

A Night in the Sun Office.

THE SYSTEM THAT STRUCK AN OUTSIDE NEWS-PAPER MAN AS VERY INTERESTING.

(From the Louisville Post.)

The *Sun* newspaper is a small affair in square inches, but every inch is an institution. The sheet is not as large as the *Louisville Post*, but a comparison of the paper on any day with either of its great New York contemporaries will prove that it contains every item of valuable current news, local, national, or foreign, and hardly a line of trash. Notwithstanding the condensation necessary to secure such results, the paper is written with singular clearness, and is deservedly noted for literary grace. And further, along with all the news, it finds room for pointed editorials—pebbles of hard English well flung—and as much of miscellaneous and interesting matter as any reasonable reader would care to have. In short, the *Sun* is the most complete newspaper in America, supplying everything in such a shape that every thing can be read.

With such characteristics it is no wonder that it is the most widely read paper in New York, where nearly everybody is busy; and so long as it is conducted with the present liberality, energy, and care, its continued growth is assured; 127,000 copies are now sold daily, which is one paper to every ten people in New York City, a proportion that is likely to hold in the future, if, indeed, it is not improved with the increase of the proportion of busy people.

A majority of the newspaper men who are familiar with the *Sun* as an exchange, and who know of its great prosperity, have long agreed that, if they ever start a paper of their own, the *Sun* shall be their model. Many such attempts have been made and have failed. The *Cincinnati Sun*, a mechanical imitation, a perfect counterfeit, when too far off to read, was the most notable instance. The trouble with all such attempts was that the proprietors did not know the New York *Sun* and its system. They imagined that by imitating its size and outward appearance they would have a bright and successful journal, when in fact the size of the *Sun* is fixed, not to save white paper and type setting, though it does this incidentally, but because it is the smallest size into which all the news can be put and still preserve a clear and pleasant shape. The *Sun* is really run on very expensive principles. The cost of its news, coming through men who are able to condense, is as great as that of any of the monster papers which employ diffuse, ill-paid fellows, and meet their heaviest expense in telegraph bills, paper bills, and the wages of their able-bodied compositors. The *Sun* pays as much for editors to cut out words and leave tangible facts and ideas as the blunderbuss papers pay for writers to concatenate.

It is only after some study that one can realize what an enormous amount of news a great metropolitan paper must handle before it can boast to "have it all," and it is a matter of real wonder that a little paper like the *Sun* contrives to hold so much. It is a case of the harlot man's small head; it is the result of a complete system carried out daily under able management, by the hard work of many bright minds. Just think of the materials that come to the office every day. Though the hundreds of men who gather the news know that their positions depend on their being as brief as is consistent with completeness, they still furnish, at a small estimate, more than ten times as much copy as can possibly be printed. The issue daily of reading matter averages about twenty-two columns; it contains all of value in two hundred columns of copy sent in, from which it has to be extracted and set up within the short space of eleven hours, the greater portion within half that time. I spent yesterday and last night in the *Sun* office to observe the process.

Outside of the editorial work of condensation, the capacity of the paper is enhanced by several mechanical devices. For instance, the type, while clear, is compact and small, being nearly nonpareil and agate; then the headlines, while nicely graced to suggest the importance of the matter to follow, will be found on no argument, in any case, to occupy very small room. There are other ways in which the types are compressed, but I will proceed now to give an outline sketch of what I saw of the work of the editors and reporters.

Mr. Dana maintains the closest personal supervision of the whole establishment. In the editorial department, which comes per-

fected from his hands, he is assisted by seven writers. When he goes home, Mr. John Swinton is left in charge.

The city editor has immediate command of forty-two reporters, and his territory embraces New York and the surrounding cities, and a half day's journey into the country in any direction. All the reporters and many of the other writers come to the editorial rooms (a small suite for Mr. Dana and a large hall for all the rest) at 11 o'clock in the morning. Mr. Dana learns the plans of the others for the day, and makes his suggestions or gives his orders, writes a leader and a paragraph or two and assigns specified subjects to be discussed by members of his staff. Before he leaves he reads a revised proof of all the chief editorials.

Distant correspondents are at liberty to send at first only a short message by telegraph, stating the character of the news they have and asking instructions, which are promptly returned to them by telegraph, unless the news comes late at night and is of great importance, when the matter is left to their discretion. The selection and control of correspondents is a vital matter in the *Sun* system.

The city editor and his four assistants keep a very complete assignment book, in which are entered memoranda of every point that ought to be worked on each day, entries being frequently made three months in advance. Besides this book, reporters are kept on duty constantly at the police headquarters in New York, Brooklyn, Jersey City, and neighbouring towns, and immediately on the receipt of a piece of news from a police station it is telephoned to the city editor. Using the book of assignments, the papers of the day, and any hints he may have had from other sources, the city editor directs each reporter as to what he must do, exercising his best care in selecting the men with reference to their peculiar talents for the particular style or kind of work he desires.

About 5 o'clock Mr. Dana steps from his rooms to go home, first stopping to consult with Mr. Swinton and to leave with him a schedule of the editorial matter he wishes to have appear. A calculation is now made to determine how much space Mr. Dana has left, and then the managing and city editors make up their schedules. On a comparison of the city editor's generally found that each has been too liberal with himself, and both schedules have to be cut to leave a sufficient margin for the certain and probable news, local and telegraphic, that is to come. When the schedule matter is finally made up, it is given to the compositors, who are now all at work. Once on the printers' hooks the schedules, in their outline of space, not in their contents, are absolute. They represent what the paper will hold, and on the receipt of any unexpected matter, either the articles embodied in the schedules or the later news, or both, must suffer condensation or slaughter. It happens occasionally that, piece by piece, the whole of the schedule list is so altered to make room for more important news, and sometimes a hundred columns of copy very late is reduced to two columns before it reaches the printers. A few weeks ago fifty columns of Washington matter was boiled down to one, and not an important fact was lost.

Before the conference as to the schedules, the city editor has received returns from most of the morning assignments, and has started many of the reporters on new errands. At 6 o'clock the night city editor arrives, who, assisted by the three other city editors, from this time forward directs the reporters and edits their copy, the managing editor keeping him informed as to the necessary condensation.

It matters not how great the rush of matter and the consequent condensation may have been, nor how much of type may have been set aside. The *Sun* forms are locked up at the stroke of a certain hour every morning, and at 3 o'clock the paper may be brought anywhere in New York City. This is one hour ahead of any other New York morning daily, and a second edition is rarely needed to maintain the *Sun's* reputation for printing all the news.

It will be seen, I think, that while the *Sun* is extremely economical of space, and therefore of the time of its busy readers, and though it pays as seldom as possible for red ink and words, it is exceedingly liberal in getting the latest news. Ambitious newspaper men with small capital should not undertake to run a paper on the *Sun's* system, but such a paper is needed in all of our large, busy cities, and the day is not far distant, probably, when the *Sun* will no longer stand unique and alone.

A FLACK for everything—Baby's mouth.

Celebrated Book Stealers.

THE PRIEST WHO COMMITTED MANY MURDERS BECAUSE OF HIS PASSION FOR BOOKS.

(From the London Spectator.)

Many eminent characters have been bibliopoles. When Innocent X. was still Monsignor Pamphilio he stole a book—so says *l'aitleman des Roux*—from Du Monstier, the painter. The amusing thing is that Du Monstier himself was a book thief. He used to tell how he priggled a book, of which he had long been in search, from a stall on the Pont Neuf; "but," says Talkman (whom Janin does not seem to have consulted), "there are many people who don't think it stealing to steal a book, unless you sell it afterward."

But Du Monstier inclined to a less liberal view where his own books were concerned. The Cardinal Barberini came to Paris as Legate, and brought in his suite Monsignor Pamphilio, who afterward became Innocent X. The Cardinal paid a visit to Du Monstier in his studio, where Monsignor Pamphilio spied, on a table, "*L'Histoire au Concile de Trente*"—the good edition, the London one. "What a pity," thought the young ecclesiastic, "that such a man should be, by some accident, the possessor of so valuable a book." With these sentiments Monsignor Pamphilio slipped the work under his soutane. But little Du Monstier observed him, and said furiously to the Cardinal that a holy man should not bring thieves and robbers in his company. With these words, and with others of a violent and libellous character, he recovered the *History of the Council of Trent*, and kicked out the future Pope. Amelot de la Houssaye traces to this incident the hatred borne by Innocent X. to France.

Another Pope while only a Cardinal, stole a book from Monage—so M. Janin reports—but we have not been able to discover Monage's own account of the larceny. The anecdotalist is not so truthful that Cardinal need flush a deeper scarlet, like the roses in Bruns "*Lumens for Adonis*," on account of a scandal resting on the authority of Monage. Among royal persons, Catherine de Medicis, according to Brantome, was a bibliopole. "The Marshal Strozzi had a very fine library, and after his death the Queen-Mother seized it, promising some day to pay the value to his son, who never got a farthing of the money." The Ptolemies, too, were thieves on a large scale. A department of the Alexandrian Library was called "*The Books from the Ships*," and was filled with rare volumes stolen from passengers in vessels that touched that port. True, the owners were given copies of the ancient MSS., but the exchange, as Aristotle says, was an "involuntary" one, and not distinct from robbery.

The great pattern of bibliopoles, a man who carried his passion to the most regrettable excesses, was a Spanish priest, Don Vincente of the Convent of Poble in Arragon. When the Spanish revolution despoiled the convent libraries, Don Vincente established himself at Barcelona, under the pillars of *Los Escuderos*, where are the stalls of the merchants of bric-a-brac and the seats of them that sell books. In a gloomy den the Don stored up treasures that he hated to sell. Once he was present at an auction where he was outbid in the competition for a rare, perhaps a unique, volume. Three nights after that the people of Barcelona were awakened by cries of "*Fuero!*" The house and shop of the man who had bought "*Ordinaciones por los Gloriosos Reyes de Arago*," were blazing. When the fire was extinguished the body of the owner of the house was found with a pipe in his blackened hand and some money beside him. Every one said: "He must have set the house on fire with a spark from his pipe." Time went on, and week by week the police found the bodies of slain men, now in the street, now in a ditch, now in the river. There were young men and old, all had been harmless and inoffensive citizens in their lives, and—all had been bibliopoles. A dagger in an invisible hand had reached their hearts; but the assassin had spared their purses, money, and rings. An organized search was made in the city, and the shop of Don Vincente was examined. There, in a recess, the police discovered the copy of "*Ordinaciones por los Gloriosos Reyes de Arago*," which ought by rights to have been burned with the house of its purchaser. Don Vincente was asked how he got the book. He replied in a quiet voice, demanding that his collection should be made over to the Barcelona Library, and then confessed

people who had bought from him books which he really could not bear to part with. At his trial his counsel tried to prove that his confession was false, and that he might have got his books by honest means. It was objected that there was in the world only one book printed by Lambert Palmart in 1482, and that the prisoner must have stolen this, the only copy from the library where it was treasured. The defendant's counsel proved that there was another copy, in the Louvre; that, therefore, there might be more, and that the defendant's might have been honestly procured. Here Don Vincente, previously callous, uttered an hysterical cry. Said the Alcalde: "At last, Vincente, you begin to understand the enormity of your offence?" "Ah, Signor Alcalde, my error was clumsy, indeed. If you only knew how miserable I am!" "If human justice prove inflexible, there is another justice whose pity is inexhaustible. Repentance is never too late." "Ah, Signor Alcalde, my copy was not unique!" With the story of this impenitent thief, we may close the roll of bibliopoles.

Marrying a Tenor.

The following is an extract from a letter from the wife of a tenor to her friend!

Yes, Jenny, we have 30,000 dollars a year; the praises of my husband are sounded every day in the newspapers; he is applauded every night; he sings and is a very king in his art. But you don't know what it is to be the wife of a tenor. Those who flatter my husband, and they are numerous, are incessantly telling himself: "Michael, you have a mine of diamonds in your throat." That may be true; I don't say it is not, but if you could understand what consequences it entails—a mine of diamonds in a man's throat! Michael is always as cross as a bear because of the state of the temperature. A barometer is less variable. He is continually opening and shutting the windows; when they are open he wants them shut; when they are shut he says he stifles. You have no idea of the trouble we have at hotels to prevent his taking cold. Even the style of carpet becomes a study. And the cartloads of furs we carry about with us! And the difficulty we have with the fires! There is also a long chapter as to what he may and may not eat; this is too strong and that is too weak. And the night he sings there is a syrup which he must drink five times during an act and a wash of brandy and camphor with which to rub his throat. From morning till night a tenor thinks of nothing but himself; he listens to himself sing; he studies poses before a looking-glass; he calls after the servants, "Jean, muffle the door-bell, its noise affects my nerves. Brigitte, don't pass before me again; you make a draught." He interrogates his throat every ten minutes, "la, la, lo." Never a sensible word, always "la, la, la; at table he does not talk for fear of desroying his "la, la, la." If I ask him to take me out on a fine day, he runs to the piano-forte and exercises his "la, la, la!"

It was only natural that the States should subside into quietness when their great struggle was over. They have accordingly subsided for the time being into speculations, betting over boat races and making themselves comfortable for the winter. The people over there are at present being busy and very prosperous, and when that is the case, they have neither time nor inclination for much else, but to look after the coppers and enjoy themselves.

The Queen of Wurtemberg's life is regulated with conventional exactness. She is the Colonel of a Russian regiment, and frequently appears at review in her uniform. Her Majesty inherits her father the late Czar's mania for drill and pipeclay. The fat, beer-drinking, pipe-smoking King Cole to whom she is mated used to dispute with her about it, but at length gave in and allowed her to have her head. All he now asks is to be left undisturbed in dens in his palaces, in which he can enjoy a little untidiness.

The Intercolonial Literary and Anthropological societies, which number among their members such men as Henri Martin, Capellon, Delgado, and Mr. John Evans, of the British Museum, opened their congresses at Lisbon last month; the King, Dom Luiz, and the ex-King, Dom Fernando, with the Ministry and all the notables of Portugal, were present. The savants were the guests of the city and of the ex-King, and the King and Queen gave a ball in their honour.