

HOW THE NEWS OF THE DAY IS SIFTED AND PUBLISHED

Minute Subdivision of Work Among the Force.

Complicated But Smooth-Running System Required.

The business department, having made it possible for the paper to be published in the most up-to-date manner and able to give its readers the best that can be procured in the way of news of the greatest interest to them, it is the duty of the news and the city editors to get together all available news. It is news—live news, reliable news, instructive news—that is the fundamental basis of a modern daily, and such news does The Advertiser constantly strive to obtain. That it does obtain the news at all times is due to the complete system which the paper has. Of the city department and its work, more is written further on. In this article there will be dealt with the gathering of the news from outside of town.

The chief duty of the news editor is to receive the telegraphic news and edit it. This is in itself an operation requiring skill and experience. He has also to keep in touch with the trend of events and know just what news has been written or before. His chief stock-in-trade perhaps is his ability to value news. News varies in quantity, and the editor must be able to gauge the matter he will have, so that he shall as nearly as possible have the requisite amount set up, and not have too much, which would result in having matter left over. The danger is always of having too much news, and it is therefore desirable to have everything placed in according to its news value. An item must be

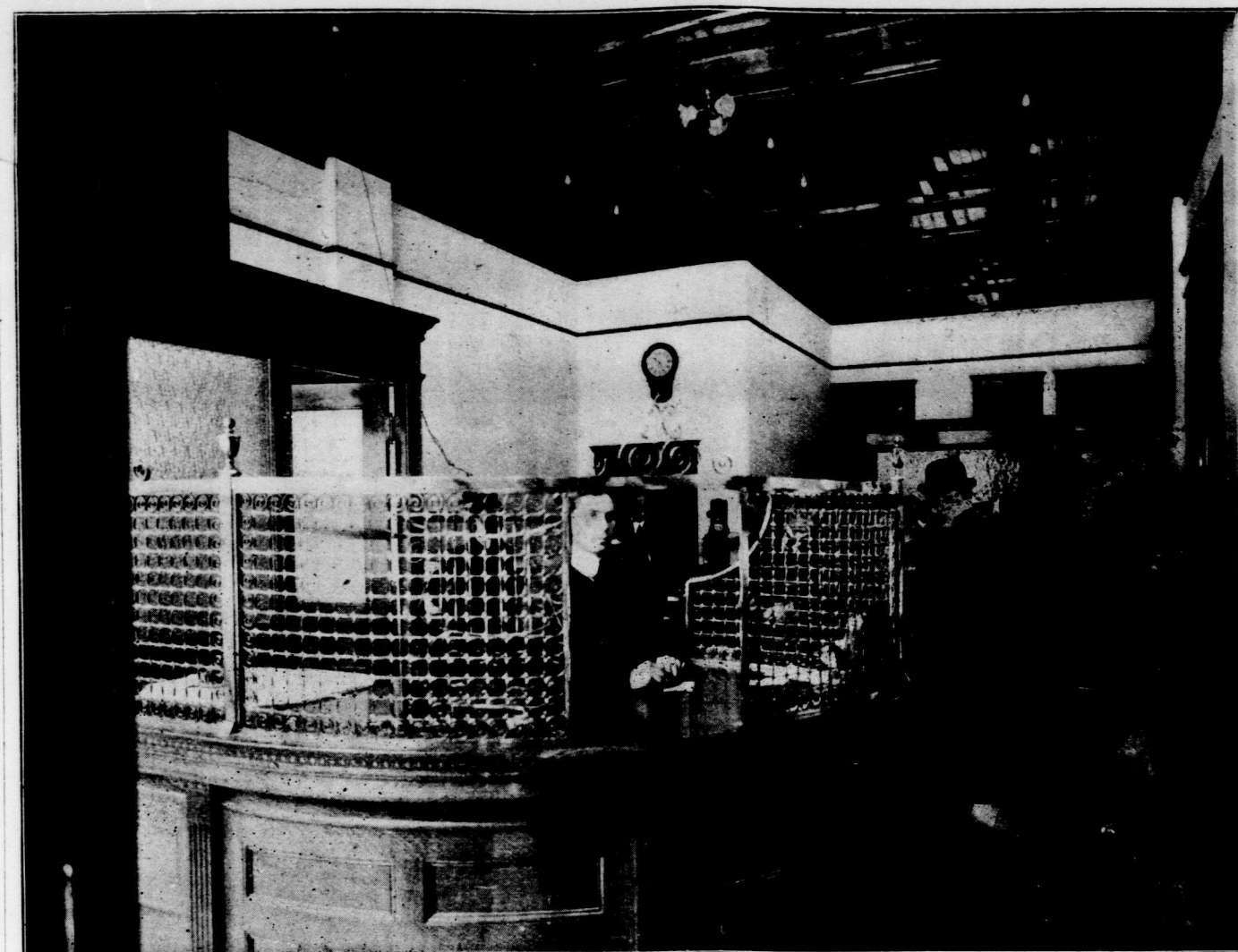
ly, The Advertiser has numerous correspondents who send news in 31-rectly.

HOW DISPATCHES COME IN.

The news editor does not simply receive ready-made copy and write heads for it. He has to thoroughly edit it, condensing where it is required, correcting errors in English where they occur, and distributing and arranging his matter. In regard to the last feature, he very often has trouble in the way the dispatches are received, many times there being dispatches of entirely different purport on the same sheet. On the other hand, it is an interesting operation—the compiling of news of like character. For instance, in the recent Venezuelan trouble, dispatches came along at all hours of the day. First, perhaps there would be one dated London, England. This would probably be followed by a short one from the seat of the impending war, while another would come in later from New York. Coming in at different intervals and requiring to be connected for the evening edition, it is necessary to have considerable care as to how things are arranged. The news editor, however, does his work systematically, and the reader always finds that no matter how scattered the dispatches may have been brought into the office he is able to find them in the proper order, and learn whatever is going on in that part of the world where the eyes of all are turned. It is by hundreds of thousands of miles of copper wire that the news editor is connected with all the ends of the earth, and his ever-present thought is how to best take advantage of that fact.

HANDLING STORIES.

Canadian news is what must be most watched by Canadian papers, and the



Frank Cooper, Photo.

Front View of Business Office.

of the news editor, should of course be well equipped. That is, he must be reliable as a news-gatherer; he must get the news and nothing but the news. The correspondent must be qualified in the matter of sincerity, for faking never pays, and newspaper men recognize that such is nothing but journalistic suicide. This is a fact, notwithstanding a rather prevalent, though erroneous, idea among those who do

times results in several columns being left out, a case that everyone will see requires discrimination and rapid thinking.

THE NEWS OF THE CITY.

System Must Be Complete to Permit Nothing to Escape.

Eternal vigilance is the watchword of the city editor. Unceasingly must he oversee the scouring of the city for the news, and the system has to be so perfect that nothing escapes his attention. Under him are the reporters of the paper, who bring in the news, and the planning has to be done so that the reporters shall miss nothing. It is at the city editor that the news channels of the city converge, and of him one of the essential qualities is generalship. He must know how to place his men to the best advantage. He must know how to so marshal his forces that he will get the best results for the time put into the work. He must so size up the quantity of news of the day, as he anticipates it, that the correct proportion will be given to everything in accordance with its news value, that as nearly as possible the amount of copy turned in will be enough to fill the local pages of the paper, and brief enough to not have anything left over. Of course, there are cases where ordinarily important news has to be left over. This happens in case of a calamity or tragedy, where the time between the occurrence and the time of going to press is of such duration that it is only possible to have set up the details of the more important story. When there is time, in that case, the ordinary news is cut down, the preference, of course, being for the extraordinary news. News values must be a part of the city editor's knowledge, just as much as the merchant must know the value of the goods in which he deals. To the experienced newspaper man news value becomes a sort of instinct. He has no scales to weigh it; he has no rule to measure it; he has no concrete form of analysis to estimate its consistency; he simply must know what it's worth from intuition.

There are a great many people unacquainted with the modus operandi of the publication of a newspaper, who have not the slightest idea as to how the daily work is accomplished. Many intelligent visitors to a newspaper office there are, whose misconceptions of the manner in which the news of a city is gathered, are nearly twice as great as that of a visitor to a large American office not long ago, who said: "So this is the city department. Yes, I know all about this. It is where the reporters work. They go out every day and hang around where they are not known and hear things, and then come back and write long pieces about it all, and

the city editor cuts the pieces down." Besides those who do not know that the city department of a modern newspaper is systematic and complex in its machinery, there are many others who, thinking that a system is pursued, still have no idea as to the amount of work entailed. They imagine that the news-gathering, the news-writing, the news-

meetings that evening and the coming day, and enters in the assignment book the name of a reporter opposite the meeting or whatever will be held. For instance, there is to be a meeting of the city council. Opposite that entry in the assignment book is put down the name of the man who attends to the city hall work. Then there is a lecture to be given in a church by some prominent man; another reporter is delegated to that place. Perhaps an annual meeting of some society or church is to be held that evening; another man has to "cover" that. Again, there may be a social event to be written up, and someone has to go there. The amount of news of the known quantity nature sometimes varies, and at times the number of assignments exceeds the number of reporters, in which case someone has to cover more than one the same evening. In winter especially there is evening work for the writers, and besides the ordinary news there is generally a certain amount of comment to be handed in for publication by the man who has charge of the sporting department. If anyone has an idea that the reporters of these meetings are at liberty to simply go and take notes and do the writing the next morning he is mistaken. The copy must be handed in the same evening. The lecture or the council meeting may be a large one and require a good deal of space, and that means perhaps several hours' work on it after the close of the meeting. Nevertheless, the report must be finished at once, and the copy ready for the city editor when he comes down early the next morning. The latter has to edit it, and send it to the composing-room, to be started the first thing in the morning. In fact, a reporter is always required to prepare his copy on the do-it-now system, for in the race for time he can easily be left in the lurch.

EXERCISE OF JUDGMENT.

Reporters Must Be Careful of What They Choose as News.

It has been said at the beginning that the city editor must be a man who has a great knowledge of news values. The copy goes through his hands, and it is

their beats. The railway depots are a source of information, and this part of the city is regularly visited. The undertakers are the people who are able to make the papers aware of the deaths of people within the city, and the reporters have then to procure the obituaries, having learned of what has happened. The fire department is one of the public places where news is generally available, and then there are a score of places where news is at indefinite periods obtained. Something may not happen every day, but there are places that need to be kept in touch with. For instance, there is the university and the schools, the Normal, high and public, there is the postoffice and the custom house, and the various public institutions, as well as the many private sources of information.

Coming events are closely watched, and if a prominent man is expected in the city, he is awaited, and when he arrives he is interviewed, and as a rule much interesting, as well as valuable reading, is given the readers. The Advertiser watches these things, and in the routine of daily news of the ordinary nature, the special features of a local interest are not lost sight of. The coming events being chronicled in the assignment book, the city editor is prepared for what takes place in this way and sees that the proper attention is given to whatever is before the public.

It will be evident to all that the city editor must be a wide-awake man. The better he knows the city, its history and its people the better will he be able to conduct the city department of his paper. With reporters coming in and out, with telephone at one hand, messenger calls at the other, with fresh tips constantly coming either verbally or by message, with reporters appearing at all times to give reports upon their stories, the office of the city editor becomes a news center of great proportions. Sometimes the life-blood of a city flows slowly. In fact, very often there will be a regular dearth of news, while at other times the news will come with a rush. But a change may come



Frank Cooper, Photo.

Interior of Business Office.

estimated as to the amount of space it is worth in the paper. More than that it must be measured in importance, no matter how long it may be, and the proportionate heading written for it. It will be seen, then, what a power of discrimination must be possessed by the news editor to have his department run smoothly.

THE NEWS SERVICE.

In the case of an evening paper, the bulk of press dispatches come in after 10 o'clock in the morning. The first few hours of the morning are spent by the news editor in looking through exchanges. It is his duty to see that any important dispatches of happenings the day before, since the previous day's paper went to press, are chronicled. He goes through, also, the morning papers, and sees what is desirable for the evening paper. Perhaps there is some small item which promises to grow into a big story, or there may be something which might have a local interest that he thinks it advisable to hand over to the city editor. The news editor has scarcely gone through his morning papers when the different dispatches begin to come in. These are either from the special correspondents or from the Associated Press and other press agencies. For a great deal of the news of the day, the Associated Press is depended upon, and that organization is truly one of the most wonderful systems in any line that the world has produced. Its primary object was for the supplying of news from Washington to the New York dailies. Steadily it grew until today it handles reports from every place on the American continent, as well as other parts of the world. The system by which this association is able to cover all the news and is entitled to the credit of being the most extensive purveyor of news in the world must be marvelous, indeed. This association supplies much of the news to The Advertiser, especially of a foreign nature. Considerable Canadian news comes through like sources on a smaller scale, while throughout the western part of the province especial

duties of the news editor of The Advertiser are largely to keep his eye on events in Canada. Perhaps today it is necessary to write up a railroad wreck in Western Ontario. A reporter is sent to the scene, and the messages, as he sends them in, must be received by the news editor. Then, while he has a man engaged upon such an accident, he gets a "query" asking how much is wanted from the special correspondent at some place of a disaster, of which the latter has wired a few words. The news editor considers how much else he has coming and what he thinks the story ought to be worth. Perhaps the paper could use five hundred words, and a message is sent for this, and in due time the account comes in and is printed in that evening's paper. Then there is the regular amount of daily news from Parliament when that is in session, the special correspondent generally sending in about the same amount every day. There are the weather reports and the daily markets, and such smaller affairs, all of which have to be taken into consideration.

Besides the Canadian news, the world has to be watched. It may be that there is a battle being waged somewhere, and the account of it must be in that day's paper, not the following day's. The same applies to the great international affairs in all parts of the world; it applies, too, to whatever is occurring in the Imperial Parliament or the United States Congress, and the news editor for these reasons must keep abreast of the times—right to the very hour.

Any place may at any time be on the news center. Today it may be as far as provincial matters are concerned, in the city of Toronto, but tomorrow it may be in some obscure place in Manitoulin Island. Here lies one of the problems of the news editor. It is his duty to see that no matter what place looms into prominence is a center of news, if even for a few days only, he must be able to put his hand on someone who will furnish him with news. Hence the value of having at one's command correspondents who can be relied upon to furnish copy when required. The correspondent, who must be considered when speaking

not know the workings of the newspapers, that a newspaper is conscienceless. The Advertiser has been fortunate in its sources of news, and its readers always get accounts of the happenings of the world and of Canada in particular, and are sure of the truth.

Lastly, the news editor has to know the relative value of all news that goes in the paper, and remember everything that has passed through his hands, for at making-up time he is expected to oversee the operation, which some-



Frank Cooper, Photo.

The Mailing Room.

editing and the news-printing is a matter of an hour or two.

A RACE AGAINST TIME.

Alertness Characterizes Preparations for Printing a Paper.

On the contrary, the getting out of the daily paper is not only a race for news, but a race against time, from the time one day's edition is out until the next day's has gone to press. In the first place, in the case of an evening paper like The Advertiser, the first preparations for the paper are made on the going to press the day before. The city editor looks over the anticipated

he who has to use the blue-pencil where required. This, however, does not excuse the reporter from also knowing the value of news, and he, too, must acquire that instinct by which he can estimate news, that he will not turn in copy that will need to be cut down, and the man who can write a story that needs no revision is the man most valued by the newspaper. Even more, possibly, than the city editor, is he called upon to use judgment in the use of news. Instructed from the first to always get authentic news, to get only the truth, and not to be affected by any personal feelings in the matter, he must be of a discriminative mind and able to grasp the importance of things. It is wonderful how often a reporter has to sift news as given to him, and watch out for coloring in what he learns. There are many men who are intentionally honest who will give a reporter news, but from such a prejudiced standpoint that were the paper to publish it as given, it would be accused of not telling the truth. A reporter, therefore, has to use discretion; he has to have a certain tact in the handling of news. Diplomacy is very often required in the getting of news for people will not always tell what they know when asked. The news-writer has to have what is known as the "nose for news," but he has to have more, as has been mentioned. It may be that every newspaper reporter is not adapted according to these principles, but he will learn the necessary methods and acquire the address that will enable him to talk with men in all the walks of life, if he stays at the business; otherwise he should not stay at it if he by chance has the knowledge.

FOUNTAINS OF KNOWLEDGE.

In a city like London there are certain fountains of knowledge to which the reporter has to be taken daily. These routes are, in the parlance, called "beats," and each reporter on the staff has his "beat." These include the city hall, the police station, the courts, and the hotels, where the registers are daily scanned for the arrival of prominent visitors. Public officials take it as a matter of their own routine to be visited by reporters, and the places of public service are always open to them, and the officials, with few exceptions, are ready with some story for the boys when they come around on

so quickly! It is as if the city editor had his hand upon the city's pulse. Perhaps at one period of the day he feels that there "is nothing doing," but before an hour passes he will feel the throb of renewed activity. The pulse quickens—history is making—news is to be secured.

COPING WITH EMERGENCIES.

It is probably in the events which are not foreseen that the greatest difficulties are met, and the city editor must have at his command the forces with which he can cope with any emergencies. Should a fire break out, the office is at once notified of it, and if it is one that promises to be a conflagration of importance, the reporters are expected to leave the work of their beats and attend to the emergency case. Even here, where to the average person it may seem a haphazard way of getting news, a system is used. The city editor sends one man out to watch the progress of the fire; another thinks of nothing save finding what caused the fire and who discovered it. A third perhaps gets a statement from the owners, and finds the probable loss as nearly as it can be estimated. An artist or photographer is also sent to get pictures of the scene. If the fire is of long duration, one man relieves another, so that no time will be lost in turning in the copy. Sometimes it is an accident that happens, where many people are killed, and this entails a large amount of work. Should someone die under suspicious circumstances and an inquest be called, it may be a story that needs a couple of men to gather the details of the case. Naturally, it will be seen that there is no 6 o'clock whistle business for the reporter, but this is one of the accepted things of his life, and if he works the greater part of the 24 hours of the day that is all expected. The recompense for the sometimes strenuous duties is the excitement and the novelty that is always connected with his work. Their race against time is very often one which requires all the going powers of the reporters. When something happens within a half an hour of going to press, and most of the forms are made up, while the press is awaiting the last few items that will find their way into the paper at that hour, and when it is an occurrence worth space, the rush is at its greatest height, and if it is far from the office, the available men are



Frank Cooper, Photo.

The Advertiser "Delivery."