

hands in 75 per cent. of the printing offices in the country in "clearing up" and "straightening out" if not a stroke of productive work were done during the time.

For a compositor to go about the office picking letters and hunting for leads, rules, ornaments, etc., quickly wipes off of the estimate all profit figured on account of the item for composition. The loss is augmented when it is found necessary to throw away a soiled sheet of paper when the stock is cut; make an extra allowance for an habitually dirty-fingered feeder; hunt for a piece of cardboard to put under the paper when it is cut, to obviate the ragged edges due to a dull cutter knife or a worn out cutting stick; hunt again for proper tympan-paper when the job reaches the press; lose time dabbling among the scattered ink-cans for the ink required; wash the press and the form two or three times to secure a good color, because some of the type used was not properly cleaned when previously used; wait for the feeder to scrub his hands, which bear evidence of all the varieties of inks used during the week; clear a place to spread the job to dry; send out for benzine to wash the press; struggle to get a set of worn-out rollers into condition; warm the press ink-plate with a lamp before the ink will spread, and then wonder why it seems determined to separate and blur and look "dauby" on the job—to struggle, in fact, all along the line with adverse circumstances tending to delay work and make it more costly, even to the final search for a suitable wrapping for the finished job when it is called for, and a delay in figuring the cost when the patron is in a mood to pay.

This is not overdrawn. It is true that not all of the hindrances named may attack each slothfully conducted office, but enough of them are operative in many offices to make profit an almost unknown element, and pleasure in the work a sentiment rarely felt.

There are occasions, of course, when everything has to stand aside for the necessity of turning out work: when jobs must be allowed to stand undisturbed, and even the emptiness of the benzine can may be tolerantly discovered. It is better to meet such emergencies by calling in an extra hand, if one is available, and let one of the regulars work at putting to rights. You know that it is hard to tackle a board full of dead jobs, with the pi, the absent letters the rules and leads missing, and the general dilapidation such things fall into. It is a job everybody shuns, and it makes an extra holiday almost a necessity.

There is an æsthetic value to a clean, well equipped and well-ordered office that is not always appraised as highly as it ought to be. A compositor needs a strong mind to be able to do his best in an office that is not kept up to a high mark of order and neatness and preparedness. It is not in human nature to resist the influence of environment. Science tells us that, and it is our fault if we do not apply the scientific truth to our own everyday surroundings and circumstances. It is as valuable to us there as in the spheres we would more naturally assign its influence to, as the education of the young or the cultivation of religious and sociological habits and sentiments. The appearance of the shop influences the appearance of the work turned out therefrom, and the order and convenience of the shop vitally influences the speed and quality of that work.

#### THE OTTAWA PRINTING BUREAU.

The annual report of the Department of Public Printing and Stationery at Ottawa for last year contains a lengthy account of

the operations of the bureau since its institution, ten years ago. The Queen's Printer, Dr. S. E. Dawson, covers every part of his subject, giving a detailed description of the various kinds of work done in the bureau, and discussing the public printing bureaus of other countries. The official report is, in short, a defence of the bureau from every standpoint, and should be, at least, glanced at by printers who have felt that the Government never should have established a public bureau. The drawbacks of the contract system are pointed out, and what is called the "aftermath" of the contract system is given, namely, the success of several lawsuits against the Crown, amounting in all, with interest and costs, to nearly a quarter of a million dollars, for work awarded by the late Government to persons not contractors. These five suits resulted in awards for damages against the Crown for the following amounts:

Barber Bros., for profit on paper.....	\$45,153.11
MacLean & Roger, for printing, 1st suit.....	72,375.80
MacLean & Roger, for printing, and suit.....	29,919.28
Mortimer & Co. for binding.....	18,419.03
A. S. Woodburn, for binding.....	26,000.00
	\$191,867.22

This, as the Queen's Printer shows, was merely for profit on work done. The work was paid for besides, and there were law costs, etc., to count in. The result shows that the late Government certainly did not succeed in working the contract system profitably to the country. Whether a business-like method was not possible is another question. The Ontario Government has no printing bureau and yet it does not go outside the contractors, and the work is, and has been for years, admirably done. The Dominion bureau requires the following additions to enable it to keep up with public printing:

1. A fast perfecting press, feeding from the web and folding its own work, capable of turning out from 18,000 to 24,000 sheets of 16 pages per hour.
2. The addition of four linotype machines and the exchange of two of those now in the office for others of the latest improved make.
3. The extension to the rear of the western wing to provide increased space for the bindery and for the pressroom.

#### A JOB OFFICE AND A SMALL DAILY.

A daily paper is the most exacting enterprise with which a man can be connected. The work is never done. There are always occurrences that need the most careful and painstaking attention. The publisher who is operating a job office in connection has not his entire time free to devote to his paper. Something must be neglected; and because the individual who brought in the job is a reality—a present personage—and the subscriber to the paper or the prospective advertiser more or less impersonal and intangible, the latter is neglected, and the attention is given to the job end. The result is in a degree disastrous. The job is turned out, but a piece of news is lost, or only imperfectly secured and prepared; or the firm or individual who was about ready to advertise has decided that he will not do it. The job paid you \$10. The loss of the news story cannot be calculated. The loss of the advertisement cost you about \$100 for the first year, and it might be indefinitely extended, because a satisfied advertiser is a customer for life.

The publisher of a daily must have time to be out. He cannot run his business from the interior of his office. But, if he is operating a job plant, this is not so easy. Something will