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## *Press Time Stories.*

**D**URING the day and far into the night a newspaper office is a public place, like a railway station or a market. Men come in on business, and on no business. They come bringing news and looking for news. They chat with the editor and waste his time. They try to wheedle free advertisements out of the management. They attempt to sell poetry and stories and jokes. They leave long stalks of corn and big pumpkins to be placed on exhibition in the window. They make suggestions and requests and ask questions. And what questions they do ask! "What sized shell does the Dreadnought's smallest gun fire?" "What hotel in the city sells drinks after hours?" "What was Longboat's time in the World Marathon of 1906?" "Can you give me the exact date of the Glory Whalen murder?" But the numbers who visit the offices with their requests and questions are small when compared with those who telephone their queries, and who ask all sorts of outlandish questions "to decide a bet" or "because my grandfather has been a subscriber for I really don't know how many years." A newspaper lives, in a measure, by preying upon the public, and this is the penalty it must pay.

But there comes an hour in every day when no seeker of cheap publicity ventures in, when bettors and questioners are at rest and the jangling telephone is still. The bells in the clock towers have boomed three. Darkness still enfolds the city, and outside the office only the noises of the night are heard; the grinding of the late car on the rails; the tramp of the policeman through the empty street; the whirr of some late reveller's auto slipping past, or the rattle of a milk cart on the pavement stones. It is press-time. The last item is in type. The last form is locked and cooking over the stereotyper's fire. Two minutes, and the saw will be eating the jagged edges off the page. Down the chute goes the plate to the press-room. Bang! It is in its place and the great rollers are turning. Faster and faster! You can feel the whole building vibrate.

It is at this time that the newspaper men, the high pressure under which they have been working having relaxed, show to best advantage. What stories are told in these early morning hours as the men gather to wait for the cars that will bear them home; what reminiscences are recalled; what witticisms evolved; what shrewd criticisms of men and things given forth. They sit about on desks and chairs in the dimly-lighted, much be-littered sanctum and tell of past adventures and men they have known—few but have interviewed some great ones in their day. Sometimes the foreman from the newspaper room happens down and tells of things as they were in the time of "the old chief." Or a grizzled compositor,