

Making Millions for Uncle Sam

Manufacture of Money is the Country's Most Unique Monopoly

FOR many years the United States government has been making United States notes and coin certificates without regard to a system in designs or a scheme of uniformity in the portraits used. But now the treasury department has adopted a plan, embodying the ideas of officials of that department as well as bankers, business men and currency experts throughout the country, whereby the national currency system is to be greatly simplified.

At present there are nineteen different designs for United States notes and coin certificates of various denominations, some of the designs on certificates of different denominations being so similar as to lead to great confusion among the laymen. For instance, there are now two designs for five-dollar notes. The silver certificate bears the head of an Indian chief, while the United States note carries a portrait of Andrew Jackson, accompanied by a symbolical group of a frontiersman and family. The ten-dollar gold certificate bears a portrait of Michael Hillegas, the first treasurer of the United States. The silver certificate of the same denomination carries the likeness of Thomas A. Hendricks; the ten-dollar greenback, a buffalo. And there is equal variety in the other denominations.

The new system, however, eliminates ten of the old designs, and revises the remaining nine. It is believed that this plan will reduce confusion to a minimum. Under the new styles and de-



The "Guillotine"—the knife that chops money preliminary to its destruction.

signs all classes of notes of each denomination will carry the same portrait, and no portrait will appear on notes of more than one denomination; nor will any portrait be used which will not be immediately recognizable by every person who handles money. Besides the plan of simplification a scheme has been worked out for enhancing greatly the artistic quality of the notes.

Change in portraits.

THE one-dollar certificate hereafter will carry the portrait of Washington; the two-dollar note, whether it be a silver certificate or a greenback, will be adorned with the bust of Lincoln; the ten-dollar gold and silver certificates and United States notes, that of Cleveland; the twenty-dollar notes, that of Andrew Jackson; the fifty-dollar ones, General Grant's likeness, while the one-hundred-dollar bills will bear the portrait of Salmon P. Chase. On the face of the one thousand-dollar notes will appear the portrait of the first secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton. Considerately, there will be no change in the five thousand-dollar and ten thousand-dollar notes.

The portraits of Hillegas, Monroe, Silas Wright, Lewis, Clark, Mansfield, and others will not hereafter be used; nor will the buffalo, the eagle and the Indian head, which have proven to be so easily counterfeited.

While the treasury officials have been working over the new system for simplifying the currency for some time, the bureau of engraving and printing will have the real work to do in getting out this new money. Indeed, it has a herculean task before it; and over at the somber brown building



The great, crowded press room of the Bureau of Engraving where money is printed.

By **Newton Forest**

across the mall from Uncle Sam's strong box they are working twenty-four hours a day engraving the plates and printing the new notes at the rate of a million dollars a day.

Uncle Sam runs many interesting establishments, but the most important one under his care is the mill in which this new money is being manufactured. In this busy place sheets of paper are fed to a hand press and in a few seconds come out with a yellow or green coat of ink, when a seal is stamped on them, one or two signatures attached, and the completed product is called "Money." It seems so easy, doesn't it? Well, the process is not quite so simple as it would on first thought appear to be. To follow the course of a piece of this new money through all the stages of manufacture and issue is one of the most fascinating things imaginable.

The various processes.

THE first process is the engraving of the plates. The room in the building where this particular work is done is surrounded with the utmost precaution to guard against abstraction of the plates. These plates are scrupulously guarded during the time they are being handled and are locked in the big vaults when they are not in use. The original plate is never printed from, a replica being made for actual use. This is Uncle Sam's advice for guarding against the possibility of being himself a counterfeiter. Because if an accident should happen to a plate, it would have to be replaced by a new one, and no matter how nearly alike the original the new plate might be engraved it would not be the original, but a copy of it, and a note printed from such a plate would not be an original, but a copy and according to law a counterfeit. Whereas, if the replica should be injured, a new replica would be a new original printing plate. Besides the plates soon wear out and it becomes necessary to make replicas from the originals.

In the press room where the new notes are being printed there are over a thousand employes working day and night. This force is made up of shifts of eight hours each. The paper used is the peculiar silk-fibered fabric. Its manufacture is a closely guarded secret, and the law forbids possession by others of any such paper or its imitation. It is received at the bureau in packages of 1,000 sheets. This 1,000 sheet count, beginning at the paper mill, is maintained throughout every department of the bureau, and continued after the notes reach the treasury. To each pressman 1,000 sheets are given at a time, and to lose one of them would mean summary dismissal and an investigation by the secret service. Each of these sheets makes four notes,

and the printing is done entirely on hand presses. Each pressman, with the assistance of a female helper, prints five hundred sheets a day, on one side only. From the press room the sheets go to the verifying room, then they are passed along to the numbering machines, which impress upon them in blue ink the distinctive series letter and the number of each note. Then the numbered bills are counted for the last time at the bureau and wrapped in packages of 1,000 sheets each to be taken to the treasury. Each piece of work passes through the hands of thirty different persons. A most elaborate system of checking and receipting prevails, and at the hour for the departure of each shift every count must be verified before the force is allowed to leave the building.

At nine o'clock each morning the new currency—a million dollars each day—is taken to the treasury from the bureau in a wagon built of steel and attended by a force of armed guards. This money is delivered to the division of issue,

where three experts verify the contents of 1,000 sheets to the package, each sheet being composed of four notes of uniform denomination. Then the sheets are sent to the sealing room, where the red seal of the register of the treasury is stamped upon them. This seal bears the legend THE SAUR. AMER. SEPT. SIGIL., an abbreviation for The Sauri Americae Septentrionalis Signillum: Seal of the Treasury of North America. The cutting machine then cuts each sheet into its four component parts, and in new packages of 4,000 bills the new money passes to its final counting, each package going through the hands of five successive counters. These counters are all women and are undoubtedly the most expert in the world. Their marvelous skill, rapidity and accuracy afford a revelation of what the trained hand and eye and mind can do; their work is as fast and as perfect as a machine.

What is a million dollars?

A MILLION dollars is not so much after all, for that amount each day is now passing through the hands of these expert counters, and every package is receipted for as it goes from one counter to another. After the final count, the new money is then intrusted to the sealing clerk, who, in the presence of witnesses, wraps the packages, containing from \$4,000 to \$4,000,000, in plebeian brown paper and seals them with the seal of the treasury of the United States. The amount of money received by him at the close of each day must tally to a penny with that brought in from the bureau of engraving and printing. The new money is then deposited in the currency reserve vault, where it is to remain two or more months before it is put into circulation.

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Preparing to destroy \$1,000,000 in bills in the macerating room—a daily scene.