

as Intendant, that the matter could be remedied. The agent of the farmers of the revenue desired the Council to treat all foreign coins as France did, by entirely prohibiting their circulation. This, however, the Council refused to do unless the farmers of the revenue would undertake to buy up all the foreign money then in the colony, which of course they were not prepared to do. Hence the Council ordained that the piastre should pass current for four livres, if of full weight, and at decreasing rates according to the degree of their lightness. To get over the difficulty of constant weighing, they were to be stamped with a *fleur de lis*, and those of light weight were arranged in four classes, to be distinguished by Roman numerals stamped on them, while a scale of value was arranged for them. Similar provisions were made for the fractions of the piastre. None were to circulate without being stamped, and none to be refused that bore the stamp.

This arrangement seems to have settled the difficulty for the time. Governor De la Barre, writing to M. de Seignelay, in November, 1683, thus refers to the matter: "We experienced serious embarrassment in the month of January last in regard to dollars. They were here in some number, and a quantity of them being light caused considerable disorder among the lower classes. It not being customary in this country to weigh them, induced the Intendant and me to assemble an extraordinary session of the Council, at which it was resolved, subject to his Majesty's pleasure, to have the dollars of weight marked with a *fleur de lis*, and those which were light with some cypher fixing their value. This was done and is now in operation without any noise or difficulty."

This brings us to the eve of the introduction of card money in 1685, the nature and effects of which will be considered in the next paper.

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