

# The Protector of Finance

of Resilius Marvel, Guardian of Bank Treasures

By WELDON J. COBB

## THE DUPLICATE SECRET AGENT

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his office stenographer and Resilius Marvel, the head of the famous Bankers' Protective Association, to Rio Janeiro, Brazil, and to the duties of the secretary of the bank. It was true that he had attended to the duties of the secretary of the bank. It was also true that he had attended to the duties of the secretary of the bank. It was also true that he had attended to the duties of the secretary of the bank.

revised the last occasion I had seen him, the more I thought of the duties of the secretary of the bank. It was also true that he had attended to the duties of the secretary of the bank. It was also true that he had attended to the duties of the secretary of the bank.

he directed, leading me to the main apartment. He said something to tell you. He said something to tell you. He said something to tell you. He said something to tell you.

ndescript assemblage of little heap of hard black eggs piece of paraffine wax of crisp brittle ashes. "A known criminal, then?" "Yes, but quiescent for a few years, the record runs. That is his system, however. He generally satisfies himself with pulling off two or three big things in a decade."

"And is probably preparing for one of those signal events at the present time," I ventured. "Beyond doubt. In plain English this man and his associates are bent upon some big scheme, probably in the bank line, where my absence is essential. I wired the state prison, our Brazilian friend was there this morning, and visited a long term named Dorchester Ickes, who is serving time as a bank embezzler."

"If I can assist you—" I suggested, hoping that Marvel would let me. "I will cable you," was the response. With a dry, dry smile—"from Rio." It was a case of "while the cat's supposed to be away the mice will play," to my manner of thinking. I looked for something to happen immediately. Three days passed by, however, and Resilius Marvel, according to the schedule, should be forty-eight hours out on the Brazilian steamer Expressa bound for Rio. While I was sure that some big bank trick was about to be pulled off, as the saying goes, I wondered where the lightning might strike, how and when, and doubted not that Rex Maginn would be in evidence when the culmination arrived. The Human Spool did not put in an appearance, however. I wondered if Marvel had already nipped his scheme in the bud.

The third evening, I found myself headed in the direction of Marvel's apartment and I quickened my steps as I turned a corner to come within view of the house where Marvel lived. At the side of one of the shades of his library there was a glint of light. The shade had become disarranged in some way. I drew back, walked forward, stepped on it, and then got upon a hitching block to acquire the exact focus I needed. At last—there was Resilius Marvel, in his accustomed easy chair. Standing near a table in front of him was a stout man wearing a full white beard and a silk hat. He was drawing on his gloves as if about to depart. I walked around the corner, posted myself in an open doorway adjoining the apartment house, and waited. Almost immediately I saw the man with the high hat come out into the street. He turned in first one direction and then another and glanced sharply down the street in both. Then he almost ran to an automobile standing at the curb, leaped into it, slammed its door shut, gave some quick order to the chauffeur and the machine started away. I had no reason to imagine anything significant and sinister about the man except his covert, nervous actions. I had no thought of following him. My intention was to mount the stairs to Marvel's rooms and venture to intrude upon my friend. At just that juncture, however, something happened, something so unexpected that I was lifted off my feet, fairly. Standing in the shadow of a line of trees opposite the apartment house was a second machine. Its chauffeur was unobtrusively lounging in his seat. As if by magic he started up. A man made a flying leap from some dark doorway back from the curb. I knew the sprint. I knew the supple swing of the body. I caught the outline of the face in a glint of the corner arc light, though well shadowed by a broad peaked cap pulled down almost to the raised collar of the cravat—It was Resilius Marvel. The first automobile was out of sight, the second machine two blocks down the street by the time I could comprehend what two Resilius Marvels meant and what that discovery might mean for me.

deprived quarters were to be appropriated by the people who sought to dupe him. Further than this, a counterfeit Resilius Marvel had been constructed. I had seen him. I saw him again as I swiftly ran around the corner and sought my old focal point. Yes, there was the duplicate of my professional friend. He was standing up now. I watched him put on a pair of hideous eye-obscuring goggles and a false mustache. Under this new mask he no longer resembled the man he had counterfeited. However, the made-up face that was Marvel at a distance was ready for disclosure when necessary.

A score of theories presented themselves readily to my mind. Of course the man with the tall hat was a figure of some importance in the case. It was this person whom Marvel had chosen to follow. Of course my friend was aware of the imposture going on. Since he had left the home end of the affair to take care of itself he must have provided for later picking up this strand of the proposition and following it up. For all that, as the lights went out in that upper apartment some of the sleuth fever Marvel had imbued me with came into my veins.

Marvel Two came down to the street, drew his cap well up about his neck and shoulders and walked along, unconcerned and apparently disdaining all thoughts of being followed. I acted the shadow the best I knew how. In an expert case I would probably have failed. In the present instance I seemed to succeed. My man—let me call him the "Duplicate"—went straight to a railroad depot. At its ticket office he purchased transportation, and then at some urgent words from the ticket agent hurried down the stairs to the train sheds.

I think I did a clever thing just there. I hastened to the ticket window and opened my pocket book. "Same as my friend," I said. "Train ready?" "You'll hustle if you make it," was the reply. The speaker threw me out a ticket and my change rapidly. I was not in shape just then to keep steadily on the trail of the man I had shadowed thus far, nor had that been my intention. I saw a train pulling out just as I reached the train sheds. I doubted not that my man was



"NONSENSE!" HE SAID, SIMPLY BUT FORCIBLY

aboard. Then I glanced at the bit of pasteboard in my hand. It read: "Springfield." That was a town about two hundred miles distant. I prided myself on having discovered at least the temporary location of the Duplicate. Then I returned to the home quarters of Resilius Marvel. Somehow I felt safe in using the key my friend had supplied me, to take up watch and ward in those rooms of his. I reasoned that the only other outsider likely to intrude there would be the Duplicate. Had I not seen him leave the city? Very probably he had served his purpose in posing as Resilius Marvel. For himself that section of his plot was consummated fully. The scene would now shift. Perhaps Marvel conjectured this same thing and would return. I sat down in an easy chair to wait for him. He did not come. I fell asleep. When I woke up the light of a new day was invading the room.

As I left the apartment house, got breakfast and went down to the bank, I felt that I must not remain inert. More than once I took out the bit of pasteboard that had cost me something over four dollars, and that name, "Springfield," seemed to lure me on. I left a brief note for the president of the bank, whose confidential secretary was I merely named Resilius Marvel. I knew that would suffice and alone. The first train for Springfield, I found upon inquiry at the railroad station, left in an hour. I was one of its passengers. I had no idea what purpose I might serve by thus mixing up with an intricate case solely within the province of Marvel to explore and exploit. However, I could casually look out for the Duplicate. The presence of the latter at Springfield might be known to my friend. Perhaps I would run across Resilius Marvel himself.

I did not gain any results from a stroll about the streets. Then as a bank man I became interested in looking over the two institutions the place supported. There was the Farmers & Drovers', a small concern, and the City National, the leading financial institution of the district. I looked in at both banks. The cursory visit gave me no new inspiration or impetus, so I planned to return home on the next train. I found none city bound until late in the evening, however, and therefore decided to view the palatial home of Daniel Morgan, president of the City National bank. I stroiled to ward it casually to get in the time. The residence of the financier was

"Let me warn you, I will suffer no travesty or subterfuge to intrude upon me!" warned Morgan in a strident tone. Resilius Marvel leisurely turned away. His swift eyes swept over the well-filled book shelves. He coolly walked to the nearest case, swung open its door, took out an elegantly bound volume and brought it to the desk. The banker had no opportunity to resent or resist the action before my friend had opened the book, thumbed over a few pages and turned to the view of his unwilling host a full page portrait with accompanying biographical matter on the opposite page.

I knew the book at a glance. It was a volume devoted to "Who's Who" in banking. It contained the leading financiers of the country, and a facsimile of the signature of every banker in the United States and Canada. "You wish to have me believe that is your picture," observed the banker in a sneering tone. "Allowing for some resemblance—" Resilius Marvel boldly seized a pen and a tab of paper. He placed it beside the steel plate one in the book. "Compare, if you please," he said. "You are thinking of another Resilius Marvel whom you met. If you chance to have any specimen of his handwriting, submit it to the test."

"Hah!"—it was a strange sound that elicited in the throat of the banker. His hand went to an inside pocket. He brought out an envelope and scanned its enclosure, some memoranda furnished by the Duplicate, or the like. He was on his feet, shaking with dismay as a light seemed to flash across his mind. "What—what does this mean?" he asked, hoarsely. "That a clever criminal has induced you to give him full swing inside of your institution," replied Marvel decisively. "The loose ends of the explanation you had best wait to explore after you have made sure that he has not already carried out his designs."

It was half an hour later that the banker let us into the bank, just as he had introduced the Duplicate. He led us rather nervously and hastily into his private office, then to a waiting room, thence across the counting room and before the great steel vault. He had told us on the way that he had unseal the system of burglar alarms for the police at the suggestion of the supposed Marvel—possibly the most effective system in use in the state. The vault door was open and he rushed beyond it. Then we heard a clang as he fell against one of the inner doors. "Good!" he cried, "and—the strong box locked!"

One glance Marvel gave, then he was out into the counting room, down the steps and outside. I followed him. "Quick, my man!" he shouted to the watchman. "Have you seen anybody leave the bank?" "Two minutes before you came—the gentleman Mr. Morgan brought here. He had a satchel, the bank satchel, but I was ordered not to interfere with him." "Which way?" demanded Marvel quickly. "Down that alley."

Before I knew it Marvel had disappeared. I was no crack sprinter, and I lost sight of him before I had settled the point that I might have been of some use to him. Morgan came out of the bank almost tearing his hair. He had a weak spell from his excitement, and I had to ease him to a stone step while the watchman ran into the bank for some water. We had about revived him when Marvel reappeared. He carried a yellow satchel in his hand. He had a companion, but as the latter came within the radius of the street lamp I saw that he was not the Duplicate, but a ragged, trampish-looking fellow. He had a bleeding cut on one cheek, which he was nursing with a handkerchief. Marvel apparently had given him.

"EQUAL TO ANY EUROPEAN" FIELD MARCHAL, the late Lord Wolsley, of the British army, had a good opinion of the American soldier. It ought to be of interest to Philadelphians to learn that he received this opinion from the conduct of a Philadelphia volunteer regiment during the Civil war. "I was told the other day that when Wolsley read of the way the Corn Exchange regiment, the One Hundred and Eighteenth Pennsylvania Volunteers, withstood the fire at Shepherdstown—when they were the merest rookies, for they had had less than 15 days' training—he exclaimed: "If an American volunteer unit can act in that manner the American soldier is the equal of any soldier in Europe."

The regiment, which was greatly outnumbered, stood its ground, although the order to retreat had been given. It appears that the order failed to reach them. They were shot to pieces, and had the additional discomfort to find the Enfield rifles they were using were imperfect. The American soldier can be depended upon to give just as good an account of himself in France in 1917 as he did in Virginia in 1864.—"Girard" in Philadelphia Ledger.

"One night at Lady June's house Joseph Chamberlain said to me that he believed any man of even moderate endowment could attain any given aim which he set before him with unremitting effort and enduring to the end. To my question, 'Why then, do so many men fall short of their ambitions?' he answered: 'They come to the place where they turn back. They may have killed the dragon at the first bridge and at the second, perhaps, but at the third, but the dragons are always more formidable. The first they are very few will meet the monster, and about the rest they are very few indeed.'"

Success. "One is inclined sometimes to wonder if argument, except on matters of definite importance, should not be barred from the family circle. Its restriction to a minimum would be good. Only those who can win without exultant triumph, only those who can lose with a smile and an admission of defeat should permit themselves to engage in it except when vital decisions are necessary. Peace, love, good fellowship are essential to a happy family.—Milwaukee Journal.

Family Arguments. Argument is one of the four bases of conversation. It is one of the best mental exercises. But in the bosom of the family, on unimportant matters, it is perhaps the most prolific breeder of ill-humors that the average family circle has to fear. Few persons can triumph in an argument without pride in the defeat of the opponent, who, in his humiliation, too, often resorts to sarcasm to cover his defeat. Sarcasm, a weapon unworthy of gentleness or a gentleman, creates hostility, begets ill-nature, and so the average family dispute begins. One is inclined sometimes to wonder if argument, except on matters of definite importance, should not be barred from the family circle. Its restriction to a minimum would be good. Only those who can win without exultant triumph, only those who can lose with a smile and an admission of defeat should permit themselves to engage in it except when vital decisions are necessary. Peace, love, good fellowship are essential to a happy family.—Milwaukee Journal.

HOLLAND WON FROM THE First Sight of Great Dikes Around Even to One Who Has Read All About the System. Everyone who visits Holland, of course, goes there knowing full well that this is a land won from the sea, that the Dutch have built their country by raising dikes and pumping the water out of the inclosed lands; but the first actual sight of the dike system and of what it actually means to win a country from the sea comes with as fresh an effect of surprise and amazement as though one had never heard the tale before.

Holland today is a quiet little checkerboard of a flat country, fertile, quiet and prosperous, dotted with thriving cities, gridironed with roads and canals. Old Holland, if you can believe what the historians tell us, was one of the worst wildernesses in the world—a country of huge and angry lakes, of endless dismal swamps, of league on league of dense, impenetrable forest. Here and there a bit of that old forest has been preserved, as at The Hague, and the public look on it as an historical relic. Even in the time of King Philip II the country was such that that pious monarch called it the nearest thing to hell that was to be found on earth. Today it is pre-eminent for fertility, prosperity and peace. The change was wrought by one thing—dikes.

In the old school readers there was a standard tale of a noble little Dutch boy who saved his province from disaster. He observed a tiny leak in one of the dikes and, thrusting his finger into it, he set down and kept it plugged until help arrived, in spite of considerable discomfort from a cramp in the arm. This is a pretty tale, but one which first-hand observation of the dikes leads the visitor to regard with some skepticism. It reminds one of a small boy who would prop up the Washington monument if it began to fall. The enormous mass of the dikes is something hard to realize. There is one nine miles long that reaches down with solid granite 200 feet below the surface of the sea. In another province the dikes run for 300 miles. There is a single dike which was installed at such expense that it is said the great mass of stone could be duplicated in solid copper for the money it took to erect it. Holland is like a fortress eternally beleaguered by the sea and the price of her safety is eternal vigilance.

White Crossing the Delaware. William F. White, attorney of Muncie, Ind., a few years ago said, jestingly, while relating bed-time stories to his son, Bobby, then just starting to school, that he had crossed the Delaware with Washington on the famous boat tour of the general, says the Indianapolis News. To make it realistic he told the boy that he stood in the boat beside the Father of His Country. It was not long after that until Bobby's teacher was also telling stories, but these were true ones, regarding the early history of the country. Holding up a print of the famous picture, "Washington Crossing the Delaware," she asked the class, "And who of you can tell me what this picture represents?"

"It represents," said Bobby, standing up and inflating his small chest manfully: "It represents Washington rowing my papa across the Delaware." Since then White, among his acquaintances, has been known as the man who crossed the Delaware, this in spite of his lame explanation that what he intended to tell his son was that it was Delaware county he had crossed.

Has Two "Mermaids." J. E. Smith, a Spaniard, residing in Hamilton, Ont., possesses two creatures that are probably unique. He considers them to be mermaids. Though these are described as "fabled" or "fictional" creatures in the dictionaries, those of Mr. Smith have heads shaped like those of human beings and bodies that are distinctly fish-like. One is much larger than the other, and is considered to be the mother, and reckoned to be 300 years old. Both have fine hair like a human being, and a small mustache and beard. The head is attached to a human-like neck which merges into the fish-like body, and the arms are like those of a monkey, only that the fingers are webbed. It is said that the "mermaids" were found in the wreck of a ship in the Arabian sea.

The Regimental Dog. The regimental dog has always been a favored animal in the United States armies, whether regular or volunteer. Champ Clark, it will be recalled, by relating in the unwholesome and bad taste of "kicking my horn" dog around," aroused new interest in that particular animal, and the Second regiment of Missouri adopted one as its mascot. Since then the organization has been known as the "Horn Dog Regiment." Recently a worthy lady presented the men with a fine specimen of the species, a Great Dane, Maltese blue in color and weighing 210 pounds. It is unnecessary to say that few liberties will be taken with this "horn."—Christian Science Monitor.

Honest Landlady. Boarder (on leaving)—Madam, you are one of the most honest persons I have ever met. Landlady—I'm glad to hear you say that, sir. Boarder—Yes; your honesty is conspicuous on the very front of your establishment. Your sign says, "Boarders Taken In!"

Flowers Owe Life to Insects. In California are several sorts of flowers that would bear no seeds except for the visits and activities of insects. One of these is the yucca. A tiny moth lives in the flower and performs a peculiar work, intricate, but without which the yucca could not perpetuate itself through seeds.