

# THE BUSINESS MAN'S MAGAZINE

*Official Organ International Association of Office Men*

Edited by E. H. BEACH

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*"Entered as Second-Class Matter January 9, 1905, at the Postoffice at Detroit, Michigan, under the Act of Congress of March 3, 1879."*

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY

**The Book-Keeper Publishing Co., Ltd.,** The Book-Keeper Building **Detroit, Mich.**

so located as to perfectly balance the gun. If the gun is accurately balanced the power necessary to elevate and depress it is comparatively small, and so the wedges are tried back and forth until they are finally so placed that the gun muzzle can be raised and lowered by a slight touch of the hand. The position of the trunnions can be calculated within one-tenth of an inch, and the whole ponderous weapon is as accurate in all its parts as a high grade watch.

The naval ordnance factory, which not only manufactures heavy guns of every description, but also has a capacity for turning out 3,000 projectiles per day, gives em-

ployment to more than 4,000 men, who are paid by the government wages aggregating about a quarter of a million dollars per month. Of late years the factory has been working continuously day and night the greatest number of workmen who could be employed to advantage. The equipment includes the finest types of electrically operated lathes and other machine tools to be found in America, including many valuable pieces of apparatus invented and constructed by the mechanics in the gun factory. The general direction of the naval ordnance factory is in the hands of Capt. E. H. C. Leutze, a most capable officer.

## Origin of the Symbol \$, or the United States Dollar Mark\*

With interesting illustrations taken from the Federal Arithmetic published in 1797

By E. L. WILSON



HE origin of the symbol \$ or the United States dollar mark, has been ascribed to several sources. By some it is supposed to represent the U written upon the S, denoting U. S. (United States). Some think it is a modification of the figure 8, having reference to 8 reals, or a piece of 8, as the dollar was formerly called; others that it represents the "Pillars of Hercules," which were stamped on the Pillar Dollar; and others, still, that it is a combination of the initials P. & S., from the Spanish Peso Duro, signifying Hard Dollar. Again, as it is used in Portugal to note the thousands' place, it is held by some that it originated in that country: a mil-reis, or thousand reis, being written thus 1\$000.

At the time of the adoption of the decimal currency by Congress in 1786, each state had its own currency, which was in the denominations of pounds, shillings, and pence, but of different and fluctuating value; and there were besides considerable quantities of English, French, Spanish, Canadian, Irish, or other gold and silver coin in current circulation. All these varying moneys had constantly to be changed, re-

duced, or valued in the other, for which purpose the English pound sterling was used as the standard of value into which the others were reckoned.

That our present symbol for the dollar was originally an adaptation of the English mode of noting pounds, shillings and pence, and was the form at first used to represent not dollars, but cents, will appear from the tables and illustrations shown below, taken from the "American Accountant" or "Federal Arithmetic" published in 1797, a large part of which is devoted to rules for reducing the many forms of currency then in use into one another, and into federal currency. The advantages of the decimal system of notation as applied to the computation of money are not only shown, but the same method is recommended for computing all the other measures of weight, quantity, time, etc., and the prediction is made that the federal currency will take the place of all those then in use.

As will be seen from the illustrations, mills, dimes, cents, and dollars were separately pointed off; and the mills being represented by a single oblique bar or stroke, the dimes by two such bars, the

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*Explanation of sundry Marks and figs used in this Compendium.*

= **T**WO horizontal parallel lines are the sign of equality; as  $\%1 = \%10 = //100 = /1000$ ; i. e. 1 dollar equals 10 dimes, which equals 100 cents, which equals 1000 mills.

*Of Federal Money.*

10 Mills ( / )	make 1 Cent.	//	<i>Characteristics.</i>
10 Cents - - -	1 Dime.	%	
10 Dimes - - -	1 Dollar.	%%	
10 Dollars - - -	1 Eagle.*	E.	

**EXAMPLES.**

$\% \ \% \ / \ /$   
Reduce 24.7.5.6 into Mills.

*Ans.* 24756 Mills

=====  
Reduce  $\%24$  into Dimes, Cents & Mills

*Ans.*  $\%240$

// 2400  
/ 24000  
=====

$\% \ // \ / \ // \ /$   
82)31.71 2(38 6

711

552

Rem. (60)  
less than a mill.

$\%$	$\%$
95) 743.15 9(	2345) 28754.19 6(
323) 826.60 0(	5432) 69245.78 9(
147) 8968.07 0(	3254) 89694.45 7(
183) 5096.00 9(	4523) 48962.87 5(
212) 9125.00 0(	1765) 98765.43 2(

For the mutual division of Decimal mixed quantities, the learner is referred to the division of Decimal Fractions, in the Third Part.

cents by two bars overwritten with a curved line, or S, and the dollars by two bars with two curved lines drawn across them. The use of a curved line instead of a horizontal bar would seem to have been used to distinguish these marks from the symbol for the pound sterling when badly written,

and also from the form used in marking and numbering goods. The perpendicular stroke may have been suggested by the custom of indicating shillings and pence when taken together by writing the number on each side of an oblique line, as 5/6.