

HOW SKILLED WORK REMUNERATES WOMEN.

TYPE-WRITING AND PHONOGRAPHY.

(From *Harper's Bazar*.)

The nature of the work required in type-writing and phonography and the wide and rapidly increasing demand for it invest the subject with a special attraction for women who desire to earn a living. An artist, unless she possesses the very rare gift of genius, usually encounters difficulty in selling her wares, and even the true daughters of the Muses often pine for lack of recognition. But a type-writer operator or a phonographer, or, best of all, a woman who is both, may reasonably expect to find steady, comfortable, and remunerative employment.

The business known as type-writing is only about eight years old, having been first brought into general notice at the time of the Centennial Exhibition. A small instrument fixed to a stand about the size of a sewing machine table is operated like a pianoforte by playing upon three or four banks of keys with the fingers. Whenever a key is struck, a letter of the alphabet is printed on a sheet of paper, and these letters can be printed as fast as the keys can be struck. Obviously this is very much faster than they could be written by the most practised penman. Experience shows that a skilful copyist transcribes about twenty words a minute, and that a skilful operator on a type-writer prints about sixty words a minute, or three times as many as a skilful penman. A young woman sitting in front of the instrument disposes herself as easily as when in front of her pianoforte. She plays on the notes, but neither uses her feet nor bends her back. The type-writing machine occupies less room than the sewing machine, and to operate it is very much less trying to nerves, spine, and soul. "I have noticed with surprise," said a well-known business man recently, "that our girls, after seven or eight hours of work, perform their last half-hour's duty without apparent fatigue." The cost of the two instruments is about the same, the cost of a first class type-writer being from eighty to one hundred dollars, but in two months you can earn enough to pay for your type-writer by working on it only six or eight hours a day.

There are other things to be said in favor of the type-writer. It operates as legibly as a printing-press—more legibly than some printing-presses; its letters are two or three times as large as those of an ordinary newspaper; its sentences are punctuated with the care bestowed by a good copyist, and the general effect of a page of them is a refreshment to the eye. If "carbon" or "manifold" paper is used, three pages are written simultaneously; at the end of your allotted task you have three copies instead of one. For whenever you strike a note of the instrument, the unpress of the particular letter of the alphabet represented by that note strikes through the lowest of

three superimposed sheets of paper, and appears successively on the other two. On each of three sheets, placed one upon another, the imprint of the letter is seen, and it takes no longer to print triplicates than to print a single sheet. If, therefore, the operator on a type-writing machine can copy a page of MS. at the rate of sixty words a minute, or three times as fast as a skilled penman can do it, she can make three copies of that page simultaneously, or, in other words, can accomplish the work of nine skilled penmen. Put your nine skilled penmen in one room, and your skilled operator on the type-writer in another; at the end of the day the latter has produced as much copy as her nine competitors; and while anybody who can read at all can easily read her copy, perhaps it will require an expert in penmanship to decide what many of the words in her nine rivals' copy really are.

But this is not all. The penman copyist is much more liable to make mistakes than the copyist who uses a type-writer. Experience demonstrates that not one man in a hundred does accurately copy ten pages of MS. with a pen and ink. When compared with the original his work will be found to contain errors, and his employer would not use a pen-and-ink copy of an important document without having read it over carefully. The operator on the type-writer, however, is substantially trustworthy, and the lines of his sheets being of the same length, and each sheet containing the same number of lines as any other sheet, the reader can run his eye down one side of the sheet, and easily detect any variation from a sheet already examined and found correct. It is not usually necessary for him to read every word. "I have known one of our women operators to copy twenty pages without a single error," says the speaker just mentioned.

In all business offices, therefore, where much copying is required, the type-writer is a valuable assistant. Lawyers are already using it extensively. Authors, too, are finding it an important ally. One of the professors of Princeton College keeps a type-writer in his library, and when engaged in the business of original composition may be seen sitting in front of the instrument, and handling its keys with the agility of a practised pianist. It is said that Colonel T. W. Knox, whose contributions to *Harper's Young People* and whose books for young readers are a delight in so many thousands of American and foreign households, composes without putting a pen to paper. He takes his place at the type-writer, and the compositors who subsequently set up his legible copy bless his name. Mr. George Bancroft dictates his private correspondence to a phonographer, who then mails himself of a type-writer. Hundreds of business men pursue daily a similar course, and their number is destined to increase many fold. One of the editors of one of the leading newspapers in