COINS THAT ARE BASE

Metals and Methods Used In Making Counterfeits.

HOW THEY MAY BE DETECTED

Spurious Coins Cannot Stand the Three Tests of Weight, Diameter and Thickness—Gold Pieces That Are Sweated, Plugged or Filled.

The most dangerous counterfeits are struck from a die and are usually imitations of gold coins. Molds of various kinds are extensively used, but counterfeits so made are inferior to those made with a die.

In counterfeits made from a mold lettering, milling and reeding are usually poor and weight defective. The coins lack the sharp and clear cut appearance of genuine coin. Most counterfeit silver coins in circulation are made from molds, as it is an inexpensive form of counterfeiting. Some fair specimens have been produced in this way, but usually they are much lighter than the genuine and if of required weight differ in diameter or thickness.

Various metals are used by counterfeiters, principally platinum, silver, copper, brass, antimony, aluminium, zinc, type metal, lead and their numerous compositions.

Among the most dangerous counterfeits of gold coin are those of a composition of gold, silver and copper. They are a low grade gold, and the acid test shows they lack the fineness of standard gold used by the United States mint, which is 900 fine, or 21.19 carats. These counterfeits average from 400 to 800 fine. Platinum counterfeits are dangerous, as the metal used gives required weight, and they are heavily gold plated. When they have been in circulation for a time the plating wears off, especially on the edges.

The most dangerous counterfeit of silver coin is made of a composition of antimony and lead, the former metal predominating. These counterfeits are of the dollar, have a fine appearance, are heavily silver plated, with fair ring, and some are only slightly below the standard weight.

Some pieces among the smaller coins are made of brass, struck from a die, and when heavily plated are fair imitations. They lack required weight, except in a few instances. Counterfeits of type metal, lead and other compositions are much lighter than genuine. Those having required weight are much too thick.

Genuine coins of all kinds, for the sake of gain, are tampered with in various ways. These operations are confined almost exclusively to gold coins, which are sweated, plugged and filled.

Sweating is removing a portion of the gold from surface of coin. The process does not interfere with the ring, and as the portion removed is generally slight the coin is left with a very fair appearance, weight only being defective. The principal methods of sweating are the acid bath, filing the edges or reeding, the operator finding a profit in the small quantities of gold removed from numerous pieces. The average reduction in value of coins subjected to these processes is from one-twentieth to one-tenth.

Plugging is done by boring holes in the coin, extracting the gold and filling the cavity with a cheaper material. The larger coins—double eagles and eagles (twenty and ten dollar pieces)—are used for this purpose. The small surface of the plugging material, where it shows on the edge of the coin, is covered with gold and the reeding retouched with a file or machine. The average loss in value to coins treated in this way is from one-eighth to one-sixth. Coins of this kind are very dangerous, as they are perfect in appearance, only the edges having been tampered with.

Filling is most commonly done by sawing the coin through from the edge or reeding, removing the interior portion and replacing it with a cheap metal. Coins of all denominations from quarter eagle to double eagle are subjected to this process. When platinum is used to replace gold extracted the coin has same weight as genuine. By this process coins lose four-fifths of their value, as the original surfaces are left only of paper thickness.

When edges have been covered with gold and reeding restored the coin has the appearance of being genuine, having correct size and weight and a fair ring. Sometimes the covering of gold on edges is so thin that filling can be distinctly seen. When other and less costly filling than platinum is used coins are of light weight and have a bad ring. If of correct weight they are too thick.

Another method of filling is sawing the coin partly in two, from edge of reeding, on one side, leaving a thin and thick portion. The thin side of the coin is turned back and the gold extracted from center of thicker portion. The cavity is filled with base metal and sides pressed back into original position and soldered or brazed together. It is difficult to give average loss to coins treated in this manner, as hardly any two seen have the same amount of gold taken from them.

For detecting counterfeit coin compare impress, size, weight, ring and general appearance with genuine coin of same period and coinage. The three tests of weight, diameter and thickness should be applied, for it is almost impossible for the counterfeiter to comply with these three tests without using genuine metal.—Counterfeit Detector.

Courage is fire. Bullying is smoke.—Beaconsfield.

BRILLIANT OSTENDE.

Belgium Has the World's Most Famous Bathing Beach.

Two-thirds of the people go to Ostende, the Belgian beach, to gamble, but the remaining third is so large that the beach, in spite of splendid size, is always covered with the portable bathhouses, the mushroom and coffin shaped chairs. Even at night the chairs will be there, for with the lights from the buildings and the lighthouse it is almost turned into day. This lighthouse is quite a curiosity. It dates back to 1771, and now in its rebuilt and modernized state it throws a gleam over the country for forty-five miles round.

We are fond of referring to Broadway, New York city, as an especially cosmopolitan street; but, if you will permit the expression, it is not in any way "in it" with the promenade at Ostende. All countries are represented, and every representative is in his Sunday best. On a sunny afternoon in the season the boulevards of Paris are not more brilliant than this far famed avenue.

Here the German officer is not in uniform, but in the full glory of his spotless white flannels, his many colored wide silk belt and his imitation panama hat. And as he passes a group of attractive ladies his waxed mustache will grow stiffer in its upward twirls, and his walking stick will cut the air even more jauntily than before. If his monocle be especially cleverly handled and his face show an unusual number of the much coveted saber scars, he may be rewarded with a murmured "Reitzender Kerl."

The tall, black bearded Russian will walk somberly along and show no emotion or interest in anything, but you may be sure that very little will escape his notice, and at the casino when the play is high you will always find him in close attendance.—Charles F. Peters in Bohemian Magazine.

THE INFINITE.

Beyond the Visible the Invisible, Beyond the Invisible the Unknown.

In "Victor Hugo's Intellectual Autobiography" the great Frenchman writes as follows of the infinite after asking what vehicle shall be adopted to cross the spaces of the universe: "The locomotive travels fifteen leagues an hour. The hurricane travels sixty leagues an hour. The cannon ball travels 700 leagues an hour. The locomotive drags; the hurricane limps; the cannon ball is a tortoise. Let us bestride a ray of light. This is a mount 4,000 times swifter than the cannon ball, 4,200,000 times swifter than the hurricane and 17,000,000 times swifter than the locomotive. It makes, as you know, 70,000 leagues a second.

"Start. Light launches you from the earth to the sun in eight minutes, from the sun to Oceanus in four hours, from Oceanus to Centaurus in three years and eight months, from Centaurus to the pole star in twenty-eight years, from the pole star to the Milky way in 16,800 years, from the Milky way to the nebula of Canes Venatici in 5,000,000 years—you have not yet taken a step.

"The apparitions of the universe will continue to loom. The unsoundable will remain before you in its entirety. Beyond the visible the invisible, beyond the invisible the unknown. Everywhere, everywhere, in the zenith, at the nadir, in front, behind, above, below, in the heights, in the depths, looms the formidable darkness of the infinite.

"What, then, is there back of all this? Nothing, say you? Nothing? What! I, a worm of the earth, am possessed of an intelligence, and this immensity is without one? Oh, pardon us, Abyss of Infinity!"

Effects of Radium.

Many precious stones show a remarkable change of color in the presence of radium. In late German experiments a colorless diamond from Borneo became pale yellow after an exposure of eight days to impure radium bromide, deeper yellow in eight days more and was not wholly restored to its original colorlessness by heating to redness. The light blue of a sapphire turned to green in two hours, then to yellow, reddish yellow and after fourteen days to yellowish brown. The color disappeared on heating, a light yellow invariably reappearing, however, when the stone became cold. The rays did not affect the color of the amethyst, ruby, blue topaz or chrysoberyl, but a tourmaline with a green end became green at any other point on which the rays acted.

She Could Swim.

"Look here!" exclaimed the irate suburbanite as he floundered about in the green water and soft mud. "When I bought this lot didn't I tell you I had just been married?"

"You did, sir," replied the land agent boldly.

"Well, do you think this is the proper place to bring a bride?"

"I do, sir. Didn't I hear you call her 'Duckie' two or three times?"—Chicago News.

The Main Point.

"Young man, you don't want my daughter."

"Why, sir, I can support her in the style to which she has been accustomed."

"But can you support her in the style of which she has been accustomed to read in trashy novels?"—Washington Herald.

It's better to do something for somebody than to do somebody for something. Try this today.—Wall Street Journal.

Aristotle believed that the proper age for marriage was thirty-seven years for a man and eighteen for a woman.

Star Scintillation.

Much of the beauty of the stars depends upon their scintillation. The multitudinous flashing of their tiny rays gives a wonderful life and brilliance to a winter's night. The great star Sirius excites the most admiration when, near the horizon, it coruscates with rainbow hues. But the astronomer would be glad if he could put a stop to the scintillation of the stars. That unsteadiness of their light is one of the chief obstacles he has to overcome in studying them with the telescope. Scintillation has generally been regarded as due only to slight disturbances in the atmosphere. But as recent observations have shown that red stars scintillate less than white ones it has been suggested that the causes for some of the essential differences in the scintillations of different stars may be in the stars themselves. There is no doubt, however, that the main cause of scintillation depends upon the condition of the air.—Minneapolis Journal.

His Cheerful Invitation.

Although Johnnie's and Willie's mothers are warm friends, those boys are always fighting each other. After a recent battle the victorious Johnnie was urged by his mother to go and make friends with his fallen foe. She even offered to give him a party if he would go over and invite Willie to come to that festivity. After much urging Johnnie promised to do as his mother wished. So the party came off at the appointed time and was violently enjoyed by all present. But Willie did not come.

"Now, Johnnie, you did invite him?" asked Johnnie's mother.

"Yes, I did! Yes, ma'am, I invited him!" answered Johnnie. "I invited him," he added reflectively, "and I dared him to come."—Harper's Weekly.

Benefit of Peerage.

Every one may not know what the term "benefit of peerage" implies. A peer can demand a private audience of the sovereign to represent his views on matters of public welfare. For treason or felony he can demand to be tried by his peers. He cannot be outlawed in any civil action, nor can he be arrested unless for an indictable offense, and he is exempt from serving on juries. He may sit with his hat on in courts of justice, and should he be liable to the last penalty of the law he can demand a silken cord instead of a hempen rope.

Hardly.

Cabman (sitting in the street amid the ruins of his cab and horse, to driver of the bus which occasioned the disaster)—You — —! — — —!! —!!! — — — — —!!!! —!!!!

Constable (to the orator)—Now, now! You mustn't call him such names as that.

Cabman (in frenzy)—Him wot smashed me cab an' killed me 'oss an' left me a 'elpless cripple! Wot the —— do yer expect me to call 'im—a 'owlin' hangel?—London Judy.

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