

has followed his copy or instructions, to find his proof tell a different tale, and alterations made from the original. The clicker can do nothing for you; there is no satisfaction to be had from the readers, and the overseer will not be bothered; the comp. learns by experience to save time by correcting all errors, and to give vent to his vexation by liberally "damning" the readers and the fate that brought them into such a business. There was a reader in the house who had formerly come from New York, having read proof on the *Herald*, and it was amusing to hear how bountifully the abuse was heaped on "that damn'd Yankee's" head, when the boys were correcting his marks. "Yankee Doodle" was whistled in full chorus for his benefit whenever he entered the room. By the way, a pet mode of recognition was the whistling of appropriate tunes for different occasions. Did a man come in a little late after pay-day, he had "Old John Barleycorn" for a salutation; or should he leave half an hour before time, "Meet me in the lane" was the favorite air, accompanied by a stamping of feet, thumping of cases with sticks, rattling of shooters, etc., on the iron stones, making a terrific racket. A man may have occasion to interview a fellow-workman in another compartment; immediately "My good friend, he's a pal of mine," is started in his honor. There were tunes for every occasion, and the "Johnny Bulls" seemed to take great delight in this pastime, losing no opportunity of indulging in it. To an American it seems rather childish amusement, more befitting the apprentice state than that of matured manhood. In conjunction with this was their "entertaining" style of chaff. Pet phrases, such as "No fly," "Take no notice," having a "chopper," a "pan," or a "chaff"; "I'm sticking up for you," "Just a few," "Rawther," "Now, you're in it!" etc., etc., seemed to be the stock phrases; and a man was forced to hear them chewed over so often, day after day, as to make him have but a very humble opinion of English wit. They seemed to lack entirely the originality of the sayings of an American printing office—the punning on words, the extravagant expressions, and the keen sense of the ridiculous peculiar to American comps.

The English printer wears an apron as a rule, and it is a custom that might well be copied by his contemporary in America. It gives a very clean and tidy appearance to the workman as

he dons it fresh and white from the washerman every Monday morning who charges the modest sum of one penny for cleansing. It takes but a very short time, however, to change its hue, more especially as the majority of the workmen make it answer the double purpose of apron and handkerchief; and, as snuff-taking is very prevalent, it gives rather an uninviting appearance to the article, to say the least.

Each man in a book-office is expected to furnish his own galleys, stick, bodkins, rules, "space-charge," etc. The galleys are all wood, and open at one side. They are worth from 1s. 8d. to 2s. 6d. each, according to length and width and a man is expected to own four at least. Galley-clubs are often formed for the purpose of procuring them, each man in the shop contributing 3d. or 6d. per week for a stipulated time.

The working hours are from 8 o'clock in the morning till seven in the evening, with a half-holiday on Saturday. During the winter months the working-hours are extended to 8 o'clock in the evening, according to the state of work. The peculiar phrase for knocking-off work is "cut the line" at such an hour as the clicker may dictate. It strikes an American print. as rather harsh that when extra work is to be done, he is not *asked* if he will work overtime, but he is *ordered* to do so—a mode of procedure slightly different from what he had been used to. These hours of working are inconvenient to a man. Most compositors working in city offices have distances, varying from one to seven miles, to traverse mornings and evenings to and from their homes, as it is extremely difficult to get comfortable lodgings in the middle of the city. Well, a man working till 8 o'clock in the evening, and having to go to his lodgings to make a change, finds it nine o'clock before he is ready to go out—an hour and a half too late for theatres or other entertainments, and but a sorry time to visit friends, if the stranger comp. is fortunate enough to possess any. The working hours of New York, from 7 to 5.30 are much to be preferred. The extra hour in winter is not even appreciable from a monetary point of view, as the time is sure to be lost during the week, by having to distribute bad matter, waiting for copy, and the numerous petty grievances that a man is subject to in a London book office.

I think the book compositor has to contend