

## An Early Chapter in the History of Steel Pens.

The subject of the identity of the inventor of steel pens has lately been broached in one of the Birmingham papers, in connection with which attention has been drawn to the statement, made some years ago, that the first steel pens were made by Daniel Fellows, of Sedgley, an old sportsman, intimate in his younger days with the then Lord Dudley, of Hinley. D. Fellows also made gold pens and claimed to be the inventor of them, but this was disputed by a Dr. Wise, of London, between whom and Fellows a paper war was carried on respecting it some seventy or eighty years ago. The writer of the above statement was asked to give further details, names, dates, etc., and he then stated that the "paper war" was by rival hand-bills; that he had been at Fellows' house in 1806, and seen "Thomas Sheldon, his apprentice, making steel pens;" that Fellows began to make steel pens about 1793, that he himself paid Sheldon £100 in 1822 for pens, and more than that amount in 1823, but that soon after the machine-made pens of Mitchell & Gillott took the place of the barrel-made pens. Another contributor ("T. S.") wrote that in 1815 Sheldon's pens were sold at 18s. per dozen, less 10 per cent. for cash, that they were the barrel-shape, and that with bone handle and cover to protect the pen, for pocket, the price of B. Smith & Co.'s steel book was 36s. per dozen, discount 25 per cent. quarterly, or 5 per cent. for prompt cash. The writer added that he had in his possession a metallic pen, of Dutch make, the date of which was provable as sold in the year 1717.—*Printing Times and Lithographer.*

## Uniform Gauge of Track.

In the early times of railway construction the width, says the Cincinnati *Price Current*, was a matter of small concern, so that the carrying capacity was deemed an economical one; but with the vast growth of the railway system it soon became apparent that a uniform gauge of connecting lines, was essential to rapid and economical transit. The roads north of the Ohio and Potomac rivers settled down upon a gauge of four feet eight and one-half inches, which is now called the standard gauge, while the south-roads were all, or nearly all, of the uniform width of five feet. It is now becoming a matter of importance that all the railroads of the country, North and South, should be able to transfer their cars from one track to another without the unnecessary expense and delay of changing trucks or breaking bulk, and we are glad to see a disposition manifested by the managers of most of the southern roads to meet the requirements of through traffic by adopting the standard gauge. The Cincinnati, New Orleans & Texas Pacific, lessee of the Cincinnati Southern, has applied to the trustees of that road for permission to make it of standard gauge. The step has been taken because of the belief that the business of the company would be much larger if the gauge was the same as that of all the lines north of the Ohio river. Strange as it may seem, this request is not received in some quarters with favor, the fact only showing that all of the fogies are not yet dead.

## Early Type-Founding.

In 1636 Joseph Moxon, the earliest writer on the technique of printing, type-founding, etc., published his "Mechanical Exercises," a work often quoted in the typographical literature of to-day. He was the first of English letter-cutters to reduce to rule the art which before him had been practised only by guess, and left to succeeding artists examples that they might follow. By nice and accurate divisions he adjusted the size, situation and form of the several parts and members of letters, and the proportion which every part bore to the whole. The bodies most in use when Moxon wrote, and which were the only ones noticed by him, were Pearl, Nonpareil, Brevier, Long Primer, Pica, English, Great Primer, Double Pica, Two-line English and French Canon. Moxon further says: "We have one body more, which is some times used in England, that is, a Small Pica; but I account it no discretion in a master printer to provide it, because it differs so little from Pica, that unless the workmen be more careful than they sometimes are, it it may be mingled with Pica, and so the beauty of both may be destroyed." Moxon followed the occupation of a mathematical instrument maker, and was hydropographer to the king.

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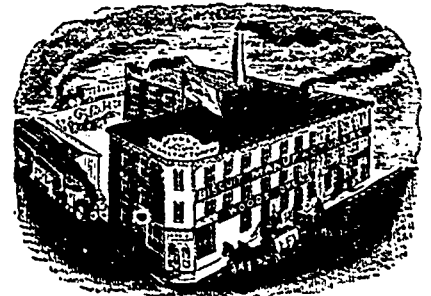
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