

# UNCLE SAM'S PREPARATIONS TO COUNT YOU

BY WILLARD W. GARRISON

**F**OR the thirteenth time in his 130-year career Uncle Sam is getting ready to count noses. Census-taking will occupy all his energies in 1910, but even to-day he is getting ready for that Herculean task. It is the biggest thing the United States does once in every ten years, but to-day the system for its accomplishment has no peers anywhere in the world.

The reason is because America now has a permanent census bureau, one which is always making preparations for the next decade's count. The country's solons will go down into the public treasury this winter for \$14,000,000 for the 1910 census, and of that sum, \$1,500,000 is for maintenance of a permanent bureau.

Speaking in smaller figures, it costs the United States government 17 cents for counting each and every man, woman, boy and girl once in ten years. It costs just as much to count John D. Rockefeller as it does the lone immigrant from Norway who arrives at New York with \$23 as a nucleus for his prospective fortune.

It is estimated that the population



S.N.D. NORTH  
DIRECTOR OF THE U. S. CENSUS

REAR OF THE REMARKABLE NEW CARD PUNCHING MACHINE.

be placed upon the payroll of the United States government next summer and shortly afterward this great counting process will be commenced. After the New Year the greatest problem which Director North faced was of getting enough money from congress to fully guarantee a complete count, which would fully set forth all that statisticians wished to know. The census budget was up before congress last year, but was turned over to the 1908-09 national legislature.

Lawmakers much regret that whereas the constitution of the United States requires that each ten years there be a



THE NEWLY-PERFECTED TABULATING MACHINE

of this country has increased 20 per cent. since the last census was taken in 1900 and according to conservative guesses by men who are qualified to know, the number of persons should total in the neighborhood of 99,000,000. As a consequence statisticians have arrived at the decision that in 1920 the population will touch the 100,000,000 mark.

The census of 1910 is to cost the people little more than that of 1900 for the reason that machines, which are wonderful in their makeup, have been invented by members of the census bureau and these do far greater work than the old style counting devices in use when the job was started nine years ago.

There are two styles of machines—one is the card punching device and the other, the tabulator. The first punches the holes in the conventional card index. The wonderful tabulating machine then takes the pasteboards and solely by mechanical means adds, classifies and makes up totals from the cards, which pass through the device faster than the eye can follow them. Both machines are essential and each is dependent upon the other for success.

The new card punching machine, which is a great improvement upon the old system, is an electrical contrivance. Hitherto the operator was compelled to play upon it like a typist, but to-day all that is necessary is to touch the key desired, press a lever and the machine keeps on punching cards as long as the power is kept on. The old hand puncher was capable of sending out 900 cards each day while the new automaton attains a speed of 3,500 and saves the operators' nerves.

Another feature of these new machines is that the United States will soon know, after the cards have been turned in by the great army of statistics-gatherers, just where it stands on population. Classification is also a great feature, divisions being made of whites, blacks, and other races, along with females, males, natives, foreigners, married and single persons.

One hundred and fifty of these new machines are in the process of construction for the census taking of 1910. Three thousand persons will do the clerical work in the government offices at Washington. So you see there is something to this census taking business.

Director North of the census declares that as soon as the incoming cards are punched he will be able to give to the country the total. The tabulating machines are now a closely guarded secret in a little machine shop at the census bureau offices in Washington and at last accounts the experts at work upon it were perfecting the details of its construction. It is a government invention and no one person gets the credit for it, but it will revolutionize the business of counting noses.

In other years Uncle Sam's work of taking a snap shot of his people was like a man in the hay and feed business jumping into a printing shop



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and trying to make good. The conditions each ten years were so much different from those of the decade previous that even though the same persons were given the care of the offices connected therewith, they found themselves at sea within a few days. Now, however, the permanent census bureau makes the counting of the population a business for all time with Uncle Sam and this gigantic job will be given the attention of his weather eye from day to day, though the fruits of the work will be thrust into the public gaze only once in ten years.

Men who are experts on taking the census of countries declare that the system by which the government will take the count in 1910 is admittedly a model which the whole world should follow, if it would be as up-to-date as this corner. Another project is on foot to-day which will greatly facilitate this census program. That is the erection of a permanent home for the population-counters. If congress allows Director North to erect such an edifice, it will be a specially constructed statistics manufacturing plant. In a communication to congress Director North sets forth his plans. He plans to expend the sum of \$675,000 for the purchase of a site and for the six-story fireproof building upon which he is laying his program. This, he says, will provide ample accommodations for the 3,000 persons who are engaged in this work from year to year.

To-day, if you were to visit Washington, and wished to see the census bureau, you would be led to a one-story brick structure which was erected for the tabulation of statistics in 1900. One great space problem which the government faces is the storing of census reports and this took up just about all the room of the old structure, so that most of the clerks and other help had to be accommodated elsewhere. It was recently estimated that it would house just about one-fourth of the clerks needed for the census next year.

The great army of house-to-house canvassers who will count you and your family in 1910 are not as yet even estimated by Director North, but it is recorded that one man counts only about 10,000 persons, many of them counting less in the small space of time allotted to the tabulation. Thousands upon thousands of extra men will



THE OLD STYLE TABULATOR WITH DIALS THAT REQUIRED TO BE RESET BY HAND

complete, satisfactory census of all the souls in the country, no adequate plans were made when the republic was planted on this side of the Atlantic. For that reason every decade saw a hurry and scurry to count the population, great confusion, distress in some sections and general prevalence of conditions bordering on chaos. So, for more than a century it continued thus each year, for the preceding administration, it is stated, did not care about giving the next successful party anything upon which the caption of "spoils" might be hung, it is declared.

So nobody went after a real census system very strongly.

But modern ideas have been injected into the counting process and the gigantic move for a permanent bureau having succeeded, we are now to have a census which will enumerate, speedily, accurately and give results to the people in the shortest possible time. The establishment of a permanent bureau will also bring about the perfection of more accurate, faster and far better ideas at later dates. Each decade will see changes for the best, it is declared by those in power at Washington.

### Cultivate the Open Mind.

President Eliot says the open mind is a fruit of culture. And it is likewise, a Christian virtue. The man with an open mind is an agreeable person. He is just and kindly. One can talk with him with pleasure, for one can be quite sure, if the mind is open, there is no prejudice, envy or ill-will there. The open mind is where the truth is welcomed, and where it is not tainted with meanness of any kind. As a general thing, the more ignorant a person is the tighter is his mind closed. He thus becomes exceedingly absurd, and consequently pitiful. He loses influence and in time, respect. He likes to say his mind is made up, which means that the doors and windows of his soul are shut and no more light will be let in.

That is a bad situation for a person to get in. It is full of cold gloom, pessimism, and malign meditations; and stands in the way of the world getting better. And who wants to be such an obstruction?

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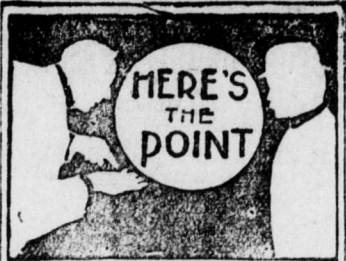
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