A DOLLAR IN THE MINT

HOW THE SILVER BULLION IS TRANSFORMED INTO GLITTERING COIN.

Follow an Ingot—Between the Jaws of the Rollers—The Milling Machine—The Steel Digits of the Coin Press.

[Philadelphia Press.]

The visitor followed an ingot into the coiners' department. The ingot has in its name, with its suggestions of treasure galleons and buccaneers, about all the romance there is in the nomenclature of money. It has in itself $60 worth of silver prepared by the melter for the coiner's use, the shape of a bar twelve inches long, two inches wide and half an inch thick. It has a rapid, varied and rather trying experience before it is on its way into dollar shape. The first room in the coiners department was full of artisans rolling, drawing, cutting and milling the ingots.

DOWN AN IRON THROAT.

Through sheer force is the first of the coiner's art exercised on the ingot. That which the visitors had followed was inserted between the jaws of two huge rollers and slowly went through a process of deglutition down an iron throat. Twelve times it has to go through this ordeal, the pressure being increased by the narrowing of the space through which the ingot passed by a sixteenth of an inch each time. It is then twice its former length and so reduced in this press that when split in the middle the two bars which are produced are just the thickness of a dollar. The rolling process imparts a heat to the metal which necessitates the use of handling it and a brittleness to overcome which another trip to the furnace is required.

Some coiner of imperial Rome was doubtless a long time at hammering out Judas' thirty pieces of silver. The machine which was working across the room from the rollers cut out in the minute which the visitors looked at it just eight times as many pieces as Judas sold his lord for—so, all told—using up in the process about ten bars of metal which had been heated in a furnace and straightened in a drawing machine before they reached the cutter.

THE MILLING MACHINE.

"It's like a girl cutting out cookies," said Col. Maurice as he watched the big machine clanking silver like a greedy boy. Each bar of cuttings was bent in three folds by a workman as the machine finished with it and stowed in a box for a return to the melters. Then the milling machine was set whirling. It is a thick circular plate of steel, with grooved edges revolving in a circular hoop of steel with its inside edges also grooved. A grist of the metal disks from the cutter was dropped into a tube, of which the bottom was the space between the whirling and the stationary grooves. Then the milling machine began scattering the disks from a slit in its circular side. The disks, when they came out, had a raised edge on each side. They began to look like dollars. Very dull and zinc-like looking dollars they were, however. The visitors followed them into an adjoining room, where they were plunged into an acid bath and then placed in a revolving wire radle with a quantity of hot sawdust. There they were left, turning brighter and more dollar-like every moment.

The adjusting-room, where the tour next led, looked not unlike a meeting of a Dorcas society, for at least a score of women matronly-looking for the most part, sat and stitched in knots of three and four, talking meantime in low tones.

"They are sewing coin bags," said Col. Maurice in explanation.

A SIXTY-TON PRESS.

But of all the flying fingers in the busy room the most sentient and human seemed the steel digits of the coin press. It seemed a satire of humanity to one watching the workings of this machine that it should do so much and the mortal who ruled it should do so little. All the share the quiet lady-like looking woman who sat before the press had in its operation was in placing pile after pile of bright silver moons it its tube. Then at every three-quarters of a second the two steel fingers of the machine would catch the bottom moon of the pile, pilot it on its course to its place between the dies and leave it there. Then, with a pressure of sixty tons exerted, every three-quarters of a second the head of Liberty above came down on the eagle beneath and the silver moons between received their impress.

The silver moons which drop from the coin press are dollars now. Before they reached the coin press the conscience of the treasury department had to decide upon their claim to be dollars. The conscience of the treasury department is the weighing machine. The visitors saw the thing draw into its recesses a coin. They saw it hold it there for seven seconds while it weighed it and then slide it into one of the two middle troughs of a row of four. If the conscience had found the coin too light, it would have left it rebukingly in the trough at the left end of the row. If it had found it too heavy it would have left it in the right hand trough. The conscience with its tin tubes does this 400 times a minute all day long, when it is running full tilt. The conscience was made in Austria. Mercy towards an improperly constituted dollar enters into its composition to the extent of just one grain and a half—the amount by which the law allows a dollar to vary. More than this it is impossible to describe the conscience.

Piled on a table at the far end of the room the visitors saw heaps of dollars waiting to be marshaled forth in weighty columns to their tremendous work in the world. Four ordinary mortals—a man and three women—stood there with mechanical fingers busy among those dormant forces.

"They can count the output of $100,000 a day," said Col. Maurice. "No, it doesn't require a special knack, only experience."

Cocoanut Cellulose.

[Chicago Times.]

Cocoanut cellulose is a new substance, and if it possesses the quality claimed for it, England may go back to her wooden walls with safety and heat up her self-destructive rams for old iron. The patentees claim that a ship can not be sunk by shot or shell if only she has taken the precaution of coming into the fight with this peculiar tissue as a great coat. When a shot, no matter what its dimensions, strikes the side of the frigate the carpenter and his mates need not jump to cram the old-time plugs, for the cellulose immediately closes, and a drop of water will not enter.

"Tera de Bacalaos."

On an original map of the world by which Alexander VI. divided the discoveries between Spain and Portugal, and which is now in the possession of the Vatican, all the present United States form a blank space marked "Tera de Bacalaos," or, The Land of Codfish.

A Reporter In Disguise.

[Pittsburg Post.]

Col. Ware, of Virginia, was, before the late "unpleasantness," a noted breeder of fancy sheep, which he used to exhibit at the national exhibition of the United States agricultural society. He was a member of the executive committee of that society, and became intimately acquainted with Col. H. S. Olcott, now studying Hindoo Spiritualism in India. Olcott was then connected with the New York Tribune, and was sent to Virginia to obtain, if possible, an account of the execution of John Brown. Going to Richmond he managed to get himself admitted into the ranks of a volunteer company, which had some spare uniforms, and he was thus a witness of the execution at which the brave old zealot was kept standing at death's door while Col. August, who commanded the troops, countermarched several companies that they might have a better view of the scene.

Olcott flattered himself that by feigning sickness he could get away unobserved, but he remained in the ranks until after a review, which closed the performance. As the reviewing officer, accompanied by a large number of military dignitaries, came down the line, he saw with some trepidation that in the rear was his old friend Ware, who was a colonel of the Virginia militia, without any command but none the less active. When the colonel came opposite to where Olcott stood, looking vacantly to the front, he halted and looked at him, as though he remembered his features. But the volunteer gave no sign of recognition—indeed, he subsequently admitted that he endeavored to squint and distort his countenance. To his relief the colonel passed on, and in a few hours Olcott had resumed his citizen's attire and was on his way to New York.

Symptoms of Brain Weariness.

[Cassell's Family Magazine.]

Patients who suffer from brain weariness are usually very fanciful, and easily given to imagine that they are the subjects of organic disease of the brain, such as softening or tumor. People who consult medical men about their mental or cerebral condition are seldom diseased, although I am bound to confess that long-continued brain excitement or debility might end in something serious.

There is, however, usually a marked deviation from the straight road of health, of which the patient is himself perfectly conscious, whether his friends be so or not. He does not feel his "old self," he experiences greater nervousness, he can not settle so long and so well to business as he used to do, he can not grasp calculations so well, he loses taste for any kind of work, whether intellectual or otherwise, which necessitates the least degree of thought. He would fain work as of yore, and tries hard to do so; but the power to continue at it does not really exist in the brain, and he is vexed and worried, and rendered worse in consequence.

His memory assuredly fails to a great extent, and his intellectual powers are reduced to a lower ebb than formerly, or they but flare out occasionally and die away again. There is, to use homely language, "no stay" in the nervous power. Sleep, if it can be obtained for an hour or two, tends greatly to refresh people suffering thus. They awake and arise more hopeful and more full of strength; but, alas! the first excitement blows it all away.

Mighty Men of One Occupation.

[Dr. Talmage's Sermon.]

The general rule is that a man can do only two things well—the first is, to find his sphere; the second, to keep it. The general rule is mason, stick to your trowel; carpenter, stick to your plane; lawyer, stick to your brief; minister, stick to your pulpit, and don't go off lecturing. The mighty men of all professions have been, for the most part, men of one occupation. Sometimes a man is prepared by providence, through a variety of occupations, for some great mission. Sometimes men get prepared for their positions in life by their troubles. They go from disappointment to disappointment until they graduate at the university of hard knocks.

The old poets used to talk of a man getting inspiration by sleeping on Mount Parnassus. It is not the man on the mountain, but the mountain on the man that brings man to the position for which God intended them. The difference about conditions in life is not so much a difference in fruitfulness of occupation as it is in the difference of the endowment of men with that great attribute of stick-to-a-tiveness. Concentrate all your energies into one direction. Do not be afraid to be called a man of one idea. Better have one great idea than a hundred little ones.

Traveling Up and Down Hill.

[Lady in Queen.]

If it is hard to forego a stroke, how much harder it is to get off on a hill, the top in sight, just because every nerve is strained, and a little more and the tension will get dangerous and yet, as an old rider, I say again get off at the first feeling of distress. What matter if another does ride the hill? If a man, he is very likely stronger, if less experienced. If a woman, she may have greater practice and skill, or a light running machine, or, in short, many advantages.

There is a curiously graduated scale to be noticed, according to the experience of riders, as regards going up and down hills. The novices are bumptious; they scornfully refuse to dismount till the machine runs back on a steep hill, and they plunge down hill at a most reckless rate—hence the many accidents. The older the rider the more cautious, as a rule, at hills, especially going down them. The one knows what the danger is, the other neither thinks nor cares until the smash comes, when the machine or the brake is to blame—never the rider.

Work of the Life-Saving Stations.

[Frank Leslie's Illustrated.]

Recent statistics show that from November, 1871, to June, 1884, there were on the New Jersey coast 476 wrecks and other disasters, involving property to the value of $11,039,071, and a total of 5,629 lives. Of this aggregate, 380 vessels and all but forty-seven persons were rescued by the men of the life saving stations, while the property saved by them amounted in value to $10,251,851. That is to say the average loss of life per year for the past thirteen years on the New Jersey coast has been but a fraction over 3 per cent., while previous to the establishment of the present system hundreds of lives and millions of dollars worth of property were lost annually on the New Jersey and Long Island coasts.

Impervious to Bee Stings.

[Chicago Herald.]

A beekeeper having been told that a lad, through being repeatedly stung by bees, had become impervious to any unpleasant sensation when attacked by them, resolved to experiment on his own person. He kept a record of the number of times he was stung, and when he began to cease feeling the effects of the stings. The result was that all sense of feeling had gone when he had been stung thirty times within a few weeks.

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THE BARBER'S NEW BOY.

The Boss Shave: Gives a Few Words of Advice to Jimmy.

[Chicago Herald.]

"'And Jimmy,' I went on, 'you must be observing at your work. A perfect barber is a diplomat, a companion, a workman, an actor and a gentleman. Keep your razors sharp rather than your tongue. Remember that speech is a silver dollar, while silence is old greenbacks. Make friends with all men, but watch your razors as they pass out. Give advice only to customers whom you do not want to see again. In talking as well as in shaving be careful not to rip up old sores. Don't stroke a cat the wrong way unless you do it with your foot. Don't let the man who has many friends get in your debt for more than three shaves. Never convince a good customer that he is mistaken about anything.

"Learn the value of kindliness and self-denial. One day a good young gentleman who was next kindly kept his seat and permitted an old man to take his turn. The barber's foot slipped and cut the old gentleman's lip into a Cape Cod. Be cautious, too. Ask a man ten times how he wants his hair trimmed—you can cut it but once. If you would be a brilliant conversationalist and acquire reputation as a wit learn to listen constantly and laugh in the right place. Never undeceive a customer when he thinks he has said a good thing. You can afford to laugh heartily at an old joke. Laughter is cheap medicine, and in some kinds of business it draws like a mustard plaster or an advertisement.

"To him who is aching to tell all he knows everybody seems to talk too much. If you can't beat a man at an argument call him a crank. But don't argue. When a man argues his brain all rushes to one side of his head, and the contrary side at that. A man was never convinced of anything by argument excepting of his own cleverness and t'other fellow's stupidity. Men change their politics and their beliefs only as they do their skirts—when they are alone. The man who talks much and easily may seem to be the smartest, but about the time he gets tired the man who has been lying back in the chair thinking puts in a few words that knock the man out. Education is a good thing, but too often it is a mere sugar coating to hide ignorance. The best education is that which teaches a man how little he knows of the much there is to learn and shows him the way to think. The educated man is an amateur, while the thinker is a professional."

Locomotives Compared.

[Boston Pilot.]

George Richards, master mechanic of the Boston & Providence railroad, who has lately made a tour of Europe, says the English coaches, as the cars are called, are lighter and smaller than ours, and are made to run on six wheels. Each car is provided at each end with a long chain and a hoop for connection. The absence of hand brakes is quite noticeable, but there is a powerful brake on the baggage van. The trucks, as a rule, are first class. Iron and steel are coming largely into use for sleepers. At Liverpool station, in London, there are dispatched each way 350 trains a day. All the trains in Boston number 44.

One of the styles of locomotives coming into use in England is called Webb's compound. It burns a smokeless coal. Another, which is considered very desirable for short distances, is a double-ender, about twenty-three feet long, which passes very freely around curves and runs very easily. On English locomotives there is neither bell, pilot nor headlight, and and there is little use for these, owing to the manner in which the track is fenced off from the public. The average American engineer would break up the English freight train in a day by clumsy handling. The tenders of locomotives run on three pairs of large wheels without trucks. In England there is absence of noise and of severe treatment of cars. You will hear more noise in a Boston station in a day than on all the trains in England in a week. English engineers consider the American tender an expensive affair which might be improved by the absence of trucks. They also believe head-lights a source of danger rather than an advantage.

The Press and Public Opinion in China.

[Cosmopolitan's Monthly.]

The mightiest revolution is being worked by the press in China. This new factor in the enfranchisement of that ancient nation is really the work of foreigners. The papers are printed in the ports under the control of Europeans and Americans. The capital is supplied by foreigners, and native editors are hired by English, French and American capitalists. There is nothing to prevent the circulation of these journals all over the Chinese empire, and as a consequence rulers are brought to the bar of public opinion. Of course, neither at Pekin nor in the provinces ruled by the native mandarins would one of these independent sheets be allowed to exist, but happily these editorial censors are beyond the reach of the officials.

At first, of course, there was much indignation at the free-spoken press, but now it is said, even the rulers take kindly to these expressions of public opinion, for the criticism of the journals spare no evil doers, and while each individual office-holder resents criticism on himself, he is very well satisfied when his contemporary mandarins are roundly abused. Even the dowager of China, said to be one of the wisest women who ever ruled, regularly reads these Chinese journals, and is often influenced in her actions by their criticisms.

Look Out for Yourself.

[Hotel World.]

The citizen who travels along the highways of this country, crossed by railways, is warned in many ways of the danger which threatens him. At one crossing he is warned to "Look out for the cars!" At another, "Look out for the locomotive!" At a third, "Look out for the engine!" Fourth, "Railway crossing." Fifth, "Look out for the train!" Sixth, "Beware! Dangerous crossing!" etc., etc. In most warnings the idea is conveyed that there is but one thing about a railway train that one has to "look out" for at a crossing—the engine, the locomotive or the cars. The signs could probably all be comprehended in one style of notice: "Look out for yourself!" The railway, with its appurtenances, generally manages to look out for itself.

A Syndicate to "Break the Bank."

[Detroit Free Press.]

A French philanthropist and scientist at New York wishes to form a syndicate, with from $5,000 to $100,000 capital, to "break the bank" at Monte Carlo. He is not a gambler, but he has made a life-long study of roulette, and insist that he can beat the game and win $3,500,000 in a year. If the syndicate is formed, he is to have a royalty of 25 per cent. for his services.

The better grading of labor, I think," says a manufacturer, "is a question paramount to the eight-hour agitation."

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