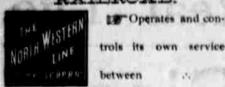
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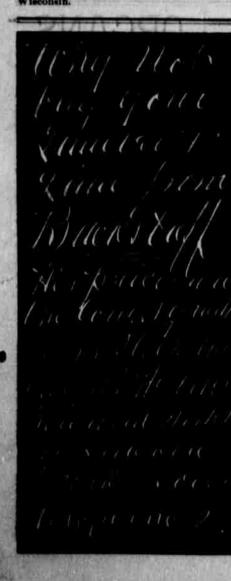
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BILLIONS OF SIGNATURES.

THE UNITED STATES TREASURER'S MUCH SOUGHT AUTOGRAPH.

Hillion and a Half of "Spinners"-J. N. Huston's Will Soon Adorn Uncle Sam's Money-It Must He Done by Machinery. Interesting Antographs.

WASHINGTON, May 16 .- In a few days the plate printing presses of Uncle Sam's big money mill will begin grinding out crisp, beautiful bank notes and silver certificates with a new name signed to them. J. N. Huston, the new treasurer of the United States, will soon take possession of the office to which he has been appointed by the president, and then his name will be sent thundering down the

ages by means of the signing of his autograph to all the paper money used by the people of this country. Immediately Mr. Huston's autograph will become one of the most valuable and popular known to the common people. It is for his name, signed at the lower right hand corner of small pieces of paper, that 65,000,000 of human beings will do more or less struggling, make many sacrifices, and often will they mourn because they get it not. To accommodate all the people who want his autograph Mr. Huston will be compelled to sign his name a great many times a day, and, work as industriously as he may, the chances are that even then some poor mortals will be disappointed, while others will get much more than their share. This is not Mr. Huston's fault, nor Uncle Sam's, for these worthy gentlemen would be much happier if they could make enough money so that no one need go without. Probably if they were to print a thou-sand times as much money as they do print, a few men would succeed in hogging the major share and in leaving but a small portion to be divided among a great many millions of the less fortunate. If you should be lucky enough to get hold of a few of Mr. Huston's autographs and to retain them long enough to make a study of their appearance, do not imagine that Mr. Huston made them in the good old way, with pen and ink. Mr. Huston is an accomplished penman and an industrious sort of person, but if he were to set out to sign with pen and ink all the money which Uncle Sam puts in circulation, it would take him about thirty years, working with all his might ten hours a day and doing nothing else, to sign the new notes that go out in a single year. If we had to wait on Mr. Huston's pen, nimble though it is, in about six weeks there would be very little paper currency in the country, ex-cept a lot of old bills, so worn and rot-ten as to be barely able to hold together, and such growling about the scarcity of money as was never before heard of.

There was a time when greenbacks were signed by a pen, and what a task it Everybody to examine the late war, when the specie had run out twenty hours out of twenty-four, in order Policies incontestible and that there might be funds to pay the men who were fighting the battles and the commissaries who were feeding them.

paid in from one to two years the same office he then occupied, though now as assistant treasurer of the United States. He could sign up to five though the company. They protect sand notes a day, and by working late into the night could work off as many as the family and estate during seven thousand. But there was on the the younger years of life, and John Evans—who was the mainstay of the insured in old age at regu-lar life rates. Other desirable the soldier as pay day approached. Evans was a phenomenal penman, and when the authorities got into tight places, in the calls made on them for ready cash, as they frequently did, they would go to Evans and ask him to put on steam. When pushed to it Evans could sign 15,000 notes in twenty-four hours, and get rest enough to enable him to start in again the following day. But in order to do this he abbreviated his already short name to "J. Evans," and wrote that with a mere dash of his pen, leaving an autograph which a stranger could never decipher, and yet one which nobody could counterfeit. It is a curious fact that although \$60,000,000 of these notes were issued and put into circulations. culation, many millions of them to sol-diers in the field, all but \$56,000 have been redeemed at the treasury, showing that not a great deal of currency was lost or destroyed even in those troublous

Of this \$56,000 outstanding, a few hundreds dribble into the redemption bureau every year-old bills which some soldier vas paid off with down in Dixie, and which he has hoarded till this day for the sake of their associations. The money counters in the redemption bureau say they occasionally get hold of old "demand notes" of the issue of 1861, and greenbacks of 1862 and 1863, which are discolored by blood, but otherwise almost like new. These notes, say the clerks, were sewn in the lining of the uniform of some soldier who was wounded, and who, on recovering, brought the blood

stained greenbacks home as souvenirs of his part in the war, carefully preserving them till compelled by adversity to pay

them out for the necessities of life.

As the war progressed the needs of the government in the way of paper currency became so enormous that even the nimble Evans and his co-workers were unable to move their pens rapidly enough to keep up with the demand for greenbacks, and the names of the treasurer and register were then printed upon the face of the bills. Mr. Huston is the seventh man to gain the honor of having his name printed upon the paper money of the country as the responsible issuing officer-the man deputed by the government to sign in its name its millions upon ment to sign in its name its militons upon millions of promissory notes. The first of the seven was F. E. Spinner, general-ly known as "Old Spinner," who, as treasurer through the war, and up to 1875, had the pleasure of seeing his name go upon the most extensive issue of paper money ever made by a government in a similar time. No fewer than one billion and five hundred millions of dollars of money went into circulation in fourteen years, bearing the famous sig-nature of "Old Spinner"—that signature which for many years was one of the standing jokes of the country. "Old Spinner," who was one of the

most faithful officials the government ever had, still lives in Florida, where it is said he scrawls his famous autograph in the sand and with it frightens away the festive alligators. Yet, even wealth is not immortal, and riches take wings and fly away, for of that vast sum of "Spinner money" only \$35,000,000 re-main "outstanding" at this day—probably not more than one-half of it in existence. Soon Spinner's signature, once in the pocket of every man who owned

plaster," will have become a curiosity.

Treasury officials say the average life

of a bank note of the denomination of one dollar or two dollars is only three years. Though for a dollar note many a poor wretch must work from morning till night, it is after all but a frail piece of paper, and quickly becomes worn and ragged from use as it goes on its journey of good or evil through the world. A five dollar note will last five times as

ong as a dollar note, and a ten dollar note twice as long as a five dollar.

Over at the money mill, as the bureau of printing and engraving is known, is a huge vault filled with the steel plates on which something like four billions of dollars of money has been printed. The plates now in use are the silver certificates, the national bank notes, the interest checks and a few other minor forms of collateral. Some of these plates cost a thousand dollars apiece, but every one

name on it before it can be used in the printing of a single dollar after he takes office. Luckily it is not necessary to de-stroy the old plates and make new ones. Shortly after the appointment of Mr. Huston by the president the chief of the money mill sent to him for his autograph. "Be careful about it," said the chief, "for it is the signature that will go on millions and millions of money. Make it to suit you, so that it can be left undisturbed as long as you remain in the office." The new treasurer sat up nights with his autograph making. Though a banker and a business man who has long known the value of an autograph, never before did Mr. Huston so fully understand how much the simple signing of a name might mean. He wanted this name neatly signed, plainly signed, with a handwriting that should indicate character, strength, facility of execution, gracefulness. Mr. Huston didn't keep count of the number of times he wrote his name before he found an autograph which in his modest estimation was fit to certify to the genuineness of five bundred millions of dollars, but he will not deny that in his two or three days of practice he covered a couple of quires of paper. When the autograph was finally received at the money mill the skilled

workmen there made short shift of their part of the task of making ready for the

issue of new money. Within a few days bright and pretty 'Huston money" will be in circulation. In a few months the country will be flooded with it. If you have a friend in the treasury ask him to get for you a set of ones or twos, or fives if you prefer, bearing the autographs of all the treasur-ers of the greenback era, from Spinner down to Huston. Though the bills look

much alike and there are but seven

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