5,000 bales of raw silk to the United States, and it has a fleet of fast steamships, which carry its merchandise to and from Shanghai, Hongkong, the Philippines, the Straits settlements, Burma and India. There is no more thriving corporation in the world today, and just at this time, when we Americans are talking of the Japanese as being on the edge of bankruptcy, it is surprising to come into contact with an institution like this.

A FAMILY OF MILLIONAIRES.  
Through the kindness of Mr. J. Yamamoto, one of the directors, I have been able to spend the greater part of today in going through the big office buildings of the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha, Inc. in Tokyo, which contain the Mitsui bank and the exporting and mining departments of the corporation, and I have also visited its big department store across the way, which has more than any dry goods establishment of the far east. Each of these institutions is a story in itself. But before I give it I want to tell you more about this remarkable family. The Mitsui house is a joint association, consisting of 11 families or partners, who have pooled their capital in their joint bank under the system of unlimited

joint liability. The bank, for instance, which has a capital of 5,000,000 yen and a surplus of 11,500,000, inserts a statement in all of its banking advertisements that it is owned by the members of the Mitsui family, and that they as partners assume an unlimited responsibility for all its debts. As a result, the people know that all the wealth of the family is back of the bank, and it has the highest credit. Its deposits are now about 70,000,000 yen, or almost \$35,000,000.  
The same rule prevails as to all the obligations of the 11 families. The properties are all held in common, although each family may have independent property of its own. In the Mitsui establishments, however, there is no particular property to which any one can enter his absolute claim. The institutions are managed by the Mitsui family council, according to rules laid down by one of the heads of the family who lived more than 200 years ago. This, making the family, and not the individual, the head of an institution, is in accordance with the social organization of Japan. Here the individual is subservient to the family, and the rights and obligations of the family should outweigh those of any of its members.  
This combination of the Mitsui has now lasted for about 200 years. The family has been in business longer than that, its ancestry dating back to a feudal lord who lived at the time of Christopher Columbus. It was somewhere along during the days of Chaucer and Spenser in England that Takatoshi, a descendant of this lord, began to engage in trade. He opened a store in Kyoto and established a dry goods business here in Tokyo. He sold for cash and also organized a system for the collection and remittance of money, and it was his son who wrote out the family rules which have made the fortunes of the house. He also organized the first family partnership. In this first organization five brothers engaged to work with their collective capital, and this system has continued down to the 11 branches or partners which constitute the house of today.

THE FINANCIERS OF THE NEW JAPAN.  
The Rothschilds frequently come to the assistance of the great governments of Europe. Their fortune was founded, in fact, on money loaned to one of the German rulers who applied to the old house at Frankfurt-Jay Cooke helped Uncle Sam out during the Civil war, and President Roosevelt was glad to have the assistance of Pierpont Morgan at the time of the last panic. The Mitsui have occupied even more important positions in regard to the new Japan. When the emperor was brought out of his seclusion at Kyoto and the present era of western civilization began the Mitsui furnished most of the money to finance the new government. They practically enabled Japan to bridge over the great crisis

Eleven Branches Which Pool Their Capital and Work in Common—The Mitsui Bank And How it Financed the Emperor—The Bankers and the Government—Something About the Mitsui Coal Mines—Their Cotton Mills and Engine Works—Their Enormous Foreign Trade and Their Big Department Stores—A Remarkable Story of a Business Family Which Has Lasted Over 200 Years, and Today Leads the New Japan.

which then threatened the empire both from within and without, and their services were so valuable that Baron Hachiroemon Mitsui, the present head of the house, was made a peer and all the other partners were given titles in acknowledgment of it. The house today stands very close to the government, and it has great influence in financial matters.

THE BANKERS AND THE GOVERNMENT.  
Indeed, the Mitsui are perhaps the most important element in the Japanese situation today. It is through them that the emperor and the government are in touch with the people, such as Matsuo, governor of the Bank of Japan; Takahashi of the Yokohama Specie Bank and Baron Shibusawa, that the new policy of retrenchment, economy and reform is now being introduced. Until within a few months the country has been managed by a class of men who knew but little of modern business methods. The leading officials were apt to look down on trade and to consider themselves as rather superior to those who were engaged in it. This was especially so up to the time of the war between Russia and Japan. Then the country needed a great deal of money, and it had to go abroad to borrow it. It had not done much up to the placing of enormous loans, and it called in the bankers among the business men to advise it how to proceed. Through their counsel the loans were negotiated which supplied a large part of the money for the war. Agents were sent to Paris, London and New York, and there was little trouble in the disposal of bonds. As the war continued the loans were negotiated and up to the time of its close there seemed to be no financial trouble in sight. The business men were now less regarded and the government went on with its expenditures, not doubting it could get all the money it needed. Then a loan was proposed for the Manchurian railway. To the surprise of the government it was only half taken. There seemed to be but little demand for those bonds in London, or New York, and the officials were at a loss what to do. In the meantime the representatives of the large banking institutions of Paris, London and New York had come here to Tokyo to investigate matters for themselves. They were not satisfied with figures and estimates alone. They wanted to know just what the resources of the government were and whether it could, beyond doubt, meet all its obligations when they became due. They wanted to know whether it was advisable for them to invest in new bonds, and "like the man from Missouri," it was in connection with their report that Japan found difficulty in placing further loans, and on this account the financiers who represent the Mitsui, up-to-date banking and industrial interests of today have taken a hand with the government in putting Japan on a solid financial basis. This policy has already been inaugurated and

through the advice of such men as the Mitsui it will be carried out to a successful conclusion.

IN A BIG JAPANESE BANK.  
No one can go through the big banking institutions of Tokyo without being assured of the material prosperity and the great resources of this country. The building of the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha is surrounded by structures which would not seem out of place in New York or Chicago. The Bank of Japan, an enormous building of gray granite, is just over the way. The Yokohama Specie Bank is next door, and all about are other large modern buildings. The Mitsui building is of four stories, built around the three sides of a court covering more than an acre. It is of red brick and white stone, and its interior is furnished like one of the best office buildings of the United States. There are wide halls, big rooms, many windows and an abundance of electric lights. Elevators take one from story to story and there are parlors for the directors and all modern conveniences. The main room of the bank is larger than that of any bank in Washington and as well furnished as that of any in New York. As I stood in the lobby and looked down upon the scores of clerks working away I was impressed with the enormous business being done. Money was coming in the bank and I could see where the bank gets its deposits, which now amount to about 70,000,000 yen. As I went on through the building I seemed to be in a government department. The clerks were dressed in clerical uniforms and in one I saw a dozen Japanese girl stenographers, who were checking off their notes on Japanese typewriters.

THE MITSUI COAL MINES.  
An interesting branch of the establishment is the mining department. In this are shown samples of the coal, silver, copper, iron and other ores being mined by this great corporation. There are also models of the machinery used in the mines, showing how each of the larger properties is provided with the most improved type of machinery for hauling, ventilation and drainage, and that everything is done to protect the lives of the miners and to maintain a uniform output at the lowest expense. I saw models of some of the Mitsui coal mines near Nagasaki. They are known as the Mitsui mines, and are one of the largest of such enterprises in the world. There are now six different workings, and the annual production is over 1,000,000 tons. The mines have an area of 16,000 acres, and the coal veins average about eight feet in thickness. This coal is bituminous and is used for cooking. It is regarded as a standard coal in the Asiatic markets. Another Mitsui property is the Tagawa coal mines, which produce the best steam coal of Japan, and largely supply

the navy and the railroads. And another is the Yamano coal, noted for its easy firing and its high evaporating power. In addition to these coal mines the Mitsui have silver and lead properties, which are turning out considerable ore, and they have two large sulphur mines.

THEY MAKE EARTHQUAKE-PROOF CHIMNEYS.  
The Mitsui have a big engineering works here in Tokyo, where engines and boilers are made, and where they are also turning out electrical machinery which is noted throughout the Far East. They are making steel chimneys and railway bridge material. Their steel chimneys are said to be earthquake-proof. This is a very important item, Japan has, on the average, an earthquake a day throughout the year, and every now and then a big one. At such times the brick chimneys and smokestacks are apt to fall. They often cause great damage, crushing through the roofs of houses, and in one instance which I was visiting at the time, a house was destroyed. The place which I was visiting at the time, was a large department of the store, which was a big one. At such times the brick chimneys and smokestacks are apt to fall. They often cause great damage, crushing through the roofs of houses, and in one instance which I was visiting at the time, a house was destroyed. The place which I was visiting at the time, was a large department of the store, which was a big one.

THE MITSUI AND FOREIGN TRADE.  
It would pay some of our big exporting firms to go through the foreign trade rooms of the Mitsui houses. They have a commercial museum which enables their clerks and employees to study all sorts of raw materials and manufactured goods. These rooms are somewhat similar to those of our Philadelphia Commercial Museum, and one could hardly imagine such a collection being gotten together by a private company. Connected with the museum is a large library of up-to-date books on textiles, ores, mining and manufactures, and the clerks are well educated. The Mitsui family has its own system of education for its employees. It has set apart a fund of thirty thousand yen annually to send its clerks to China and other countries to enable them to acquire the languages and education necessary for their business. It is now exporting all sorts of goods to the amount of ninety million yen or more every year. It has a large import trade and brings into Japan locomotives, steel bridges and electrical machinery, ironclad steamers, warships and ordnance for the government, and also railway equipment and materials. It deals largely in cotton

and wool, and handles American canned meats, wheat flour, and other such things. The company also acts as insurance agents, representing some of the largest of the American and the English insurance companies, and that not only in Japan, but in India, the Straits Settlements and China as well.

JAPAN'S BIGGEST DEPARTMENT STORE.

Leaving the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha, I crossed the street and went through the big department store belonging to the Mitsui family. This is by far the largest and most complete store in the Japanese empire. It has a capital of 1,000,000 yen, and it does a daily business of about 30,000 yen. It is like nothing else in Japan, and is one of the best examples of how the western movement is capturing the empire, and also of the solidity of the new institutions. It is known as the Mitsui dry goods store, Marshall Field, who was at the time he died worth about \$50,000,000, made as a storekeeper, never liked the words "department store." He called his big establishment in Chicago a dry goods store. The Mitsui store follows the same rule, and that, perhaps because the fortunes of the family were founded on dry goods. As I have said, the business was begun during the sixteenth century—almost a hundred years before Boston was founded—and it was only a few years later that the store was opened right here on the site of this big establishment of today. After the combination of the five Mitsui brothers in 1723, this store steadily grew, and it covered a large area, about one-half of which is now occupied by the store, the Gofukukien, as the store is called today.

The Mitsui in the past started the cash business in Japan, and this new store has fixed prices marked on its goods. It has cash carriers to take the money from one part of the store to the other, and also a big mail order department, through which goods are sent to all parts of the empire, and collections are made through the post-offices. It has automobiles to deliver its goods through the city, elegant dining rooms and resting rooms for its customers and special exhibitions of new goods, which bring out fashionable society. It has a photographic department, a picture gallery, ladies' dressing and tailoring establishments, and, in fact, almost everything found in the best department stores in the United States. The building is of three stories, with wide plate-glass windows and a spacious entrance hall. In the center of it are two courts roofed with glass, so that light can be admitted whether the day be bright or dark. In these courts are fountains, in the basins of which palms rise high into the air. The store is a picture of modernity and comfort. It is a place where one can find everything that a man or a woman could want. It is a place where one can find everything that a man or a woman could want. It is a place where one can find everything that a man or a woman could want.

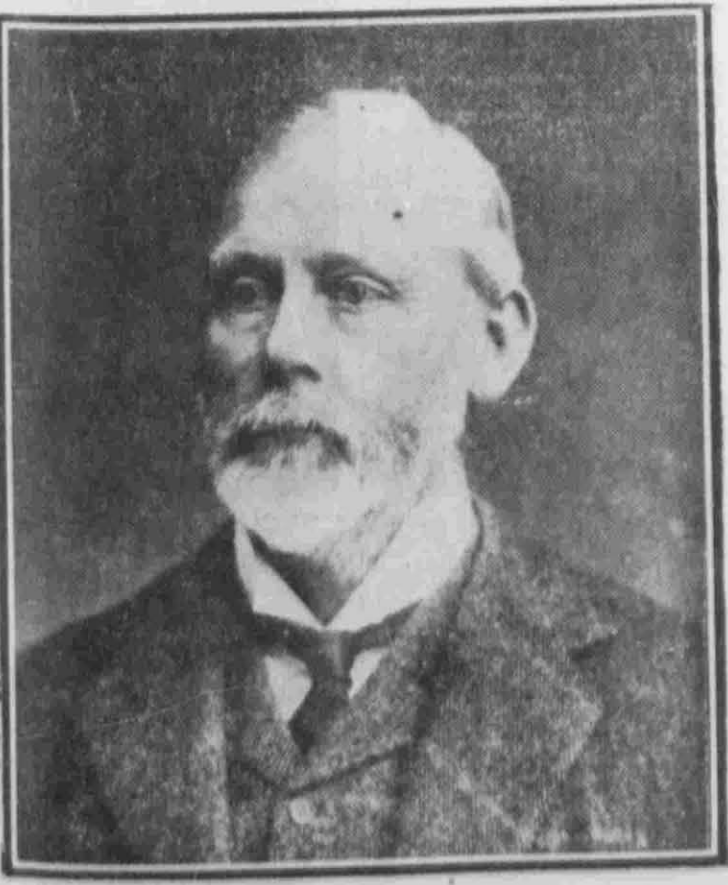
whole of the three stories are carpeted with the softest of white matting and are filled with Japanese goods of various kinds, beautifully displayed in glass cases.

SHOPPING IN ONE'S STOCKING FEET.

This big store, with its vast quantities of new goods of all kinds, is supported by the Japanese, although it has its departments intended for foreigners. There are 2,000,000 people in Tokyo alone, and the country around is more thickly populated than any part of the United States. The store is so beautiful that no one would think of entering it with muddy shoes, and the Japanese men and women all check their shoes and umbrellas at the door. I came out of a florist's and one of the clerks drew over my shoes a pair of soft cloth slippers, and it was in them that I walked through. The matting is as white as a tablecloth, and there is not a spot of dirt anywhere to be seen. The store was full of Japanese women and girls looking over goods and going through the other operations of shopping just as our women do in the United States. Some were examining the magnificent obi or wide belts, which form the most decorative part of the Japanese costume; others were looking up stuff for kimonos, and others buying shoes, jewelry, pictures, and, in fact, everything under the sun. Some of the shoes are beautifully decorated, and I saw single obis which sell for \$300. Think of a belt for your dress which might cost you \$100 or more, and you have an idea of a possible extravagance of the Japanese women.

As I walked through the establishment a concert began in the main rooms, and for an hour or more a Japanese girl played on a grand piano, being accompanied by two others with the violin. I cannot say much for the music. It was an attempt at one of those marches, and was not a success. I was taken through the store by one of the managers, who spoke English. We went together from story to story from the toy department at the bottom, where little dolls and dolls' housekeeping outfits are sold, up to the great photographic gallery and reception parlors at the top. We visited rooms beautifully furnished, some of which were for the tea drinking ceremony, and all together saw what I consider one of the best dry goods establishments and one of the most artistically decorated stores of the world. I understand that other department stores are gradually springing up in Tokyo and in other cities of the empire, and that they are greatly competing with the bookish little shops which line nearly all the business streets of Japan.

FRANK Q. CARPENTER.



FREDERICK C. SELOUS.

One of the men who will make up Roosevelt's African party.

## Drink's "Internal Revenue" Paid by the People

Special Correspondence.  
WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 20.—The annual survey of the liquor traffic as the "internal revenue" of the nation's business is just putting in its appearance in the liquor trade press.

The text for the fiscal year is found in the official report of the commissioner of internal revenue, which credits the drink business with having "paid" Uncle Sam during 1908 the sum of \$19,066,422 in taxes levied upon liquor makers and dealers and upon distilled and fermented beverages withdrawn for consumption.

This figure aggregates nearly 35-1-5 per cent of the total revenue of Uncle Sam for the last fiscal year. Forgetting all their other troubles for the instant, the liquor editors have struck up their stereotyped psalm of valour over their alleged patriotic "tribute" to the government.

"What would Uncle Sam do without our help?" they cry in defiant glee.

This old bluff has worked so many years that the notion of drink having failed to note the present danger in recouping the old shibboleth.

For those have changed and today millions of thinking citizens of America who once paid no attention one way or the other to the issue, are likely to suddenly spike the hot-air gun of the whisky champion with the Yankee retort: "Where did you get it? You claim to have helped old Uncle Sam's strong box with \$19,066,422 in 12 months, but where did you pick it up, and how much more did you keep for yourself last year?"

"And when the real facts come to light, which show that for every \$1 you ostensibly handed over to the national government you took more than \$11 out of the pockets of the people, you would be like the pirate who offered 10 per cent of his plunder to escape with the rest."

PEOPLE PAID EVERY CENT.

As a matter of fact, the people paid every cent of it and more than 10 times

as much besides of this self-glorifying trade.

The official figures of the United States reveal the other side of this long-suffered fairy-tale of the drink-makers.

Based upon these official reports for 1908, as noted in advance figures furnished the Associated Prohibition Press by the bureau of statistics, the consumption of alcoholic drinks in the United States for the last fiscal year ending June 30, 1908, was 1,508,954,011 gallons (and this figure is incomplete because the time consumption for 1907 is taken as the exact 1908 figure which is much larger) is not yet available.

Difficult to retail proportions and estimated as regards retail prices according to the highest authorities of the trade, the result shows that not less than \$2,182,942,839 was paid over the bar and otherwise to drink makers and seller by the people of America during the last fiscal year.

In other words, while the drink traffic claims to have paid Uncle Sam in that length of time not quite \$2.29 per

(Continued on page fourteen.)



W. W. RUSSELL.

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