

PRINTING SIXTY YEARS AGO.

NOT long ago Mr. James Duncan, of Dundee, Scotland, gave some experiences of his in the printing business in Scotland many years ago. He related that when he commenced his apprenticeship with the late Mr. James Chalmers, bookseller and printer, about sixty years since, the younger apprentice's principal work then, he said, was rolling the types before an impression was taken by the pressman. There were no printing machines in those days, nor for a long time afterwards. The presses were the Kuthven, a wooden press, and a foolscap press, besides a lithographic press. The wooden press had "The Elizabeth, 1788," painted on it, but the pressman who worked it declared it was much older than that. In fact, he used to say it accompanied the army of Prince Charlie in the '15, and printed his proclamations. (Laughter.) The authority for this was uncertain, and it would have to be taken with a considerable grain of salt. This wooden press, though clumsy and ungainly, was worked very quickly by those who got accustomed to it. As many as 250 demy quarto bills per hour were easily thrown off. In 1852, a Columbian press was put in its place, and he never saw a press like the old one until some years ago, when he visited the Plantin Museum at Antwerp, where he was shown two presses identically the same. These wooden presses were universally used in the 18th century.

The wages when he first joined the trade were very low. Foreman compositors had 20s. a week, and journeymen 16s. The hours were 60 per week, with no Saturday half-holiday. In the factories the hours were even longer— from five in the morning till seven at night— while the shopkeepers' hours were from half-past seven in the morning till nine at night. Trade was then dull. The country was ground down by taxation, and masters and men had to exert themselves in every way to make both ends meet. The Chartist and Free Trade agitations were in full activity. The working classes supported Chartism and the middle classes Free Trade. They once had instructions to put out a poster of one sheet the largest size they could make for a meeting of the Anti Corn Law League, and Richard Cobden, John Bright, and other prominent speakers were at that meeting. The building trades at that time were also dull. Masons (journeymen) received from 13s. to 15s. a week, and joiners about the same. On the whole, he said, the working, as well as all classes, had now much to be thankful for compared with the conditions which prevailed 60 years ago, not only in the actual increase of earnings, but also in the greater leisure and facilities for enjoying the comforts these earnings gained.

FREE ADS. TO THE UNDESERVING.

Some mild controversy has been going on in Eastern Ontario with reference to this paragraph in 'The Renfrew Mercury':

Most of our country pressmen are real Christians. They turn the other cheek to the smiter. We notice that many of them within the past week have given \$2.50 worth of local advertising for 25c. worth of patriotic post cards from a firm that has done more to eat into the country printers' trade than any other in the Dominion.

The Sudbury Journal retorted as follows: "The Renfrew Mercury last week found fault with the newspapers which it

said gave \$2.50 worth of advertising for 25c. worth of post cards, and in the same issue it gave a \$1.50 notice to a book which retails at 15c. and isn't worth half that price. Consistency, etc."

The Mercury, in turn, explains its position in these words: "It may be admitted that consistency is just about the hardest virtue in this world to achieve; but The Mercury has not been so terribly inconsistent this time, after all. It gave a notice to an old friend and confrere, who has not harmed the trade, but who is struggling to make a place as a book publisher. Our friends who seem hit were making a gift to one who has cut-throat their own trade. Finally, we did not 'find fault.' We simply paid our brethren a compliment."

This, after all, is reasonable. There is no hard and fast line to be drawn in many of these matters.

PLATES FOR BILLHEADS.

We have received from The Toronto Engraving Co., 92 Bay street, Toronto, a handsome brochure giving illustrations of their new method of producing designs for letter-heads, billheads, envelopes and stationery in general.

The samples are remarkably clean and sharp and cannot be distinguished from fine lithographs.

These plates, which can be handled by any printer with ease, are etched in a special way on extra hard metal and will print in a thoroughly satisfactory manner, even on long runs.

These plates are not expensive, but are comparatively cheap, and the fact that the printer owns the plate enables him to obtain repeat orders with little trouble.

It will be readily seen that the cultivation of this class of work, for which there is a steadily increasing demand, will open a new source of revenue, which, in the hands of a live and enterprising printer, will become more and more valuable.

We would advise all interested to write for a copy of this brochure.


Mr. W. J. Healy ("Tim"), so well known in Ottawa and Brockville during the past seven or eight years is now with The Winnipeg Free Press.


C. F. Campbell, of The Warton Canadian, is preparing a souvenir publication of Warton and vicinity. It will contain about 75 pages and be well illustrated.

CANADIAN ADVERTISING is best done by THE E. DESBARATS ADVERTISING AGENCY, Montreal.

FOR SALE.

FOR SALE—Cylinder Press, Taylor—will print 5-column quarto; perfect order; does nice work; hand or power. Very cheap for cash or suitable time. Apply PRINTER AND PUBLISHER, Toronto.





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