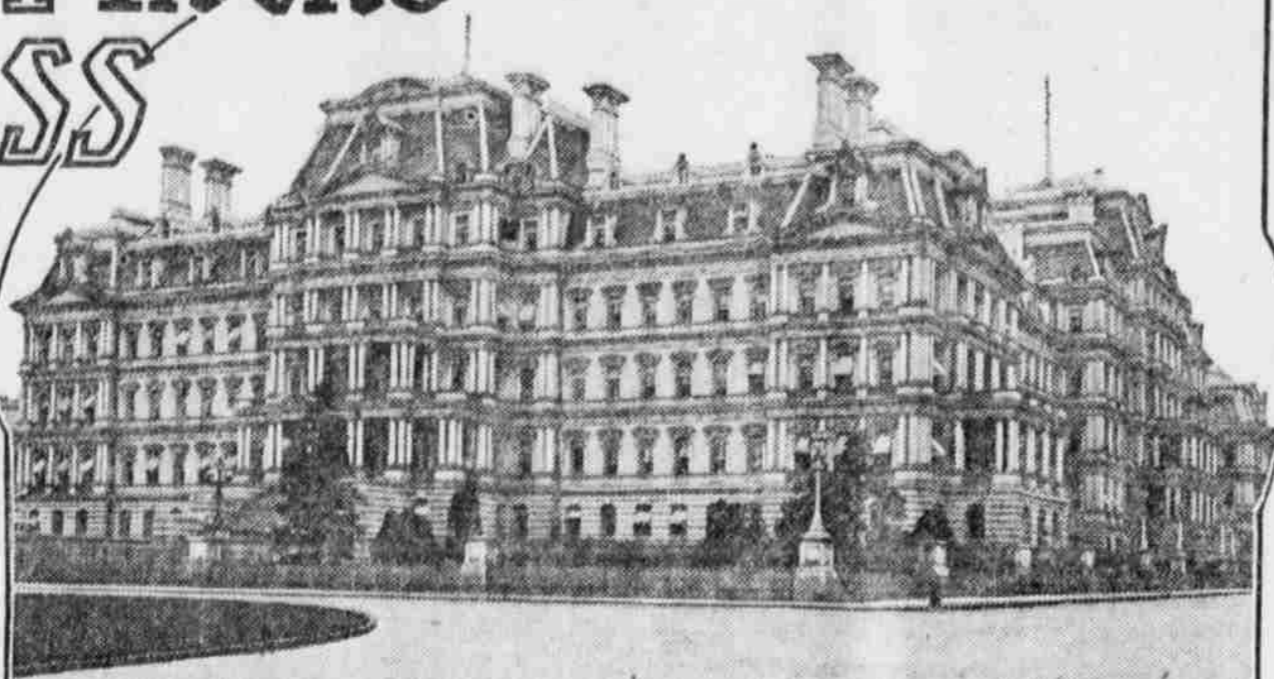


# SYSTEM in the BUSINESS OFFICE of the NAVY



**I**n the bureau of supplies and accounts of the United States navy at Washington some surprising changes have been made in the past year in methods of doing business. The bureau is the business office of the navy. Also it is the butcher, the baker, the banker, the tailor and the grocer of the navy. It pays out some \$145,000,000 a year. It saves Jack's money for him and the savings bank it operates has deposits aggregating \$253,000. It operates two great clothing factories, one at Brooklyn and the other at Charleston, S. C. In another aspect it is one of the biggest purchasing agencies in the country.

So remarkable have been its achievements in the twelvemonth that many requests have come to it recently from business establishments, public and private, for information as to its new methods.

The spirit behind the change is that of a boyish-looking, wide-eyed, ever-smiling officer, who, just forty-five years old—and he does not look it—holds the rank and draws the pay of a rear admiral, he being paymaster general of the navy and chief of the bureau. Rear Admiral Samuel McGowan he is to outsiders. Mr. McGowan is the form of address he insists upon within the bureau. But in the navy generally, by all ranks and all grades, he is dubbed, behind his back of course, Sammy McGowan.

In the 14 months he has been paymaster general he has made over his bureau. What is more, he has secured the hearty and enthusiastic support of the entire force. That, to anyone who knows how any government organization is wedded to precedent, is amazing.

Somewhat given to the making of epigrams in his instructions, oral and written, Admiral McGowan has uttered two that give a hint of the predominant ideas behind his reforms. "Make it bureau with a small b and navy with a big N," is one, and "Remember that the stores exist for the fleet, not the fleet for the stores."

The paymaster general and his bureau of supplies and accounts have their offices in the great pile known as the state, war and navy building, on Pennsylvania avenue, flanking the White House on the west. When the building was erected some forty years ago it was the largest office building in the world. Each corridor in it has the appearance of a battalion of barrooms, for each of the many corridor doors has its middle two-thirds masked by a shutter door. The rooms are all intercommunicating.

The paymaster general's office is the end one in a suite of five rooms. Across the hall are seven more rooms. In the navy annex building, in a street near by, are some more offices of the bureau.

When Paymaster General McGowan took over the job he inaugurated at once a clean-up campaign. Down from the walls came the dusty old pictures. Bookcases and file cases went out. Current and absolutely necessary bureau files went into one room in a set of steel vertical containers, for general purposes, and in the purchasing end, across the hall, they likewise were reduced. Private libraries also went out. Upstairs the navy department maintains a splendid naval library, and this is available for all purposes.

"Abolish roll-top desks," was the word. Where flat-top desks were not available the department carpenters took off the roll tops. Since then standard office furniture has been adopted for the entire bureau.

All intercommunicating doors in the suites were taken off the hinges. Walls were painted in light colors. Then the chief of each room or division chief was required to put his desk in the middle of the room with his force grouped about him. Now the paymaster general can stand in his room and look down the line and see exactly what is going on.

But that isn't exactly the point. The object is not to keep an eye on the people so much as it is to convey the idea of unity. The division chief who, sequestered in his own little nest, might be tempted to write a letter to the chief next door, doesn't do it under these conditions. He says, "Say, Bill, how about so and so?" or goes over and discusses it at close range.

Stationery in use was reduced to the fewest possible simple kinds.

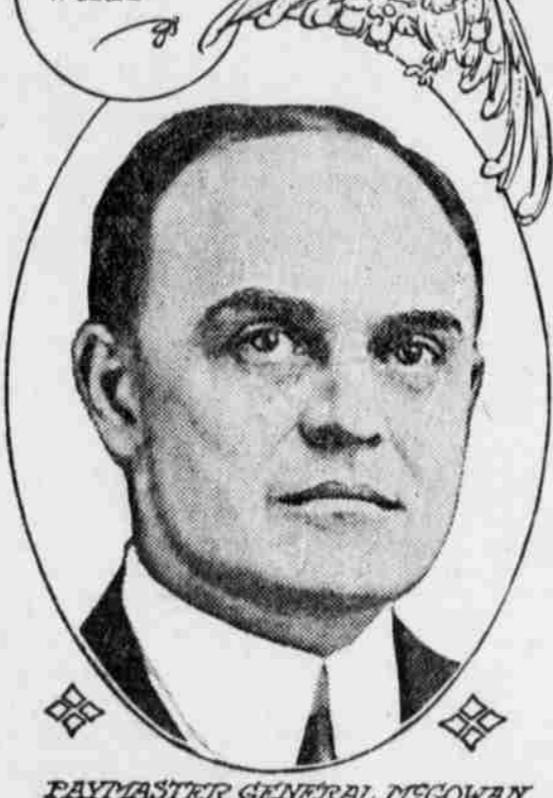
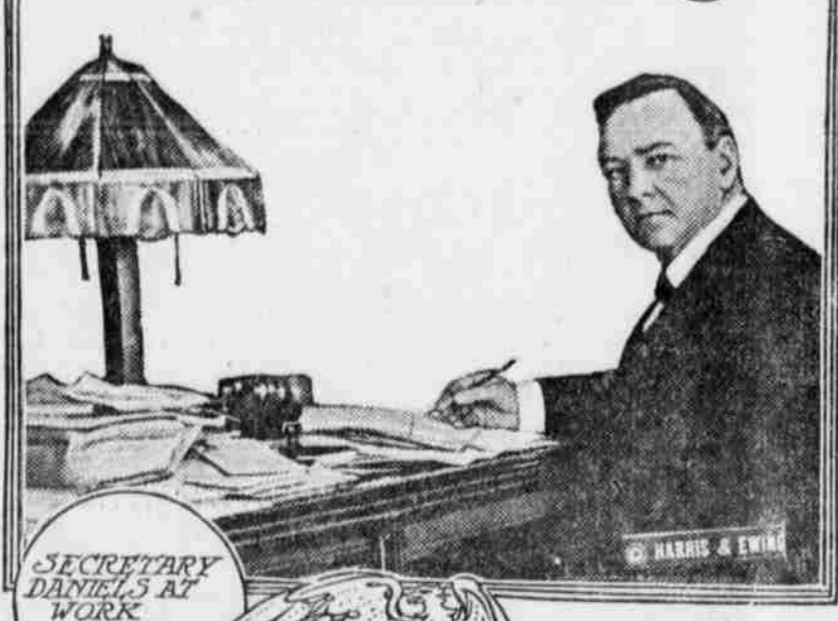
On a shelf handy to the paymaster general's hands is a book some 14 inches long by 18 inches wide. In it is all the information that once occupied a big floorroom. This information pertains to the present duty and availability for sea or shore duty, as the case may be, of all of the 230 officers making up the pay corps.

The pages of the book are faced with transparent celluloid. When a pay officer is sent on a cruise his name and the essential date are inscribed on a typewritten slip and inserted at the bottom of the section devoted to pay officers on sea duty. Place by place the slip moves up automatically, and in this way one may observe at a glance who is due for shore duty and who for sea duty as, under the law, for every two years of shore duty a pay officer must take three years of sea duty.

And thus with all records. No effort has been spared to reduce them all to the simplest and most graphic form. The messenger force was reorganized and a squad told off to act as express messengers. This insures speed in the movement of papers from desk to desk and to the secretary's office. No paper remains more than 15 minutes awaiting transmission.

One of the very first things Paymaster General

## STATE, WAR AND NAVY BUILDING



PAYMASTER GENERAL MCGOWAN

McGowan did was to put a stop to promiscuous letter writing. The true bureaucrat dearly loves to write letters. He thinks he is at his best when he is writing letters for the chief to sign, division heads dictating many of the letters which take the bureau chief's signature. It grates the soul of the bureaucrat to grow arrogant and sarcastic in such dictation.

Nothing of that sort is tolerated by Admiral McGowan. He insisted that letter writing be reduced to a minimum and that nothing unkind or contentious be put into a letter, especially to another co-ordinate bureau. After his first general remarks on the subject he followed it up with an "intra-bureau order," intra-bureau orders being one of his methods of reaching the personnel of his organization.

But the striking changes in the service have been worked in the detail of the machinery first of accounting and then of supplying. Aboard each one of Uncle Sam's fighting craft is a pay officer, the ship's business manager. Each ship has a base or home station at some navy yard. At each navy yard is a storehouse, presided over by a pay officer. It is the business of this storehouse to provide for the ships attached to it. Then there are fuel stations—coal and oil—also under jurisdiction of the pay corps, for the pay corps buys everything, save arms and ammunition, needed by the ships and their personnel.

At present there are in the custody of the storekeepers general supplies worth \$22,000,000, exclusive of fuel; \$4,000,000 worth of clothing, and \$3,000,000 worth of provisions. The problem is not alone to supply immediate needs, but to be ready to supply emergency needs.

Just as an army moves on its belly, so is a navy department on its supplies. When a portion of the fleet was dispatched the other day to Santo Domingo it required a lot of things not ordinarily carried. It got away promptly because those particular things were forthcoming without delay.

Always the bureau is in the market buying in huge quantities on bids and under rigid specifications, for delivery at the most advantageous points. Two simple record books contain all the data on current bids which have been opened, and these are always open to public inspection.

But the characteristic of the purchasing system is the simple and graphic methods used in keeping information up to date on existing stocks of fuel and supplies and on current prices. Much of this information is reduced to charts on sectional paper. Thus a simple chart tells in figures and lines up to within 12 hours the exact quantity of coal and fuel on hand at any supply station, and another gives the same information as to the amount on board any ship of the navy.

The selection of the time for restocking thus is almost automatically suggested.

A small card-filing case contains a remarkable exhibition of prices current. Charted on cards are the market price movements for seven years, week by week, of important staples. For example, the butter card shows a well defined curve for each of the seven years, indicating the weeks when butter is high and when low. As these curves closely parallel, a glance at it shows when is the most advantageous time for buying butter in quantity and storing it.

So systematized has the method of securing and charting this information become that it requires little labor and its cost, by comparison with the results achieved in assisting in intelligent buying, is remarkably low.

Other charts, corrected daily, keep the bureau informed as to the amount of stocks on hand in every detail, not only at the storehouses but on the ships as well. Since the navy through its extensive wireless system is in constant communication with every ship afloat, the task of keeping up these charts is not so difficult as it seems.

Or the bunch of cards making up a ship's company also is producible on the instant.

Machines have reduced the amount of work in the accounting section more than 50 per cent. There are refinements of cost keeping in a military establishment that are not known in a private establishment, for all expenditures must conform to some specific item of an appropriation bill, and appropriations for the naval establishment are found in three different appropriation acts.

Roughly speaking, 3,000,000 separate accounts must be kept properly to meet the requirements of the law and to furnish the information as to costs, gross and detailed, needed. Imagine a ledger with 3,000,000 accounts!

Here the cards and mechanism have come in to the extent that half the number of men needed 15 months ago are now required to do the work. In addition a great deal of new work has been taken on.

The use of new card punching machines is responsible for the larger economies.

The machine is so arranged that it sorts the punched cards, arranges them in proper groups, ascertains the totals of the figures indicated by the punched holes and prints on a sheet the results. It is accounting reduced to mechanism.

Of course the usual machines, such as adding machines and the like, are part of the equipment. In fact the whole trend of the reforms in this section has been to reduce everything to a mechanical basis.

The result is great economies in operation, increased efficiency, increased accuracy and increased speed. To the casual observer the striking thing is the disappearance of books. Few indeed are the books in sight, remarkably slim the files. In other words, the accountancy system has been reduced to the simplest dimensions.

Ask any man, officer or civilian, in the establishment how the whole organization has been made over in such a time, and he instantly will tell you that Sammy McGowan did it. And then he will grow confidential and tell you what he esteems is the secret of the whole accomplishment, the spirit that McGowan has put into his entire force. "We don't tolerate grouches," your informant will say. "We all belong to the Don't Worry club and McGowan is its president."

Another thing this paymaster general has done is to establish in Washington, with the approval of the secretary of the navy, a school for navy pay officers. These officers are appointed from civil life on a competitive examination. They go into the service equipped with a good academic education, but with no knowledge of the navy and its needs. Hence the new service school, which has in this year's class 15 young officers who are being trained in their new profession.

Admiral McGowan himself is a product of civilian training. When he secured his appointment in the pay corps in 1894 he was a South Carolina newspaper man who had worked his way through college and law school by running a brick yard and serving as a ticket agent at a railway station. Maybe there he got the training which has made him a great business executive.

The fact that he has spent most of his naval career at sea accounts for his insistence that the fleet and not the bureau is the thing ever to be kept in mind.

When he left the Atlantic fleet to go ashore as paymaster general his commanding officer, Admiral Badger, said of him, "He has made the pay department of the fleet a smoothly working military machine."

That is the ideal he holds up to his bureau and corps: "Make it a smooth running military machine."

## In the PUBLIC EYE

### HE'S IN THE MOVIES



While Representative Albert Johnson of Washington, and former Washington newspaper man, is not a movie actor, you are quite likely to see him mixed up with a lot of suitcases, trunks, canes, etc., in a comedy role along with the other national hero, whose funny hat, walk, cane and mustache are now better known than the prayer book.

Representative Johnson was in California recently, stopping at Los Angeles. He traveled part way by steamer, and like all ocean voyagers loaded himself to the limit with shawls, blankets, steamer trunks, gladstone bags, suitcases, thermos bottles, cameras, canes, field glasses and other various and lumbrous impedimenta. He was carrying all of these, and was utterly hidden from view under this load of baggage and plunder as he walked with an effort to maintain his congressional dignity down the gangplank. He might have

"got away with it" had not a drunken sailor dived from a seeming terrific height, landing amidships in the bulwarks of baggage being toted by Brother Johnson. The congressman thereupon fell down kerthump, the baggage, shawls, rugs and other truck got between his legs and over his head and under his chest. Johnson emitted sundry words of explosive character and began collecting his junk.

By the time he had it all together the drunken sailor was performing other remarkable antics on the dock. Johnson immediately recognized the jag as that great moving picture hero whose fame seems to be based on his ability to fall off a building and land on his head. And not until then did Johnson realize that his own fall had been ground into the film by the moving picture operator.

### VOICE OF ALSACE

"I have had my hearts desire on earth," he says. He does not explain what it is. Everybody knows.

He is the Abbe Wetterle, most famous of Alsatians. For 20 years he was the voice of Alsace, crying aloud the hope of the return to France. As such the Alsatian district of Ribeauville solidly sent him to the German reichstag. He was the famous deputy of Ribeauville, but he was the voice of all. The other Alsatian deputies left him the role.

Today he is "Deputy of all Alsace to Paris," preparing speeches and articles on "the durable peace." In a quiet street beside the Madeleine he works for the future of Alsace-Lorraine.

Prussia and Germany knew him as an open enemy. He had almost as many enemies as fellow members in the reichstag, yet he was by no means isolated or powerless. All knew him, and he was welcomed by all. Admirably well posted on the facts of German politics, and particularly of side issues; of witty and flowing speech, a "causeur," as the French say, whose conversation becomes monologue because everybody listens, the abbe had always a circle of admiring German colleagues round him.



### DESCENDANT OF MOHAMMED



A descendant of Mohammed and a prince of Islam, Sayid M. Wajib Zeid-ul-Ghlan, sheik-ul-Islam of the Philippines—in which capacity as Mohammedan high priest in the United States for our far eastern possessions he is promoting good will of all Moslems toward the government of the United States—has been visiting in Washington.

Sayid Effendi, the princely title given to him by right and courtesy, is on his way around the world back to the Philippines. He comes with a record of accomplishment during the few months of his chieftainship over Moslem Philippines. He brought to end the so-called holy war against Christians and Christian government; he has inculcated religious and racial tolerance, teaching a new Mohammedan creed of the brotherhood of man strange to the fierce, fanatic and rebellious Moro tribes.

A pure-strain Arab, Sayid Effendi, is as blond as a Teuton. He is tall, slender, with sandy hair and a thin beard and mustache of the same color. He dresses European fashion. He is a descendant in the thirty-seventh generation of Mohammed, through Fatima, the only daughter of the prophet.

### BORAH PREDICTS HARD FIGHT

Senator Borah of Idaho, who has frequently been mentioned in connection with the Republican nomination for president in 1916, still insists that he is not an active candidate for that honor.

"I am more concerned at present with the platform which shall be adopted by the Republican national convention next year than with candidates," says he.

If the Republican party is to win in the next national elections Senator Borah is convinced that a "liberal and progressive" platform must be adopted. And he is intent upon having such a platform adopted.

"Those who believe that the pendulum has swung back to the old stand-pat ideas will find themselves much mistaken," he said.

Senator Borah believes that the Republicans will have a fight on their hands to win, that President Wilson is stronger in the country than he was a year ago, but he believes that the Republicans can and will win. He says that the administration already has realized that it has made many mistakes and is engaged in trying to reverse itself at present.

