

Papyrus sheets were neatly joined, attached to a stick, and rolled upon it (whence we have our word "volume," from the Latin *volvere*, to roll). The titles were written on tags attached to the sticks, or inscribed on the outside of the rolls. The rolls were kept in round wooden boxes resembling the old-fashioned handboxes, and could easily be carried about.

When the literary jealousy of the Egyptians caused them to stop the supply of papyrus, the king of Pergamum, a city in Asia Minor, introduced the use of skins in a form called from the place of its invention, *pergamona*, whence our word "parchment" is believed to be derived. Vellum, a finer article made from calfskin, was also used. Many of the books done on vellum in the middle ages were transcribed by monks, and often it took years to complete a single copy.

Books consisting of two or three leaves of lead, thinly covered with wax, on which they wrote with an iron pen or stylus, the leaves being joined by iron rings or by ribbons, were also used by the ancients.

Books remained very scarce and expensive until after the introduction of paper made from linen and the invention of printing.

When the first libraries were established in England books were so rare and valuable that they were usually attached to the shelves by iron chains to prevent their being stolen.

A fashion of expensive bindings prevailed for a long time, and great skill was exhibited in bindings ornamented by embroidery and various styles of needlework, as well as in bindings studded with precious stones. Queen Elizabeth used to carry about with her, suspended by a golden chain a book called "The Golden Manual of Prayer," bound in solid gold. On one side was a representation of "The Judgment of Solomon;" on the other the brazen serpent with the wounded Israelites looking at it. In the Jewel House of the Tower of London is a book bound in gold and enamel, clasped with a ruby; on one side is a cross of diamonds, with other diamonds around it; on the other a flower-de-luce in diamonds, and the arms of England. The book is enriched with small rubies and emeralds.

#### BEFORE THE DAYS OF POSTAGE-STAMPS.

Before the use of postage-stamps various sums were paid for the delivery of letters. The amounts were regulated by the distance, and were collected on the delivery of the letter.

In the early part of this century the postage on a single sheet of paper was eight cents, and over forty miles the rate was increased; so that over five hundred miles a single sheet was twenty-five cents. But after a time these rates were gradually reduced, until in 1845 a letter weighing not over half an ounce was five cents under three hundred miles, and over that distance, ten cents.

Sir Rowland Hill, who was at the head of the Post-office Department of England at this time, introduced the use of postage-stamps in 1840, and also lessened the charges for postage. In 1847 the United States adopted the use of the postage-stamp, the low-priced one being five cents.

But railways and steamboats had now taken the place of the old-fashioned mail-coaches and postboys; and with the more rapid sending of the mails, the cheaper rates of postage, and the growing population of the country, gradual changes and improvements took place in the post-office system. And here we are, in 1892, receiving our letters from the Pacific coast in six days—also from England in the same time; and a few days or hours will place us in direct communication with our friends and correspondents in almost every part of the country.—*December St. Nicholas.*

#### CLOCKLESS COUNTRIES.

Liberia, in Africa, has neither clock nor timepiece of any sort, the reckoning of time is made entirely by the movement and position of the sun, which rises at 6 a. m. and sets at 6 p. m., almost to the minute, the year round, and at noon it is vertically over head. The islanders of the South Pacific have no clocks, but make a curious time marker of their own. They take the kernels from the nuts of the candle tree and wash and string them on the rib of a palm leaf. The first or top kernel is then lighted. All of the kernels are of the same size and substance, and each will burn a certain number of minutes and then set fire to the next one below. The natives tie pieces of bark cloth at regular intervals along the string to make the divisions of time.

Among the natives of Singar, in the Malay Archipelago, another peculiar device is used. Two bottles are placed neck to neck, and sand is placed in one of them, which pours itself into the other every half hour, when the bottles are reversed. There is a line near by also, on which are hung twelve rods marked with notches from one to twelve. A regularly appointed keeper attends to the bottles and rods and sounds the hours upon a gong.

#### THE WAGES OF SKILL.

When one finds an opening, and leaves the operative class for the managing class, the value of his service shows for itself in some way that commands recognition. Thus, in the early days of agriculture, farmers send their produce to market by a man who makes a business of marketing for others. He can handle the product of ten farms, say, and hence twenty farmers give a living to two middlemen. After a time a man turns up that is smart enough to sell the product of twenty farms, and obtain better prices for the producers by taking off a little from the commissions, and soon he gets all the business, and his two rivals are obliged to retire from the field.

When they are out the profits which were divided by two are taken by one, less the small discount that he made to the farmers to secure their custom. Now, doing the work of two, he saves the time and expenses on the road of one, and so, while they just made a living, he rapidly accumulates, and makes money faster than the farmers who raise the produce which he only sells. In a few years he is the richest man in town, and the farmers, looking only at the result, are dissatisfied, and though he has done the selling for them for less than they could possibly have done it themselves, and also for less than any other man had ever done it for that community, they complain of him as an extortioner, or robber of the poor men who have done all the hard work. To state it mildly, he is a non-producer who has eaten up the farmers of the town.

And what has happened to the farmers has happened to all others. The competent manufacturer has come in, and by doing a much larger business has retired several incompetents to the ranks; the competent trader has done the same, the banker has done it, the expressman has done it, and all others have where there was a chance.—*From Are Business Profits Too Large? by J. B. Mann, in The Popular Science Monthly for November.*

#### INDUSTRIAL NOTES.

In the manufacture of matches the Eddy Company controls the trade of the Dominion. Their match factory, situated at Hull, in the province of Quebec, employs 475 hands and turns out daily about 27,000,000 matches. 6,000 cords of wood and 100 tons of sulphur are annually turned into matches by the Eddy Company. This fact shows the enormous trade which can be developed by a manufacturer who keeps up his reputation for making a first-class article for universal use. In a fire proof room in the factory are four machines for making the little paper boxes which hold the matches. A strip of paper, about three inches wide, is fed into each machine from a spool. This machine prints, cuts, pastes and forms up the little box so that it drops down into the receiver complete, already for filling with matches. Each of these machines is made up of 3,700 pieces, and all were manufactured on the premises from designs made by the mechanical superintendent of the company. It takes three years to build one machine, hence the great precautions against fire by having them in fire proof quarters.

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