

Mechanical Department

Practical Experience With the Typesetting Machine.

From a paper read before the Associated Dailies of New York, by H. A. Brockway, treasurer and manager of the Watertown (N. Y.) Times, the following extracts are taken, detailing an illuminating experience with the Thorne and Simplex typesetting machines:—

"Early in the year 1892, after investigating typesetting by machinery quite thoroughly, we made a contract for one of the 120-channel Thorne machines which set minion type. This one machine did not do any very extraordinary work, but our company became convinced that it was because there was no particular strife, so in the fall of that same year we purchased a second machine, and after running them some time we were thoroughly disgusted with the Thorne typesetting machines, never dreaming that it was the fault of the operators. It was a rare thing when neither machine would reach 30,000 ems per day of nine hours, so we offered \$20 in gold to the operators that would first reach 40,000. Needless to say we had to pay the \$20 in gold very quick, when a further reward of the same sum was offered to the first machine that would set 50,000. It was not long before the machines were close on to and up to that mark, and of course it would not do for the operators to fall back any after they had demonstrated what could be done. That changed our opinion in regard to the machines very radically, as we had almost offered to give away the machines before the first prize was announced.

"After a while we saw that we were using in plate form matter that could be set on a third machine, and so bought a second-hand 90-channel brevier machine. With these three machines we were able to set all the type we required in our paper, and use practically no plates, excepting occasionally in our supplements.

"It is needless to say that we have been more than pleased with the working of these machines of late. The item of repairs amounts to almost nothing, and their management is very simple and easy.

"The composition on our three old machines cost us about 14 cents a thousand. This is figuring the most of a new dress once in two years, with an operator and a justifier and a boy to take care of each machine. With the new Simplex machines, which have recently been installed in our office, one boy can take care of the three machines easily, which reduces the cost considerably. Our typesetting now costs us about 12 cents a thousand. Each machine, when manned by a competent and careful operator, will set 50,000 ems per day of eight hours. It all depends on the operators; the machines will do the work if the operators are competent to get the work out of them.

"The Unitype people, who make the Simplex typesetter, are courteous, painstaking, liberal gentlemen to deal with, anxious to please us in everything. The new dress that we recently put on our paper was furnished by them, and can be purchased of them only, as we understand it. It costs 62 cents a pound, less 5 per cent, and is called aluminum alloy. It weighs about one-third less than ordinary type, and for that reason you do not have to buy near as much type as you do of the other kind, although it does cost more per pound. The Unitype people guarantee that the type will wear as long again as ordinary type will with the same usage, so that we expect the new dress will run us four years without any trouble.

"I would be very glad to have anyone who is interested come to Watertown

at any time and examine our plant, and see our machines in working order. We are very much pleased with them in every respect, and are willing to endorse them in the strongest possible terms."

Better Workmen in America.

The Engineer, of London, discussing the relative merits of American and British mechanics, asks why it is, as proved, that a workman in the United States will do "almost twice as much" as a man in its country.

It says the statement to the effect that the former is hustled and bullied by nigger-driving foremen is destitute of truth. "The sooner English employers address themselves to finding an answer, and, if possible, introducing the changes which are necessary to augment the turnout of the English workman until it equals that of the American artisan, the better. In that way, and in that only, can salvation be found."

Of Interest to Manufacturers.

According to a European correspondent, the five hundredth anniversary of the birth of Gutenberg, the inventor of printing, will be grandly celebrated at Mayence in June, 1900. In connection with the festival celebration there is to be an exposition, which will be divided into three separate groups. The historical group will represent the methods of printing during every period and by every nation, and printing presses will be shown to illustrate the advance made from the first press manufactured to those of modern date. The graphic group will comprise a complete representation of the graphic arts. The third group will comprise the best printing presses of modern times in motion.

The first outcome of the exhibition will be the foundation of a Gutenberg museum. There will be no space rentals excepting in the machinery department, which can be procured by writing to the burgomaster of the city. The machinery will be run by the city's electrical department. Exhibitors will pay a rental for the motors and for electricity used.

Copy for Your Next Ad.

If a printer can live up to the high standard set in this advertisement, and really, truly exercise "artistic insight," then this is good "copy" for him to use, with the necessary changes.

It Pays to Use Neat, Attractive Printing

It pays to catch the best trade—the money-spending trade. You can't catch money spenders with penurious or cheap looking printed matter. You must use attractive work—not necessarily expensive—that will catch your customer's eye and cause him to read it. Try an ad. in the Progress-Review

The Knack of Printing

Is the result of artistic insight into the "art preservative of all arts." With us printing is not mechanical—we treat it as an art should be treated.

THE PROGRESS-REVIEW.

In any case, let him remember that "neat" printing is more attainable than the genuinely "artistic." This specimen is from the La Porte City (Ia.) Progress-Review.

Record in Linotype Composition.

A notable contest took place in the office of the Philadelphia Times on October 3d, between two expert Linotype operators, in which the wonderful capacity of the composing machine was demonstrated again, as well as the possibilities for speed by skilled operators.

W. H. Stubbs, of the Baltimore Sun, and William Duffy, of the Philadelphia Inquirer, were the contestants. Mr. Stubbs worked five hours and thirty-three minutes, and set a total of 2,471 lines, containing 66,717 ems of corrected matter. Mr. Duffy worked five hours and twenty-one minutes, and set 2,038 lines, containing 55,026 ems. Stubbs averaged 12,350 ems per hour of corrected matter, while Duffy's average was 10,200 per hour. Toward the finish, Stubbs's machine was run at top speed, and produced an average of nine and one-fourth lines per minute. No. 2 nonpareil was used, and the measure was thirteen and one-half ems pica.

The corrected matter set by Stubbs in a trifle over five and one-half hours equalled about ten and one-half columns of solid reading matter in the Sun, or, with the usual heads and sub-heads, would fill nearly two pages of reading matter of the aforesaid newspaper.

While marveling at the speed developed by these two operators, one is still more impressed with the wonderful speed of the machine that accomplishes such a complicated operation in so short a time. The Linotype company may well be proud of this latest achievement of their remarkable machine.

They Recked Not of Cost.

The following incident illustrates the extent to which the printing business is demoralized by cut-rate printers:—

A solicitor for a firm of printers called upon a business man recently, to ask for a share of his printing orders.

"Do you people pay rent for the premises you occupy?" asked the business man.

"Of course we do," said the solicitor.

"Do you employ competent men to do your work?"

"Yes."

"Do you give them fair wages?"

"Yes."

"Do they get their wages every week?"

"Of course they do?"

"Do you pay for your paper and other materials?"

"Yes; we do."

"Then you can't afford to do my work. The people who are doing it at present must get their labor for nothing, and steal the paper. Good morning."

An Exasperating Experience.

Harry B. Gilstrap, publisher of the Chandler (Okla.) News, touches a sympathetic chord in all printerdom by the following complaint:—

"A printer who tries to pay his debts and conduct his business on business-like methods sometimes feels almost like swearing to hear, when soliciting job printing or advertising, something like this: 'Yes, we need the printing, and we would like to patronize you, but Mr. — is in debt to us, and as we can't get any money out of him, we will have to give him our work in order to get even.' We suppose other business men have the same experience, and feel the same contempt for the fellow who seeks to corner business by getting as deeply in debt as possible."

Printing a Mile-Long Poster.

A unique achievement of the Cox Duplex press is the printing of a poster a mile long for the Battle Creek, Mich., street carnival. The work was done with a new press in the factory, using a continuous roll of paper. The poster was pasted on the brick paving between the car tracks in Battle Creek, where it attracted the attention of all who came within sight of it.

A Newspaper Man's Invention.

Of the inventing of typesetting and typesetting machines there is no end, for, notwithstanding the fact that the practical exemplification of both the requisites in one machine is accomplished in the Linotype, it would seem from the information at hand, that newspaper men still look for another. According to the San Bernardino (Cal.) Index, an old-time newspaper man of its section is about to engage in the manufacture of a machine that he thinks is destined to completely revolutionize the art of printing.

Warren Wilson, the newspaper-man inventor quoted by the Index, intends to make Boston his headquarters. We are bound to apply a modicum of salt to the first part of the statement attributed to him by the Index, which was as follows:—

"It (the machine) is as great an improvement on the Mergenthaler Linotype machines as they were over the hand method of composition that so long prevailed in newspaper offices. The copy is prepared by a reporter on a machine similar in appearance and means of operation to the ordinary typewriter. Instead of the characters being printed on the paper, they are cut out of the sheet. The sheet is passed through the new typesetter, and as each character punctured in the paper passes under the reservoir of melted metal, the corresponding character is cast. The type, perfect in all respects, is received on galleys, ready for the taking of a proof. The proofs are taken in the usual way, and such corrections as may be marked by the proofreader are made with the type by hand."

On Advertising the Printery.

Properly advertising the job department is an ever-recurring subject of thought and study to the printer who is awake to the value of advertising and to the necessity of getting after all the paying business in sight. The wise advertiser in the usual lines of trade finds it advantageous to familiarly "talk shop" in his advertisements. Evidence of this may be found in the advertising of the dry goods merchant, the grocer, the jeweler, etc. It is not an untenable ground to take then, that the printer should do the same. Talk interestingly about the type you have, and why it is adapted to special lines of work. Tell the names and sizes. Talk paper stock, how to test it, its weights, the purposes for which certain grades are best fitted. Talk to your would-be patrons in your advertising as you'd talk if you had them in the shop. In short, talk style, paper, type, ink, price and everything else that enters into the job, and the results will prove eminently satisfactory to all concerned.

People like to "know things," and the man who knows—or thinks he knows—something about the things that enter into a job of printing is the man who has interest enough in the work to appreciate the force of real inducements offered to him.

Shrewd Policy in Buying.

Printers may read and profit by the following terse suggestions from the Practical Printer:—

"Most printers look upon the purchase of material of any kind as a necessary evil, forgetting that the moment an office stops purchasing it starts down hill, and ultimately fails. How different it is in the shoe business! No matter what machine is presented to the manufacturer in this line, he will examine it, and, calculating on its product, and finding that he can make a good profit thereon, he at once throws out his antiquated tool. In consequence of this progressiveness, the entire shoe industry has been revolutionized in the last decade, and the price of the product greatly decreased to the purchaser, in spite of the increased cost of the raw material, while nearly, if not all, of the shoe manufacturers have become wealthy. Why should not printers be as wise, and profit by their example?"