

THE UNITYPE COMPANY'S FACTORY AT MANCHESTER, CONN.



The Simplex Typesetter

By *BENNETT CHAPPLE*

IN an article which I wrote recently, concerning the new plant of the National Magazine, I mentioned the Simplex Typesetter as one of the essential appliances necessary to produce so good a magazine for ten cents. Now I am going to take time and space to tell National readers more about this wonderful machine. I care not what your business or profession may be, this information will be interesting to you as further proof of the wonderful age of mechanical inventions in which we are living.

Come back with me in the shop where we can see the busy little machine at work and hear the click, click of its

changing types. My story will not be one of technical phrases to be understood only by printers, but a simple story of the Simplex Typesetter and what it has done for the National.

As we approach, I introduce you to a machine standing erect, with but one leg to do it on. Standing about as high as a tall man's head, it does not impress one with its massiveness, and yet you instinctively feel that you are going to see something new—when it begins its operations. The circular body, or cylinder as it is called, is curiously ribbed with long narrow channels the width of the type, and extending from top to bottom. This cylinder is in two halves—

MR. HERBERT L. BAKER, GENERAL MANAGER UNITYPE CO.



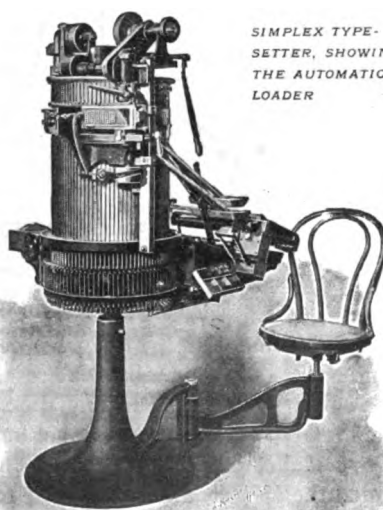
upper and lower—and the top half revolves, making little stops from channel to channel. This part is like a rural free mail delivery: it travels around, dropping in each channel that letter or character for which it is intended, the characters being separated by means of nicks in the body of the type, and when out of the machine the type is seen to be so curiously nicked as to represent miniature Yale-lock keys, or something of that nature.

Thus we have the machine's body divided into two parts—one, the stationary part containing the type separated in upright channels ready for "setting," and the other, a "merry-go-round" taking with it, in short, quick, jolly steps, the channels of mixed type for proper distribution. At each stop one can see where several "get off at" and they sink

into place as if relieved that the whirl around is ended.

But in connection with each of these two parts—one has a suffix and the other an affix—are the really wonderful features of the machine. The suffix I speak of is what is technically known as a "loader"—which feeds the type into the "whirl-i-gig" (the distributor). Small brass trays called galleys are made to take the whole of one column of type on a magazine page. This is put, by the attendant, into a berth made for it near the top of the machine. An automatic device has its sleeves up and is ready to receive it. With the pressing in of a little lever, it carefully thrusts one line at a time into the channels of the revolving cylinder as they become empty. With no human hand to aid it, it handles from one to a hundred or more separate types without a spill at each movement. On the alert and watching for a

chance, it passes by those channels that are not emptied, only to thrust a full



SIMPLEX TYPE-
SETTER, SHOWING
THE AUTOMATIC
LOADER

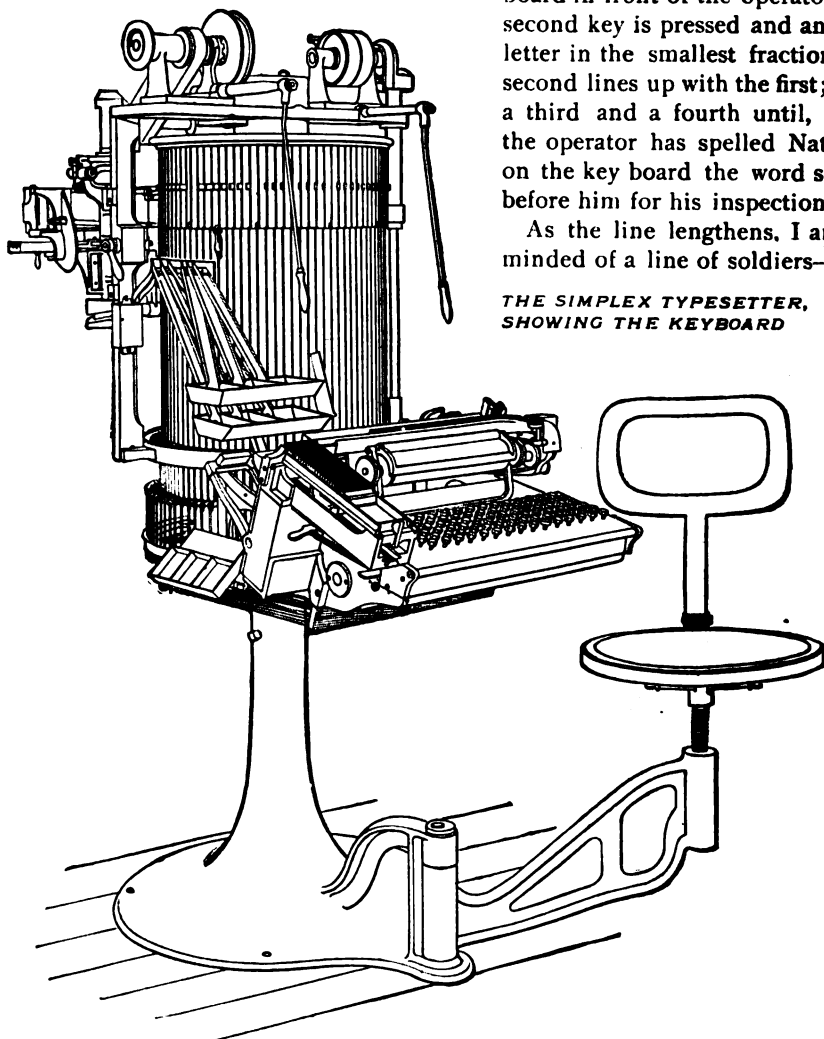
load into place at the first opportunity.

The "affix" is a term I have used to designate the "setting of the type," from the stationary cylinder or reservoir. Here is the most complicated part of the

writer. A key is pressed down, the ejector pushes the desired piece of type onto the disk and, quick as a flash, it shoots around and presents itself in a long channel which crosses the key board in front of the operator. A second key is pressed and another letter in the smallest fraction of a second lines up with the first; then a third and a fourth until, when the operator has spelled National on the key board the word stands before him for his inspection.

As the line lengthens, I am reminded of a line of soldiers—eyes

*THE SIMPLEX TYPESETTER,
SHOWING THE KEYBOARD*



machine and the most wonderful. Underneath the channels of the reservoir is a swiftly revolving carrying disk, and the long channels of type are held above it by a delicate piece of steel. This is called the ejector, and is attached to the key board, which resembles that of a type-

front, heads erect, and ready for duty. And, my dear reader, that's the way this very story—and everything else you read in the National—is put into type for you.

What a lot of failures the perfection of such a machine means! How many were the hardships and headaches the

inventors must have had, and what genius was displayed in its final completion. The inventors of type setting machines have done their share in making it possible to buy high class magazines at very little cost. The Simplex typesetter in the National office does the work of five compositors, and it never asks for a summer vacation.

Many inventions are lost to the public because of the lack of a man properly to exploit them. There is the same amount of genius required in this as in the building of the machine, but it is of a different sort. The great plant of the Unitype Company of Manchester, Connecticut, manufacturers of the Simplex Type-setting Machine, a picture of which is run in connection with this article, is a tribute to the ability of Mr. Herbert L. Baker, general manager. By his excellent management, the company has stepped into great prominence in the manufacturing world, and the orders for Simplex Typesetters are keeping the

factory employes busy night and day.

We have no reason to doubt the statement that several hundreds of these machines are already in operation, though they have been on the market but a short time, comparatively. After a year's experience with it, we would certainly not be without ours for the world, and the reasons and results which appeal to us so forcibly must naturally appeal to other publishers and printers.

In the office of the Unitype Company is an unique exhibit in the way of an United States map, wherein is stamped a red spot at each town or city where Simplex machines are in operation. In the New England, Northern and Central Western states these spots are so thick as to often tread on each other's tracks—naturally enough, as it is in these sections that newspapers are thickest. Every state is represented—and there are even spots on the back of the map where New Zealand would be, if it were represented at all.

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