

"GREENBACKS" AND THE CIVIL SERVANT WHO INVENTED THEM.

By E. G. O'Connor.

"Greenbacks" received their name in 1859. The naming took place in the spacious stone building now the home of La Chambre de Commerce, on St. Gabriel street, facing the Champ de Mars in Montreal. Fifty-five years ago our printers of bank notes shared the dismay of their American brethren as photographic counterfeits appeared. The British American Bank Note Company, perplexed by this new hazard, consulted Dr. Thomas Sterry Hunt, chemist to the Geological Survey of Canada. He suggested the use as a pigment of sesquioxide of chromium. From that day to this it has been a safeguard against fraud because, for all the vividness of its green tint, it refuses to be copied by a camera. In 1861 the Civil War began with the storming of Fort Sumter: "greenbacks" were soon issued in volumes vastly larger than Dr. Hunt, or his clients, had in 1859 deemed possible.

Dr. Hunt was born in Norwich, Conn., in 1826. He died in New York in 1892. At Yale College in chemistry and mineralogy he established new records, and this primacy brought him to Montreal. When Sir William E. Logan, then director of the Geological Survey, sought a chemist and mineralogist, Dr. Hunt was recommended for the post by his teacher and lifelong friend, Dr. Benjamin Silliman. Dr. Hunt fulfilled his onerous duties with rare ability, energy and fidelity. He was one of the builders who laid foundations broad and deep for the mineral development which enriches the Dominion to-day. He was one of the first investigators of the iron and copper beds of Canada, of her wealth in petroleum, salt and phosphates. He pointed out that wheat harvests in the Eastern Provinces were dwindling be-

cause their soils had been exhausted of wheat-food. In thousands of analyses of soils he named the fertilizers in many demanded. He examined water from hundreds of mineral springs, adjudging their merits, usually slight enough. Joining hands with his friend, Dr. James Douglas, he perfected an ingenious process for the treatment of difficult copper ores.

While thus diligent in economic fields, he gave much thought to the cosmic forces which have brought this planet to its present habitability from heats almost solar. He held that this globe has solidified from its centre. This core, as it cracked in cooling, admitted circulating waters which ages ago dissolved and brought to the surface the elements now crystallized as rocks. This theory he set forth in a brilliant course of lectures many years ago. His last address will never be forgotten while any of his hearers live. His theme was the debt due by chemistry to pharmacy, and the prodigal repayment of that debt. He began by telling how much chemistry owed to alchemy, with its fanciful quest for magical remedies. But in pursuing phantoms Geber and his disciples unwittingly invaded new empires. Often a random experiment brought a gem to light.

Early in his career Dr. Hunt became a member of the Royal Society of London; not long afterward he was admitted to the National Academy of Sciences of the United States. He was a founder of the Royal Society of Canada, and took an active part in organizing its work. He wrote much, but chiefly in the form of official reports and elaborate papers read before learned societies. Among his books his "Chemical and Geological Essays" is to-day of most interest.

The whale rarely, if ever, swallows anything larger than a herring. Although the head is of enormous size, from one-quarter to one-third the length of the body, and the mouth fifteen to twenty feet long and six to eight feet wide, the opening of the gullet is not larger than a man's fist.