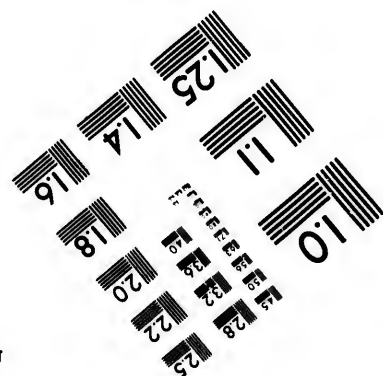
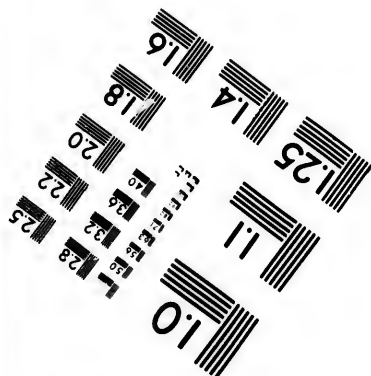
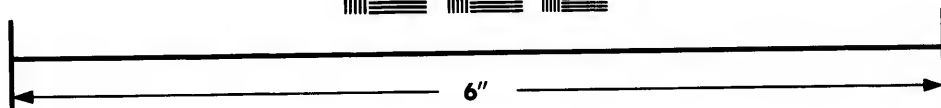
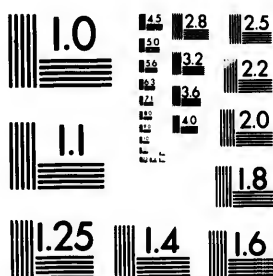


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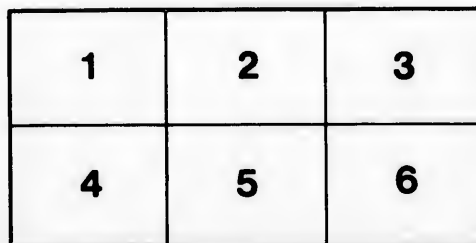
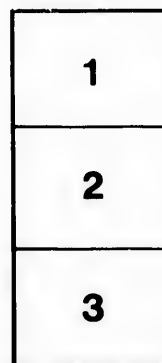
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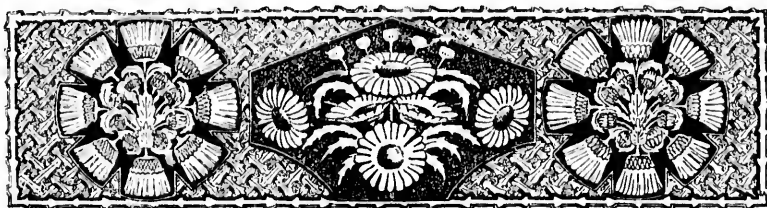
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*Can Mag. Oct 1897*

## THE MAKING OF A DOLLAR BILL.

ALTHOUGH those persons who feel that they have enough money for all their requirements are probably the rarest specimens of the human family, the receiving and spending of money is an experience common to more people than any other we enjoy as members of civilized communities. In Canada we have never troubled ourselves to make gold coins. Our silver and copper pieces are quite sufficient for the small transactions of daily life, and, in place of the gold of former times and other countries, we use the more convenient system of a paper currency. To the banks is remitted the privilege of issuing the \$5, \$10 and \$20 bills which commonly liquidate debts between traders, while the Dominion Government monopolizes the issue of the \$1, \$2 and \$4 bills, the humbler but more constant acquaintances of the common people, and the principal means of maintaining a good understanding between traders and their customers. There is a series of bills of high denomination—\$50, \$100, \$500 and \$1,000—which also are issued by the Dominion Government. These evidences of wealth are not without interest, but as they rarely come within the ken of the ordinary man or woman, but are used mainly in banking transactions, it is not necessary to say more about them.

Though the handling of the bills of the smaller denominations is a daily experience with everybody, few know how these pieces of paper money originate, or how they get into the hands of the people, or what becomes of them

after their work is done. Let not the gentle reader turn from this brief article in dread of brain-wrenching complications concerning standards, media, and parities of values. The Dollar Bill is a Thing, and an interesting one, and to that we will confine ourselves.

To those who have visited Ottawa, the Eastern Block is a familiar memory. On the ground floor of this massive and beautiful building are the offices of the Finance Department. At the end of one of the lobbies, away from the track of the casual visitor, is a small suite of offices, the headquarters of the Currency Branch, the native home and final resort of the familiar \$1, \$2 and \$4 bills. The head of the branch is Lt.-Col. Fred. Toller, whose official title is Controller of Dominion Currency. The total circulation of Dominion notes has been as high as \$22,893,259, but it usually runs from eighteen to twenty millions of dollars, increasing in the fall when the moving of the crops causes the heaviest business. Besides the care of this great circulation Lt.-Col. Toller is charged with the custody of millions of dollars of securities deposited with the Government by the insurance companies. Not only must these be kept so as to be accounted for at any moment, but, as they bear interest, the coupons must be clipped as they mature and sent to their owners. Dealing with slips of paper which are practically money, this is a business demanding absolute accuracy. It will be seen that there is hard work for the small staff engaged.

But over and beyond this, there rests

upon the head of the Branch a weight of responsibility which only the least nervous of mortals could endure. Lt.-Col. Toller has in marked degree that first necessary qualification for a specially trying position—he loves and takes pride in his work. An Englishman by birth, he had some experience in banking in his native country, which he extended by some years of work in banks in Canada. He has been twenty-five years in the service of the Dominion Government, and has been head of the Currency Branch ever since it was established fifteen years ago. The currency system of Canada is probably as perfect as that of any other country in the world. But such systems are not wholly automatic, and the better the laws the more honourable, intelligent and painstaking must be the officers who enforce them. Though the slightest hitch in the currency system would cause an instant and angry outcry on the part of the people, the fact is that, like the healthy man who is said not to know he has a stomach, the people of Canada hardly know they have a currency system. Year after year the appropriations for carrying out the work and paying the salaries of the Branch are passed in Parliament, and even the most inquisitive or querulous of the people's representatives rarely even ask for a formal explanation. This silence is the most eloquent praise that one in Lt.-Col. Toller's position could receive. The immunity from error and confusion is due, in the first place, to a thorough knowledge on the part of the head of the Branch of the duties of his position, and, in the second place, to the rigid adherence to rules that experience has proven to be wise. The Currency Branch works hard, but it distinctly declines to get "rattled."

There are agencies in Charlottetown, Halifax, St. John, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Victoria—one in each Province. These are presided over by officers known as Assistant Receivers General, all of whom, except the one at Montreal, have duties also in connection with Government Savings Banks. These agencies deal with the ordinary banks

in furnishing Dominion bills and receiving the worn-out bills which are unfit for further circulation. The Currency Branch at Ottawa performs similar functions in connection with the banks in that city. Thus there is one general source of supply, and there are eight reservoirs, so to say, which supply the banks which, in turn, supply the public. As more bills are required for the business of the country they are easily and quickly supplied, and as the changes of season or other circumstances lessen the demands, the currency system "hauls in the slack," as the steamboat men say, and thus not a dollar is forced out or kept back undesirably.

The printing of the bills is done under contract. This interesting process should be the subject of a separate article. To deal with it now would occupy too much space and would interrupt the consideration of the duties of the Currency Branch. Let us suppose that the printing is done and that the messenger has brought the bills to the Branch. They are in bundles of sheets, a thousand sheets to a bundle, and four bills in a sheet. First the sheets are counted and carefully examined. The officer receiving them must note carefully three things. First, he must see that the bills are accurately numbered. Any undetected mistake in this respect would lead to confusion, and dealing with merchandise which is soon to be turned into money at its face value, anything like the shadow of the possibility of a mistake must be avoided. Next, he must see that the sheets are all the same size; otherwise when the bundles go to the cutting machine some of the bills would be spoiled. In the third place, he must see that the printing is right, for upon uniformity and perfection in printing depends to a great extent the protection of the public against counterfeiters, and besides, the Dominion pays for first-class work and insists upon getting it. Very seldom, indeed, is anything found to be wrong, and the bundle of sheets are signed for by the officer receiving them.

The bills, as they come from the printer, bear one signature in facsimile, that of Mr. J. M. Courtney, Deputy Minister of Finance. Another signature must be written in at the lower left-hand corner under the word "Countersigned." This work of signing the bills is relegated to a staff of nine ladies, who occupy a room by themselves. These clerks all sit at one large desk the surface of which is divided into compartments by glass partitions. Thus, while each clerk is in full view of the others, there is no danger of the precious documents they handle getting intermingled. The signer receives the bills in bundles of a thousand sheets, no second bundle being given until the previous one has been returned with signatures complete. Each delivery either way is signed for in a book kept for the purpose, the receipt for the signed bills being given by two officers. It is impossible for the most expert of the ladies to sign four thousand sheets in one regular working day, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with an intermission for lunch, but by working overtime it has been done. The average time required for signing four thousand bills is from two and a half to three days. This is really rapid work. Let anybody who doubts it sit down and sign his name clearly and neatly four thousand times on a thousand separate sheets of paper. The ladies who sign the bills are not permanent but temporary clerks, and are paid only for the days of actual work. There are no employees of the Dominion Government who earn their money harder. The bundles that are not signed or not delivered back to the teller are put in a tin box which is made to just hold one bundle, each signer having a separate box the key of which she keeps. These boxes are placed in the vault with the other valuables.

With so many millions of dollars' worth of paper to be cared for, it can readily be understood that a secure receptacle is one of the features of the Currency Branch. There is not in Canada a more perfect safe than that whose ponderous doors open from Lt.-

Col. Toller's private office. The body is of seven thicknesses of chrome steel and iron, there are double doors, to open which the working of two combinations is necessary and each combination is in possession of a separate officer, and the time lock affords a further protection. Massive as a railway bridge, yet fine as a watch, such a safe is a thoroughly characteristic specimen of modern art.

The signed bills are sent to the Assistant Receivers General or handed to the representatives of the local banks as required. They are given out in sheets, again restored to the familiar thousand sheet package. Those sent out are sent by express in boxes specially designed for the purpose. Each delivery to the Express Company is attested by the signatures of two officers, who stand ready to declare that on the date and at the hour given the bills whose number appear in the book were duly delivered.

While the stream of new bills sets outward there is an almost equally large stream of worn, greasy defaced bills inward. These latter are destroyed. This seems a simple thing to say, and yet the destruction of a battered old hulk of a bill is attended with just as much form and just as much circumspection as the issue of a new one. If any one requires it he can get clean or new bills to any amount he cares to pay for from the Assistant Receivers General. It is the duty of bank tellers to retain and return Dominion bills that are unfit for further circulation, but the public are really their own protectors against disreputable looking paper currency. The Assistant Receivers General issue new notes in place of old ones, and it is through these officers that nearly all the worn bills are returned from the banks and from the public. Worn bills are cancelled in the offices of the Assistant Receivers General before they are sent to the Currency Branch, the cancellation being effected by cutting out two pieces from the lower side, like a hungry boy's two bites from a piece of bread and butter. These worn-

out bills are placed in a special vault, practically as strong as the principal safe, there to await the day of their destruction.

When the work of signing bills has been carried somewhat in advance of the requirements of the country, the ladies in the big room are required to count the old bills and arrange them according to the office through which they were issued—Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, etc. On a day and at an hour appointed an officer of the Auditor General's Department attends and receives the old bills, and he and an officer of the Currency Branch together take the bills to a room in the basement in which is a furnace, a sort of annex to the general heating furnace of the building, and throw them into the fire. The furnace is then locked and the key borne away to the Auditor General's office. Bound in bundles as they are and covered with the dirt of their travels, the bills do not burn rapidly, and that is why the officers do not wait

for their complete destruction. A whole day hardly suffices sometimes to reduce the last package to ashes.

There is a tradition current in Ottawa that on one occasion a number of bills were drawn up the chimney by the fierce draft of the furnace and scattered over the grounds. To hear the story one would suppose that the lawn was covered with these ragged refugees, and that the populace of the Capital had a finer opportunity for acquiring wealth than the traditional occupants of Tom Tiddler's ground. The fact is, however, that only two or three bills escaped through a crack in the furnace plate caused by the heat. The mistake is not likely to occur again. Still, the method of destruction is not quite satisfactory, and Lt.-Col. Toller looks forward to the time when the system in use in Washington will be adopted—that of boiling the bills to a pulp in the presence of responsible officers.

*Alexander Colin Campbell.*

#### CANADIAN HYMN.

PROSPER the peace of Canada,  
Our nation of the North ;  
Sired by the brave of olden race,  
Heir to their honoured worth.

Cabot leaped on the first-found strand,  
Planted the blood-red cross ;  
It waveth till the breakers white  
Upon Pacific toss.

Came Cartier and Champlain,  
The pioneers advance :  
They sowed the mighty River's brink  
With lilies gold of France.

When God doth give His victories,  
'Tis never nation's loss ;  
The lilies wave in Freedom's breeze  
Beside the sheltering Cross.

All nations' Father, us protect  
To every century :  
Grant always by Thy strength to stand  
And in Thy truth be free.

*O. A. Howland.*



