

# Filing Catalogues and Price Lists

System of Filing Together Catalogues and All Information  
Relating to Prices, Discounts or Shipments. Systems Used  
by Chas. F. Dawson, Montreal, for a Number of Years.

By A. B. FARMER

What to do with catalogues, price lists, etc., is a problem that at some time or other faces every man in every line of business. They come in by every mail, too often find their way into the W.P.B. without more than a hasty glance, and it is only later, when the receiver has a hazy idea that somewhere he saw a catalogue relating to the machine, or whatever it may be he wants, that he realizes that he made a mistake in throwing that catalogue away.

Being human, he next day throws three or four more catalogues away one at least of which he will want before a year is over.

A very simple and complete filing system was recently shown to the writer by Mr. Chas. F. Dawson, the head of one of Montreal's largest stationery concerns. This system has been in use for a number of years, and as it is quite applicable to the need of a concern of any size, it is well worth a brief description.

The first problem in caring for catalogues is where to put them. Large bound catalogues are all right in an ordinary bookshelf, but the small ones, the pamphlets, folders, and single leaflets, are often quite as important in their way, but they are woefully easy to lose.

This difficulty has been overcome by the use of ordinary letter files. In these, the small catalogues, etc., are filed alphabetically under the name of the issuing firm. As soon as one letter file is moderately filled, another is started.

For indexing, an ordinary two-column ledger index is used. In one column the names of firms are entered, with the number of the letter file, in which their catalogues will be found, if they are small. In the other column, the names of articles are entered, with the name of firms in whose catalogues they are listed, and where the catalogue will be found.

All price lists or letters relating in any way to goods, prices or terms, are at once side tracked in the manager's office, and instead of being filed with general correspondence are put with the catalogue or catalogues of the house from whom they come.

A convenient drawer is kept where all catalogues, price lists, etc., are allowed to collect as they come in, and from which they are taken every few days by one of the clerks, and duly filed and entered, when necessary, in the index book.

Such a system as this, if systematically carried out, is often of great value to the concern. For example, a man has a half-developed idea of some office device that he thinks he could use. He has heard of such a thing, or seen an advertisement, but he has forgotten where, or what it was called. This often happens. He calls on a stationer, and tries to explain what he wants. Nine times out of ten the clerk never heard of such a thing, thinks the enquirer is crazy, and shows it.

When such an enquirer calls on the firm mentioned (Chas. F. Dawson & Co.) he meets a different reception. The filing system has been in operation for years, and the salesmen trained to use it. Perhaps the clerk has never heard of the article wanted, but he can find out. The enquirer is taken up to the office. By reference to the index, the clerk is soon able to produce the catalogues

of all the firms likely to have such a line. The chances are that the exact article wanted will be found within five minutes, and as all data regarding prices, discounts, shipments, etc., are filed with the catalogue, the clerk is able to at once quote a price for the article laid down. It means not only a sale, but probably a permanent customer.

The plan of filing all information in any way relating to prices, discounts or shipments with the catalogues is one that can be profitably adopted by any concern that buys. It saves time and avoids many mistakes. Prices and discounts are rarely referred to except when the catalogue is also being consulted, and catalogues are scarcely ever consulted without reference to prices.

Any office boy or girl can keep such a filing system in good order in a few minutes a week. The gains from such a system are often very great.

## The Use and Abuse of Half-tones

By JAS. F. TOBIN.

Bill Nye said of Wagnerian music, "It isn't as bad as it sounds." This might be paraphrased concerning half-tones. Some of them are not as bad as they look.

A half-tone is only as good as it's printed. The finest one ever made, will look "fine" only when the printing conditions are such as to display its good qualities.

The relations between half-tone, printing, and results, are absolute. Given any particular half-tone and quality of paper and a good printer, the result can be predicated accurately.

The 175-line screen calls for the best coated paper—first-class printing—and a pressman who is "on his job."

The 150-line screen is just a grade lower; it requires good coated paper, good printing, and a good pressman to handle it.

The 133-line screen is the all around business screen. Runs well with ordinary printing.

The 120-line screen can be used on "supers" and show good effects. The 150, 133 and 120 screens can be electrotyped with excellent results.

The 100-line screen is sufficiently open for rapid printing on machine-finished paper—a first-class trade journal screen.

The 80 to 65-line screen are "newspaper screens." Good for cheap circulars and fast printing—can be stereotyped successfully.

A half-tone with a vignette finish should be used only with good paper, where the printing is first class.

For trade journal uses, either a square finish cut—with or without a line around it—or an outline cut, are unquestionably the cuts to use.

An inspection of the half-tones in the ordinary trade journal will show that "outline finish," 100-line screens print best.

A good half-tone in the hands of a good printer can be counted on for many thousand good impressions more than the same half-tone in the hands of a "near" printer.

The last word has not yet been said about half-tones. The engraving processes are improving so rapidly that it is always worth while consulting a good engraver before ordering cuts, so as to keep up-to-date.—Selling Magazine