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MEASUREMENT OF TYPE

AS stated in the January PRINTER AND PUBLISHER a conference of representatives of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, the United Typothetae, the International Typographical Union and the Type Founders, adopted a system, which set forth that the lower case alphabet of all faces of body type shall not measure less than fifteen lower case ems of its own face; and further, that the thirteen letters most frequently used—c, d, e, i, s, m, n, h, o, u, t, a z,—shall equal the length of the remaining thirteen letters. This proposal is being widely criticised, and as a rule fault is found with it. To thoroughly understand the scheme is evidently the desire of all, and to arrive at some conclusion, fair alike to printer and compositor, and not in the interests of any type founder, should certainly be the one great aim.

Mr. W. B. Mackellar, in the last number of the *Inland Printer*, finds fault with the scheme mentioned, holding that the thickness of the thirteen letters in the large boxes of the lower case need not equal the thickness of the thirteen in the smaller boxes, it not following that a letter occupying a large box is used more frequently than one in a small box. Mr. Mackellar instances the letter *m*, which occupies a large box, and yet the *l* is used more frequently by forty per cent. It will be noticed that the *m* is one of the thirteen letters used to strike a standard, while the *l* is placed in the less used list. Evidently there is something wrong in the finding of the joint representatives, as Mr. Mackellar doubtless knows whereof he speaks. Mr. Mackellar now proposes something entirely new, a movable unit, suited to all faces and all bodies of type. His suggestion is to find the

number of points in an alphabet of the type to be used, and divide that amount by 26, the number of letters in the alphabet, the result being the establishment of a unit of measurement for that type. To ascertain the number of units in one line of matter, divide the number of points in the measure of the column by the unit already found, multiply this number by the lines of the take and the entire number of units is readily ascertained. It is claimed that this system will leave the selection of faces to the printer or publisher without fixing on him any arbitrary exactions and in no wise interferes with the present system of faces turned out by each type founder.

In the *Typographical Journal*, the organ of the International Typographical Union, several schemes have been advocated, but the fairest one all around is modelled on the French system, wherein the alphabet of the type used are set up as many times as may be required to fill the measure, and then the letters are counted. The improvement suggested on this is that the alphabet be set up continuously until 1,000 pieces have been set, and the measure made from that. As suggestions are still in order we await further developments.

THE TYPE COMBINE

THE American Type Founders' Company having its "reduced type list" all the printing trade journals in the United States are now fiercely assailing the combine. The *New York Journalist* dissects part of the list and shows conclusively that the "reduced list" is a huge joke. No. 2141 was formerly sold in fonts of 1000 lbs. and over, at 61c. per pound, with a discount of at least 25 and 5 per cent. Under former conditions a font of 1000 lbs. would cost \$434.63, whereas under the alleged reduction it will cost \$494, or an advance of \$59.37. In brevity the proportion is about the same. Where sorts or italics are needed there is an advance on the old scale of four cents per pound, while the patented faces, for which the highest prices were always charged, and which should have been reduced when the patentees formed a trust, are not lowered in price. Formerly, display fonts were sold without spaces or quads; now the price per pound of type is slightly reduced, but quads and spaces are sold with each font, and charged for as if they were type. The printer or publisher will find this item alone a costly reduction in the purchasing power of his dollars. The boasted five per cent. discount is another joke, as the terms of sale read:—"Five per cent. discount for cash on monthly accounts, payable on or before the 10th of each month, at which date all accounts are due." The Type Trust is evidently a good arrangement for the men composing it, but there is no money in it for the printer or publisher.