

ALFRED BEIT

The Richest Man
In the
World.

Now that Cecil Rhodes is dead the richest millionaire in Europe, and, perhaps, in the world, is coming out from under cover. His name is scarcely known to the general reader and his remarkable personality has been quite overshadowed by that of the Colossus, although he was far richer than Rhodes. But he will be in many respects Rhodes' successor, and the fierce light that beats upon a throne will soon make him one of the most talked-about men of the time, writes a London correspondent.

His name is Alfred Beit. Short and ugly as it is, that name could make an otherwise worthless bit of paper into a check that might be used to shake Wall Street and Lombard Street to their foundations. Whether he is really richer than John D. Rockefeller, is a question Beit himself probably couldn't answer. Two men who have been closely associated with him in widely different ways have told me in the last few days that this financier probably could not scrape together more than a hundred million dollars or so just now, although it has been stated in print that he has that many pounds—or, half a billion of dollars. Both of these authorities agreed, however, that the end of the war in South Africa where this vast fortune has its roots, would assuredly bring a prodigious increase in the Beit wealth.

TO BE A BILLIONAIRE.
If he keeps on at the rate of the last ten years the world will not have to wait much longer before getting its first sight of a billionaire.

Heretofore he has been content to worship Rhodes and to pick up millions, but an Englishman who has been conspicuous in the operations of the Chartered Company ever since the first Matabele war said to the writer: "I venture to predict that Beit, who has been known only as a financier up to now, will be found before long taking up and carrying to completion some of the empire-building work Rhodes left well begun but only half done. I have reason to believe that Beit caught some of Rhodes' enthusiasm for Imperialism to such an extent that he will eventually put money into it without thought of getting it back, just as Rhodes did. So far as investments in the De Beers company, Johannesburg, and in Rhodesia go, Beit is the big man in Africa already, and if he shows administrative power equal to his financial ability his future is going to hold the world's attention. His friendship for Rhodes was something more than an alliance for business purposes. He fairly worshipped the man."

LIKE RHODES IN MANY WAYS.

This mysterious multi-millionaire was born in the same year, 1853, as the man into whose shoes he is expected to step. Like Rhodes, he is a bachelor, and for the same reason that Rhodes and Kitchener got the credit of being woman-haters—because they were too much engrossed in their ambitions to have time to give attention to domestic affairs. Like both of these men, he cares little for society, although there is a plenty of exclusive peers who seem glad to accept an invitation to dine with him at his beautiful house in Park Lane, England, and although many a titled mamma is said to have tried to capture him for a son-in-law.

Like Rhodes, again, he gave no indication in youth of being anything unusual. He was born in Hamburg forty-nine years ago, coming of an old, solid Hebrew family, not vastly wealthy, but rich enough to give him a good education in the German schools and get him a good place in a banking-house. His luck began when he was 22 and was drawn to South Africa by news of the diamond discoveries. He got there a little before Cecil Rhodes arrived in the hope of keeping out of the early grave to which his physicians had surrendered him.

Beit made money as a diamond merchant at Kimberley and invested it in diamond mines, which brought him in touch with young Rhodes, who was laying the foundations of his fortune by his scheme for consolidating the diamond interests—a scheme that proved to be a lucky one to Beit. In fact, Beit seems to have been Rhodes' chief helper in the business.

LEADER IN SOUTH AFRICAN MINES.

Beit branched out into the banking business, becoming a partner in the firm of Jules Porges & Co., predecessors of the present great firm of Wernher, Beit & Co. When gold was discovered in the Transvaal Beit was on the ground floor again, and with his Johannesburg partner, Hermann Eckstein, soon became one of the great captains of the South African gold industry. He is credited with having transformed South African gold mining from a speculation into a steady, well organized, conservative business. He had the wit to import the highest quality of machinery and to pay prodigious salaries to such mining engineers as John Hays Hammond, Hennan Jennings, and Louis Seymour to advise and superintend this huge enterprise, which before the war was putting out \$90,000,000 worth of precious metal

a year, and which, besides paying heavy taxes to Kruger, turned \$20,000,000 a year of profit over to its shareholders.

This lucky son of Hamburg was grubbing along with only a meagre two or three millions in 1900. Most of the stream of wealth that has since poured into his coffers ever since came from the gold of Johannesburg and the diamonds of Kimberley.

Some of the diamond fortune was pure luck. When Rhodes, Beit, and poor Barney Barnato became life governors under the original De Beers charter they stipulated, without dreaming that much would come of it beyond making an impression on the shareholders, that they should have a fourth part of the profits after the company had paid 30 per cent to the shareholders. But the diamonds were so astoundingly plentiful that this fourth of the surplus turned out for the ten years before the war about a million dollars a year. When it is considered that Rhodes and Beit were likewise the chief shareholders, with their 30 per cent, and their three-fourths of the surplus profit, one can understand how it is that they didn't run short of pin money.

SUFFERED BY AFRICAN WAR.
Of course the war cut off most of this income and Mr. Beit doubtless feels the pinch of poverty severely. It is hard to have to live on the interest of \$100,000,000 or so when you have formerly had an additional income of maybe a million or two a year for current expenses.

The Beit interests are not limited, however, to Johannesburg and Kimberley. He helped to originate the British South Africa Company, and has huge interests in the Chartered Company, paying his share of the company's annual deficits with a steady confidence that showed his loyalty to Rhodes. The De Beers Company got a grant of 400 square miles in Rhodesia, too, in return for their help at the time of the Matabele war. Beit is a director in the Rhodesia railways, limited, and was so much in sympathy with Rhodes that he had a hand in the Jameson raid. Through his firms he controls companies having a nominal capital of \$100,000,000, and as most of the stock is listed at high premiums it may be imagined how great is the influence he exercises. Like Rhodes again, he doesn't speculate, and the confidence in his judgment and financial integrity are so great that there is a whole swarm of little fellows with only \$10,000,000 or \$20,000,000 apiece ready to put as much as he asks for into any scheme he has on hand.

ONE OF THE QUIET KIND.

What manner of man is it who has the grip on more power over human fortunes than even the Autocrat of all the Russias?

He seems to be chiefly remarkable for negative qualities. He has none of the slap-dash, devil-may-care ways that distinguished Barney Barnato, none of the taste for bluffing that made Hooley celebrated, none of Rhodes' commanding individuality, no fads, no taste for ostentation, and no niggardliness. You could not find a better example of polished, courteous, reticent, well-balanced man in the world.

A man who has dined occasionally in Beit's Park Lane house says he is an admirable host; not effusive, certainly but simple and cordial and genuine. The house itself has been furnished with an eye to the avoidance of display. Perhaps its most striking feature is a rockery just off the dining-room, which, with the pressure of a button, becomes a beautiful series of waterfalls, delighting the eye and cooling the air. Choice dinners are given there occasionally, and high and mighty folk are often among the guests but most of them are business connections of the host in one way or another, and women are rarely included.

It is dramatic to picture a multi-millionaire as working harder than any of his employes, and as being obliged to live like Rockefeller on crackers and milk—providing one can't go to the other extreme and have him light his cigars with thousand dollar bills and have his pet poodle's teeth filled with gold—which last manifestation is a matter of record in the history of Hooley. But, unfortunately, this quiet, courteous little German Jew does not come up to any of these requirements. He does not even work hard nowadays, and spends a good deal of time riding, a recreation of which he is as fond as Sir Charles Dilke. He has succumbed to the fascinations of golf, too, and although by no means a bon vivant, he seems to get a good deal of quiet enjoyment out of life.

CAN'T GET NEAR HIM.

Reticence seems to be the Beit motto. It is harder to get into his business offices in Bishopgate Street—the finest business offices in the city—than it is to get into the sanctum sanctorum of the Bank of England; and as for seeing the man himself on any business short of a million or so for some personal reason, you cannot even approach his private secretary's private secretary without

an introduction. The clerks in his employ include several members of the aristocracy, and nearly all of them are Oxford or Cambridge men. Even the office boy is cultured.

Although this South African potentate is not as lavish in his gifts as Andrew Carnegie and Pierpont Morgan and has even got the credit of being rather cold toward charity, I am told by a man who ought to know that his personal gifts in the name of his firm have exceeded those of the Rothschilds in the last ten years. An intimate associate credits him with having given half a million dollars to broken down South African friends since the war began. It is also said that he pays the best salaries of any employer in London. Almost the only unusual thing about this plutocrat is his passionate fondness for the theatre. He has no country house and never leaves London except on business trips.

A TRAGEDY OF WAR.

Dramatic Incident of the Peninsular War.

After Sir Charles James Napier had been wounded in the jaw at Busaco, during the Peninsular War, in 1810, he seems to have been a patient most difficult to be suppressed. When the shot took effect on him he was carried into the convent where he got up from the pallet where he had been laid, and with blood flowing freely from his wound, went to the door to look for his horse. One of his comrades seized him and led him back, saying:

"Are you mad, Napier, to think you can go back to fighting in this state? Be quiet!"

So he yielded, and was carried away to Lisbon, where he rested some months in great suffering from his wound.

"It is said that my sight may be lost," he wrote. "But if it goes, why, Hannibal had but one eye!"

But when his division began to pursue Massena, and one combat followed another, he could no longer bear to remain inactive. With his wound still bandaged, he rode ninety miles to rejoin the army. He found his corps, and pushed forward to support the Light Division. Then occurred one of those tragic happenings which are the commonplaces of war.

He knew that fighting was going on in front, and hourly he asked for news of his two brothers. He did not then even know that they were living. Thus advancing, he met a litter of branches borne by soldiers and covered by a blanket.

"What wounded officer is that?" he asked.

"Captain Napier of the Fifty-second. A broken arm."

Another litter followed.

"Who is that?"

"Captain Napier of the Forty-third, mortally wounded."

Charles Napier looked after the litters, and passed on to the fight in front. Captain Napier of the Forty-third was seriously wounded, but he lived until 1860.

A SMART YOUTH.

A bright youth of fourteen or thereabouts walked into a certain grocer's shop one morning.

"Do you want a smart boy, sir?" he asked.

The tradesman, who wasn't exactly in need of a boy, smiled at the youngster's business-like air.

"So," he remarked, "you consider yourself a smart boy, do you? Do you think you could run this business as well as myself?"

The youngster glanced round the shop and calmly replied:

"I think I could do some things a little better than you, sir!"

"Indeed!" gasped the grocer.

"Yes. Now look at that butter, for instance. Don't you think it would be better to label it 'Can't be beaten,' instead of 'Can't be approached,' as you have it? Some folks'll think it's scarcely fresh, you know!"

That youngster wasn't long out of a berth.

QUEEN'S TRAIN BEARERS.

Part of Two Pretty Children in the Coronation.

All conversation here ultimately turns to the King's coronation. One of the latest and most interesting details of that royal spectacle is the selection of the two little daughters of Lord Burghclere, pronounced "Bur-clair," to attend Queen Alexandra at the ceremony. They will serve in the capacity of train bearers, and two prettier children for the distinguished task could not be found in all England, says a London despatch.

The Ladies Juliet and Althea Gardner, for their father is better known as Mr. Herbert Gardner than as Lord Burghclere, are especial favorites of the Queen. She is fond of having them around her, and it was this desire together with her eagerness to delight the childish mind, that dictated their selection for posts of honor in the coronation procession.

As Herbert Gardner, Lord Burghclere, sat in the House of Commons as Liberal member for Saffron Walden for many years. He was president of the Board of Agriculture during the whole tenure of office of the last Liberal Government. His wife is the eldest sister of Lord Carnarvon. They have one other daughter besides the two who have been honored by the Queen.

Coronation echoes are heard from all directions. We read of children who have been born in these early days of coronation year being named Coronius and Corona. And, referring to this subject of names, a daughter of Sir Francis Knollys, private secretary to the King, bears the name of Louvima, which is formed from the letters of the names of the Princesses Louisa, Victoria and Maude.

Sir Francis' sister, the Hon. Charlotte Knollys, has been Queen Alexandra's companion for twenty years and will act in an important capacity at the coronation.

CURES FOR RHEUMATISM.

There Are 1,437 Remedies for It Up to Date.

The latest computation of the number of distinctly rheumatism cures puts it at 1,437. It is one of the peculiarities of rheumatism that the cures prescribed for it are more numerous than the varieties of the ailment itself.

A brief enumeration of remedies includes horsechestnuts, wintergreen tablets, electric rings, magnetic watch charms, red flannel bandages—white flannel is considered of no efficacy—goats' milk, calisaya, horse hair poultices, raw onions carried in coat pockets, and ice cream soda.

These are only a few of the best known remedies, and do not include several which owe their fame to combinations of sundry ingredients. One old-fashioned cure is made up of a pint of old ale and a small measure of grated horseradish put in a jar or demijohn and allowed to stand over night, after which a glass is drunk before each meal.

In favor of many of the established whimsical rheumatism remedies, it is to be said that they are usually palatable, can be bought cheaply and are generally harmless, recalling in this particular the case of the patient for whom rock-and-rye was prescribed and who declared that it did him great benefit—even with the rock candy left out.

Rheumatism appears in so many forms, it affects or afflicts so many persons, it is so readily connected with weather conditions and the knowledge of its causes is so indefinite and on some points so much disputed, that the provocation to give remedies for rheumatism is readily understood, though this fact does not moderate the general conviction of acute sufferers from rheumatism that the remedies so freely offered them constitute an aggravation of the disease.

The chronometers made for the warships of the U.S. navy cost \$400 apiece.

ROYALTY'S LOVE AFFAIRS

HOW AND WHERE SOME OF THEM PROPOSE.

Interesting Gossip About King and Queens of Europe.

Many people are possessed of the idea that, as royal marriages have generally to be arranged as affairs of State, the prospective bridegroom has no occasion to woo his bride as the average man would do. This, however, is a totally erroneous idea, as will be found on reading the following authentic accounts of how and where some royalties proposed to those who ultimately became their wives, says Tit-Bits.

It was at Rosenberg, the palace of the Danish royal family, that King Edward VII. proposed to and was accepted by our gracious Queen. His Majesty—then, of course, Prince of Wales—first saw his wife in the cathedral of a Continental town, and was so impressed with her beauty that he determined to secure an introduction on learning who the Princess was. The result of that introduction was that a short time afterwards the Prince went over to Denmark and made a formal claim for the hand of the Princess.

A charming story is that told regarding the manner in which the late Emperor Frederick of Germany, then Crown Prince, proposed to the Princess Royal (the late Empress Frederick). The two became separated from the rest of a royal party, who were taking a walk over a Scotch moor in the vicinity of Balmoral. Suddenly the Crown Prince spied a bit of white heather, and picking it up gave it to the young girl beside him—for the Princess was barely eighteen years of age at the time. She knew, however, the meaning of the simple gift, and whispered "Yes" loud enough for her companion to hear. During the remainder of their lives Balmoral always had great attractions for the

EMPEROR AND EMPRESS.

White Lodge, Richmond Park, was the place where our present Prince of Wales wooed and won the heart of Princess May. The Prince went on a visit for a few weeks to his sister, the Duchess of Fife, who lived at Sheen House, near the Park gates. Every day His Royal Highness could be seen strolling down Sheen Lane, leading to White Lodge, and it was in the gardens round that mansion that he put the all-important question.

In describing how the Marquis of Lorne, now, of course, the Duke of Argyll, proposed to Princess Louise, one cannot do better than quote the record made of the event by Queen Victoria in her "Leaves from the Journal of Life in the Highlands." Our late Queen wrote:

"This was an eventful day. Our dear Louise became engaged to Lord Lorne. The event took place during a walk from the Glassalt Shiel to Loch Dhu. We got home by seven o'clock, and returned some time after, told me that Lorne had spoken of his devotion to her and proposed to her, and that she had accepted him, knowing that I should approve."

It was at the same place, i.e. Rosenberg, the seat of the Danish royal family, where our King proposed to the "Daughter of the Sea Kings," that the present Czar asked Princess Alix of Hesse in 1894 to be his wife. He had made up his mind long before that if he married it would be to whom he pleased rather than one commended to him by his counsellors for State reasons. His choice fell upon Princess Alix, and the party was arranged at Rosenberg to allow Nicholas to meet this royal lady. Accounts differ regarding the actual spot where the proposal took place. Some say the Czar proposed during an evening party; other that he did so in the garden round the palace whilst out for a walk with the Princess. The latter account, however, is generally regarded as correct.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

A doctor, who was somewhat of a wag, met one day in the street a sexton with whom he was well acquainted.

As the usual salutations were passed the doctor happened to cough.

"Why, doctor," said the sexton, "you have got a bad cold. How long have you had that?"

"Look here, Mr. Sexton," said the doctor, with a show of indignation, "what is your charge for interments?"

"Three dollars," was the reply.

"Well," continued he, "just come into my surgery and I will pay it. I don't want to have you calling round and so anxious about my health."

The sexton was soon even with him, however.

"Ah, doctor," he replied, "I cannot afford to bury you yet. Business has never been so good as it has since you began to practice."

Since the above conversation neither party has ventured to joke at the expense of the other.

FARTHING BANK NOTES.

Bank notes for about a farthing each circulate freely in Paraguay. It takes two notes to get one's boots blacked and eight to pay the postage of a letter to England. Yet one of them will buy in season fifteen oranges, three bananas, or a water melon.



THE MEXICAN IS LOOKING FOR HIS BURRO. WHERE IS HIS BURRO?