

THE PRINTING DEPARTMENT.

CONDUCTED BY IRA ENOS.

Readers of this department are invited to make use of these columns for the expression of opinion, or by making inquiries regarding any topic having relation to the printing department. All opinions will be gladly welcomed, and all inquiries will be answered as fully and carefully as possible. Any criticisms of what appears in this department will also be welcomed. Communications should be addressed to IRA ENOS, "Printer and Publisher," Toronto.

ARRANGEMENT OF COMPOSING-ROOM.

IN saving time, and, therefore, in saving money, the arrangement of the various parts of the composing-room is of the greatest importance to all busy printers. As everything depends on the shape of the room, it would be impossible to have any fixed and definite rules by which to arrange cases, galley-racks, etc., but there are always common-sense rules which can be applied to any shape or size of composing-room, but which are not always, by any means, put into practice. Upon this subject The Inland Printer has the following to say:

"One of the most important points to be considered is that of light and where it is most needed. It will be quickly conceded that in this respect the requirements of typesetting are the greatest, and, accordingly, the news cases should be arranged to the best advantage in close proximity to the windows. There is very little choice between a left and right light, but it should invariably come from the side and not from the front or rear, and the most economical and satisfactory plan is to place double frames facing each other on either side of a window, so that the alley will have the window at the end, leaving the light practically unobstructed for use in the centre of the room. If the composing room is long and narrow, with light on one side only, as such rooms frequently are, the cases can be thus arranged along one side, with the ad. cases at one end. The arrangement of the balance of the room should be such as to save the most time. The copy hook, standing galley, head-letter cases, bank and galley racks, should all be convenient for the compositors, while the bank and galley racks should in turn be near the proof press, the rack for corrected galleys near the imposing stone, and the latter near the entrance to pressroom or to the elevator. If the pressroom or elevator is at one end, the imposing stone should be near it, with ad. type at the opposite end. The bank should be in the middle of the room, with standing galley on one side and head-letter cases on the other, proof press near the bank and opposite the compositors, with rack for uncorrected galleys on one side and the one for corrected galleys on the other, the latter nearest the stone."

THE PAYING COMPOSING-ROOM.

A great many printers are so positive that no composing-room can be made to pay, that, perhaps, no amount of argument could convince them otherwise. If, however, we find the reasons for so many non-paying composing-rooms, and show that they can be overcome, it may induce some

printers to at least try to make the composing-room pay, instead of resigning themselves to what they consider inevitable.

A foreman of a composing-room, writing to the manager of The American Printer, has some ideas upon this subject which are worthy of repetition: "To my mind," he says, "three things are necessary to bring about this desired change, and this is the trinity that will do it: Thorough systematic management on the part of the foreman in the minutest detail; up-to-date, labor-saving appliances; and plenty of first-class material, in quantity suited to the size of the office. These three requisites go hand-in-hand. * * * It may be said that the greatest of these is system.

"There are certain unmistakable evidences of lack of system in the composing-room which are patent to all. It is only necessary to mention a few of them here, and every one of them is a time-loser. I have been in composing-rooms where cases were piled on the floor under the compositors' frames until they filled the entire space up to the racks themselves, and still other cases shoved back behind those in the racks, simply because there was no definite place to put them; or, if there was, no means were provided to show where they belonged. Suppose a man has occasion to take a case from a cabinet for use at his stand. Now, if there is no means of knowing what has become of the case, the next man having occasion to use it will simply contribute his mite toward the loss in the composing-room, in lost time looking for it. A dozen compositors may be told by the foreman, for instance, to put up nonpareil cases. If there is no system in the office whereby those compositors can quickly locate the cases, or no assurance that there is sufficient type in them to set the copy, it is a safe presumption that each one of those men will lose considerable time in looking for the necessary cases, with no absolute certainty that, when finally secured, they are in proper condition. Can you figure up a profit where such methods are employed? Yet, such is the condition of things in many offices. I have mentioned but three factors which contribute, among many others of a similar nature, toward the unprofitableness of the composing-room. So it might be said that we have here two trinities—one representing profit, the other loss. The trouble with many foremen is that they conduct their departments in a trust-to-luck sort of way. They make no preparation in advance for the many emergencies that are likely to arise at any moment. They are so averse to crossing the bridge before they get to it, even though they had been over the same bridge oft before. They even consider the little things of no moment at all, and consequently utterly ignore them. They are always ready to accuse the man who does look after the little things as being "finicky." It is impossible to get such men to understand that by the application of