

ON SECRET SERVICE

True Stories of Experiences in the State, War, Treasury and Postoffice Departments by Col. Jasper Ewing Brady, Late Censor of Telegraphs and Chief Signal Officer, U. S. A., Santiago de Cuba.

Written for the Deseret News.

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No. 11.—"The Mexican Ones."

JAMES CRONIN, special agent United States treasury department, was about as keen an operative as there was in the secret service. His headquarters were in Chicago, and many a counterfeit was sent over the road by "Jimmie" Cronin, as he was affectionately called by his friends.

Cronin and Cheney were much the same as regards ability, but Cheney had ambitions (and was achieving them) beyond the mere detection of crime. Cronin hadn't any ambitions beyond the running down of a smooth-fingered gentleman or smashing a gang of counterfeiters. He was a great, whole-souled Irishman, full of wit, and as brave as a lion. He was always poorer, every cent he received went through his fingers like water, but, as he said to Cheney, with a slight Irish brogue: "Phat the devil good is money save to have fun wid'." Ye see, Jack, I haven't any one dependent on me, and when I get too old to work I'll kiss the world goodby." Cronin could have been a rich man had he any desire to be. A great deal of money had been offered him at different times, but each time refused. He was as honest as a study oak, and Cheney counted Cronin as one of his staunchest and best friends.

The head of the treasury department secret service on more than one occasion had been informed by Col. Cheney of some exceptionally good work that had been done by Cronin. Modesty was one of this Irishman's predominant virtues; he merely reported accomplish-ments, never giving any of the divers details used in their accomplishment.

Cronin came into Cheney's office one day, and after his usual salutation of "Top of the morning to you, Jack," threw six bright silver dollars on the desk and said:

"What do you think of that bunch of silver?"

"Cheney knew immediately the 'queer' money was being passed, and Cronin had discovered it, and wanted his advice and co-operation on the case. He picked up the silver dollars one by one, fingered them carefully, looked through a microscope and minutely examined the mulling and stamping. Then he passed each one between the thumb and forefinger of his right hand. After that a pair of featherweight scales came into play, and the coins were carefully weighed. Cheney stacked five in one pile and the sixth coin he tossed over to Cronin.

"That coin's all right, Jimmie, but these five are queer."

"Right ye are, Cheney, but that's the queerest queer I've ever laid my eyes on."

"Yes, I notice it. The silver in these five 'queer' coins is of a higher alloy than the real coin. That's a paradox, but it's a true one."

"Well, whatever 'paradox' it is, it sounds all right to me."

"Where'd you pick up these coins, Jimmie?"

"Over in the First National three weeks ago. Later I found them in several other banks, and reports from the secret indicate that these coins all bear the mill mark of the San Francisco mint. Made any investigations along that line?"

"Any suspicious, Cronin?"

"Nary a one, Cheney. They come from everywhere, counter banks, big stores, railroads, coal companies, and what not. Why, hang it, any man would take one of those coins and never notice it. An expert would be fooled. You would have taken a number of them without a murmur. So would I, ain't it so?"

"Sure thing," murmured Cheney. At the same time he was studying the coin with the microscope. Cronin, he continued, "these coins all bear the mill mark of the San Francisco mint. Made any investigations along that line?"

"No, not yet. I've just been feeling around. I reported it to the chief, and he directed me to run it down. It seems easy thing for the chief to sit in Washington and say 'em down,' but it's not so easy to do it."

Cheney was busy, but heard every word Cronin had spoken. He had a dual intellect. He could hear and understand intelligently what a person was talking about and at the same time his mind could be working out some sort of a problem.

"Excuse me a minute, Cronin," he said, and was gone.

Cronin smoked in silence, while he slowly fingered the coins. His mind, too, was active; he knew Cheney would be with him in the case; and if it could be solved, surely they could do it.

The colonel came back in about 15 minutes and laid down one of the coins with a section cut out.

"I thought so, Jimmie," he remarked.

"Thought what?" snapped Cronin.

"These coins are Mexican pesos. Their value in United States money is 27 1/2 cents. The man, or gang, can buy all these Mexicans they want, recast them into our dollars, and net 62 1/2 cents profit. Queer, too, isn't it, Cronin, the counterfeiters are better silver than the good dollars."

"Well, all that's news, Cheney, and interesting, but what we want is to find the man that's making this bum money."

"You're a good way off from the plant at this minute, Cronin."

Cronin looked quickly at Cheney. All rallery and joshing had disappeared from his face; he was working out the problem.

"You don't mean to tell me that you have a clew already, Jack?"

"Not one clew, Cronin, but two of them—two good live leads. Now listen.

The coins are all identical, made by the same die. That's where the gang was not out; they should have changed the mill mark. These are all supposedly 'Frisco mintage.' Now, clew two: Mexican silver can, of course, be bought up here, but out on the coast and on the frontier pesos are dealt in almost like potatoes, therefore the plant of this gang is at some convenient point to

"Know what became of him after he left here?"

"No, I don't. I heard he went back to his old home in Mannheim, Germany. It was said he came from a very good family."

After a little further conversation Cheney left, promising to let Fitzgerald know in case anything came up. As soon as Cheney got down town he cabled to his correspondent in Berlin, Germany, asking for definite information of Emil Kuhn, of Mannheim. Cheney's organization was so perfect he had correspondents in

"You make yourself known at the bank and find out how much of this rotten silver is around here. I'm going on another still hunt for Kuhn. Will meet you here every evening."

"All right, Jack."

Some thing told Cheney to take another look at Buehlow. He found the German artist lived in a very pretty little cottage on the bank of the Los Angeles river. His wife was a good looking Mexican, and did the house-work. The Buehlovs kept to themselves, and were not neighborly at all. Cheney was disguised. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon Buehlow left his house and went down town. Cheney followed, and gave him go to the postoffice general delivery window. There was a crowd around at the time, and Cheney could not hear the name Buehlow gave. In a jiffy he was behind the door, his credentials easily admitting him to the treasury department service office and sent for Cronin. Then he told her what he knew of Kuhn's marriage and life in Germany. He had the proof they having been sent him at his request. She saw and was convinced and rose to go.

DIPLOMAT SUED FOR HORSEWHIPPING WOMAN.



MRS. WILHAM GRESHAM

Dr. Raoul Amador, son of the president of Panama and consul-general from that republic to the United States, is the defendant in a suit brought by Mrs. Bertha K. Gresham, widow of Rear-Admiral Frisber and Lieut. William Gresham, U. S. A. Mrs. Gresham's suit is divided into two civil actions. In one she holds Dr. Amador responsible for her present condition; in the other she accuses him of attacking her with a whip. In each case both of which will be heard in New York she puts the damages at \$10,000.



DR. RAOUL A. M. A. DOR

the Mexican frontier, where money is plentiful. The 'queer' money is made, shipped seven ways for Sunday, and put in circulation.

"Clew one and clew two are very interesting, but we're a long way from the right party."

"Yes," interrupted Cheney, smiling, "2,600 miles, more or less. But, Cronin, we're going to get those birds sooner or later. I'd rather run down a gang like that than eat. They're clever, but as I told you, they've made one mistake, and that mistake will be their doom."

"By George, old man, the chief'll be glad you're on this."

"Don't say anything to the chief about it. I'm going to Frisco tonight. Later I may wire you to come. I'll keep in touch with you, and in the meantime you find the person or persons who are floating this money up here. Don't arrest them; just keep them under surveillance. We want the king pin of this crowd, then the gang will fade away."

"All right, Cheney, I'll do as you say, but keep me posted."

"I'll sure do that, Cronin." The two men parted, and after clearing up the odds and ends of current work, Cheney made ready to leave for Frisco. The Overland carried him west that night, and three days later he landed in the "American Paris." He had been there before on numerous occasions, had a number of good friends, and spent the first evening just looking around. Frisco always had a large floating population of light-fingered gents, and Cheney went to the hall of justice, looked over the gallery, joshed with the city force without revealing his mission, and after a trip through Chinatown, went to the Palace and had a good night's sleep.

He was cordially received at the mint the next morning. Fitzgerald, the superintendent, had not as yet been informed regarding the "Mexican ones." Of course he surmised Cheney was out there on business.

"Fitzgerald," said Cheney, after the usual salutations had been exchanged, "I want to see a list of your die cutters."

"Not much of a list, colonel. Let's see, there's only four of them—Gangley, Stearns, Ritchie and Evans."

"Who cuts the die for silver dollars?"

"Ritchie."

"Is he all right?"

"Yes as straight as a die. Been here about two years. Makes \$1,800 per year, married, lives over in Berkeley, and is a good citizen."

"The other three, how about them?"

"All good men, and old-timers. The youngest of them, Evans, has been here seven years, and Gangley and Stearns both have been here over 10 years."

Cheney handed Fitzgerald one of the Mexican ones. "What do you think of that coin, Fitz?" Fitzgerald examined it closely and said:

"Looks good to me, Cheney."

Cheney then told him how it was discovered, and what he suspected.

Fitzgerald took down a record book and studied it carefully for a moment, and then said:

"I am positive none of my die cutters did that work. About three years ago there was a die cutter worked in this mint by the name of Kuhn—Emil Kuhn. He was a high class workman, but rather unscrupulous in his habits. If I remember rightly, he drank more or less, and two years back he was discharged."

"Did he cut dies for silver ones?"

"Oh, yes, Kuhn was an artist. He could cut a die for any coin. He also painted quite well."

spring. Health has been restored."

"Pretty definite information that," muttered Cheney. He wired Cronin to meet him at the Halphen hotel, Los Angeles, as soon as possible, and the "wet irons" on the Southern Pacific that night carried Cheney on his way south. The population of Los Angeles at this time was a heterogeneous crowd of consumptives and tourists. There always was a large number of artists, good and indifferent, located in this city of Los Angeles, and the day following his arrival Cheney began to investigate.

Not an Emil Kuhn could he find. There was a German artist named Buehlow, but he was married, and as Kuhn had a wife in Europe, Cheney hardly thought Buehlow and Kuhn could be one.

Two days later Cronin came in from Chicago, and Cheney told him all that had transpired since they parted company.

"Very interesting, Cheney, very interesting," commented Cronin, "but nothing very definite. Your telegram from Germany may or may not have been authentic."

"All right, Cronin, avail and doubt if you want to, but I know Kuhn is the man we want, and I know Kuhn is right here in Los Angeles. Since I wired you to come I have ascertained that several large shipments of Mexican silver have been made to Trujillo, just below here. The coin was delivered to a Dutchman and two other men. They disappeared from Trujillo, and I am thinking they brought the stuff up here and recouped it."

"Cheney, I hope you're right. Now, what's the lay?"

"You make yourself known at the bank and find out how much of this rotten silver is around here. I'm going on another still hunt for Kuhn. Will meet you here every evening."

"All right, Jack."

Some thing told Cheney to take another look at Buehlow. He found the German artist lived in a very pretty little cottage on the bank of the Los Angeles river. His wife was a good looking Mexican, and did the house-work. The Buehlovs kept to themselves, and were not neighborly at all. Cheney was disguised. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon Buehlow left his house and went down town. Cheney followed, and gave him go to the postoffice general delivery window. There was a crowd around at the time, and Cheney could not hear the name Buehlow gave. In a jiffy he was behind the door, his credentials easily admitting him to the treasury department service office and sent for Cronin. Then he told her what he knew of Kuhn's marriage and life in Germany. He had the proof they having been sent him at his request. She saw and was convinced and rose to go.

"Wait a moment said Cheney. The woman, wondering, sat down and gazed at this quiet masterful man.

"Senora Buehlow, you have been wronged, grievously so, and you want revenge. You can have it without a death. Wonderingly the woman looked at him, faint suspicion was beginning to creep over her. He continued:

"Buehlow—or Kuhn—has been violating the law for years. While earning his living ostensibly by his brush he has been coloring Mexican pesos into United States dollars. You know he has, Senora; you've helped him; you are an accessory before and after the fact; you will be punished as severely as he."

The woman quailed. Cheney knew he had struck home. "Now if you will do as I say, you will have your revenge for your personal wrongs and you will escape punishment for the counterfeit crime. Will you do as I want? Will you?"

"Si, senor, se—what you want?"

"Where is the key to the house, right on the river bank?"

"How is this cave reached?"

"Two ways, Senor. One through a tunnel leading from our cellar, the other by a door from the river bank. This door is covered with dirt and green plants so it cannot be seen, but on pulling a certain bush it will open. Minutely she described the cave and its approaches. Then Cheney said and with you."

"Now, Senora, you go back home and act as if nothing had happened. Tonight at midnight the place will be raided. If you fail us it will go mighty hard with you."

"Have no fear, Senor; I won't fail you." Her eyes glittered, her breath came in little gasps, but she would carry out her part. She wanted revenge, and then she could be free, go back to Mexico—and who knows?

She left and Cheney turned to Cronin. "Well, Jimmie, how about it, eh?"

"You're a wonder, Jack. But we've got a fight ahead of us, maybe."

At 12 that night the cave was raided. Kuhn and two accomplices were turning out some fine work. The surprise was complete. The prisoners were marched to jail and then Cheney gave Senora Buehlow a chance to say a few things to her supposed husband. The conversation was animated and bitter to a degree. Finally the pair were separated and the next day the woman disappeared. The evidence was complete without her testimony and the gang got 15 years in Folsom prison. Cronin was promoted and Cheney—well, Cheney was satisfied.

Next story "The \$100,000 Policy."

A day or so after this a natty looking stranger appeared at Buehlow's home. He was a connoisseur and had heard of Mr. Buehlow's painting, etc., etc.

The Dutchman really was a good artist; his flower painting was beautiful. Cheney (for he it was) dickered, praised and finally said he would come back next day. He did and the day following Buehlow took to him and they became quite friendly. Cheney bought one or two small pieces. One day while they were having a friendly smoke Cheney said:

"What part of Germany are you from, Buehlow?"

The question was so quickly put,

the German was taken quite unawares and answered:

"Mannheim." Then he colored red and white by turns.

"Mannheim, eh? Pretty place that. I've been there several times. Know several families there."

But Buehlow didn't want to pursue the subject further. Cheney saw it and changed the topic.

Cheney knew Buehlow was Kuhn; knew he had worked in the Frisco mint; knew all about him; knew even in his own mind that Kuhn was the head of the "Mexican ones" gang; but the proof—the proof—that's what he needed and he didn't have it. He must strike him through the woman.

The next day when Cheney called Buehlow was out, presumably gone for the mail. Senora Buehlow received him. After a few commonplace remarks Cheney said:

"You have known Senor Buehlow long, senora?"

"No, not long, senor; only two years. I met him just after he came to Los Angeles."

"A case of love at first sight, eh?"

The senora's eyes drooped and she softly said, "Si, senor," using the soft language of old Mexico. Cheney led the conversation along and gradually approached the subject of bad faith.

"Suppose, senora, you found Senor Buehlow was false to you, had another wife living in Germany; what would you do?"

The senora's face hardened, her black eyes glittered, and true to her Spanish blood she said, "I'd kill him." Her voice was quiet but very tense.

"But killing would be a crime, senora."

"It is never a crime to avenge a woman's honor."

"That's the unwritten law, senora, but not God's law; that says 'Thou shalt not kill.' But why talk about such things? I was only fooling, that's all."

"Senor Cheney, you were not fooling."

"The Mexican woman was very calm, but very much in earnest. She continued: 'You had a purpose in asking me those questions. Now what was it? You are not lying to me, I'll kill you, if you are not lying—well, then, I'll kill Buehlow.'

Cheney leaned towards her, his manner, too, was very tense and very earnest. "Senora Buehlow, I am not lying. Come with me and I'll give you the proof; then you can do as you will."

Quietly and without a word the woman picked up her mantle and down man town they went. Cheney took her to the treasury department secret service office and sent for Cronin. Then he told her what he knew of Kuhn's marriage and life in Germany. He had the proof they having been sent him at his request. She saw and was convinced and rose to go.



FINE FURNITURE

This week we give Parlor Furniture a whirl. For the special pleasure of the winter girl. In the parlor she welcomes her friends. In the parlor pride of home centers. In the parlor she will probably change her name and life. Its charms she will never forget. Will it pay to have her remember its lack of them? Never, at prices prevailing at the I. X. L.

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He has cut the price on beautiful solid oak quarter sawed Rockers, polish finest, good for 25 years' service, from \$10 to \$7.50. We have ten different styles at about this price. \$5.00 Rockers cut to \$6.00, and beauties. Then we have a Rocker for a little larger than the foregoing and almost too handsome for a man, that he would think a bargain at \$12.50; it is his for \$9.00. Mamma comes next with a beauty, and, oh, my, its easy, leather back and seat, polished quarter-sawed oak—not \$12.00 but \$9.00.

There are also Mahogany Rockers for those who admire these beautiful woods that never grow less beautiful from age. These come plain. Many are fancifully striped, some pearl inlaid; others artistically figured in scroll or



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Bear in mind that forenoon is the best time to attend this sale.

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