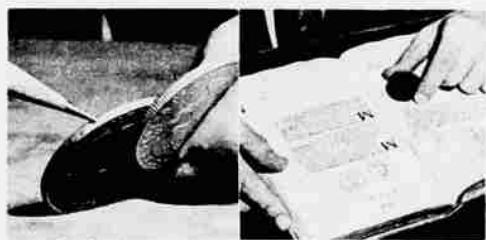


Watermarks on paper money, hard to imitate, are best clues to genuineness.

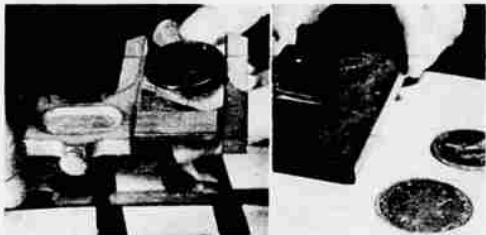
Picture of Tsar on Imperial Russian bill shows up only against light.



They Outsmart the Counterfeiters



Details of edge inscriptions may show discrepancies. If still in doubt, check coin with reference works.



Official coins are exact in measurements, fakes vary. Gold coins will survive acid test, gilded coins fade.

Photos: Al Barry from Three Lions

SOME 27 centuries ago a bright Phoenician invented money. Even before someone could borrow it from him, an equally bright Phoenician invented counterfeit money, and so began another ageless struggle between honesty and greed. The counterfeiter has found a particularly ripe market in the rare-coin field and, in defense, collectors have built up the intricate safeguards shown in these photos. Before paying good money for an interesting hunk of lead, the amateur should consult a reputable dealer; he knows all the ancient tricks and has a few modern ones of his own to keep things honest.



Some counterfeiters outsmart themselves by faking money of little value, like Confederate currency, or creating originals for which no issue ever existed.

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