

PUBLIC MEN and their BUSINESS AIDS

BY WALDON FAWCETT
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THE public men of the nation are little, if any, behind the proverbially resourceful American business man in the extent to which they are now saving time and labor by means of mechanical aids and office appliances. This tendency to economize in minutes and muscle is manifest to a surprising and constantly increasing extent among men engaged in political, professional and even artistic pursuits—vocations that are not commonly supposed to quicken the quest for maximum efficiency with minimum waste as does the fierce competition of modern industrial, commercial and mercantile life. Under the new order of things, however, the visitor to the office or study of the progressive statesman, lawyer, preacher, musician, artist, lecturer, physician, librarian or educator may



ELECTRIC ENVELOPE SEALING MACHINE

expect to find the brain worker surrounded by an array of filing systems, desk devices and other paraphernalia of rapid-fire office administration that would do credit to the most up-to-date capitalist, merchant or manufacturer.

Whereas state and municipal headquarters in all sections of the country afford interesting object lessons as to the extent to which mechanical time-savers and labor-savers have invaded the conservative sphere of public affairs the most convincing proof of the revolutionary influence at work is to be found at the national seat of government. All branches of the federal government—the executive, legislative and judiciary—have improved and systematized the handling of detail under the spur of twentieth-century practice and twentieth-century utilities. This is more notable in view of the oft-repeated charge by critics of the government that Uncle Sam, enmeshed in red tape, countenanced an extravagance, not to say wastefulness of time, labor and material in the discharge of his business that would not be tolerated in any private business.

Naturally some sections of the governmental machine are much more advanced than others in their adoption of business aids and office appliances. For instance, there is the forest service, which under the direction of that human dynamo, Gifford Pinchot, is the peer of any private business establishment in the country in point of record keeping, administration and celerity in the dispatch of business. Some institutions under the government are yet a long way behind this prize example in the matter of office equipment, but the point is that practically all of them have made a beginning in the right direction. With business men and corporation lawyers being drafted, as a matter of course for cabinet posts and the most important responsible positions under the government, there is every reason to expect that mechanical assistants will continue to make their appearance in increasing numbers as aids in the discharge of the ever-increasing volume of government business.

The presidential business establishment, for all that a certain dignity must be maintained in all procedure, is thoroughly up to date both in methods and equipment. The rule (and it is by no means a dead letter) that every communication shall be answered on the same day on which it is received might be adopted with advantage by many private business establishments that do business with far more fuss and fustler than the White House. A word should be said in favor of the White House system of securing the mail at frequent intervals during the day by special messenger and having all incoming letters opened by one man, who sorts the communications and so distributes them among the office force as to insure speedy response. The White House uses approved card index systems for a considerable portion of its record keeping and for its very important "mailing lists," including those of a social nature, carrying thousands of names and addresses which are used in sending out invitations for the card receptions and other functions at the presidential mansion. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that the card index and its next of kin, the vertical file installation are now in practically universal use in the government offices at Washington and no factors have helped more to simplify the whole routine of



UP-TO-DATE DUPLICATING APPARATUS - GOVERNMENT OFFICE

ments are sent to more than 50,000 addresses in all parts of the United States. In one government office where envelopes are addressed by means of chain apparatus, employing links in which the necessary type is held, a young man devotes his entire time to setting up new addresses in the movable rubber type as names are added to the mailing list, and in making corrections of street addresses, etc. In the addresses already in type. Not only are envelopes mechanically addressed to Uncle Sam's regular correspondents, but said envelopes, after their destined contents are in place, are sealed by electrically operated envelope sealing machines, each of which does the work of a dozen men. Our public men, if they used postage stamps on their official correspondence, would undoubtedly follow the example of private business houses in utilizing mechanical contrivances for moistening and affixing postage stamps, but this is unnecessary because governmental mail is transmitted under frank or in penalty envelopes, which are impressed at the time of manufacture with that "dead head" inscription in the upper right-hand corner which answers in lieu of postage stamps.

It is significant that the demands of the government service for mechanical aids for economical business administration has bestirred many inventive minds among the federal employes. In some instances government officials have found it most satisfactory to have the manufacturers of book typewriters, adding machines and other standard office helpers simply vary or modify their stock models in order to meet the specific requirements of the government service, but in other cases men on Uncle Sam's payroll have invented apparatus that was adopted in preference to anything evolved by outside experts. A notable case in point is the new style card-punching machine invented by James Powers, mechanical expert in the service of the department of commerce and labor—a type of semi-automatic apparatus that will be employed for compiling the greatest card index in the history of the world, namely the federal census of 1910, which will require more than 90,000 individual cards. Other examples of the products of inventive genius when bestirred in behalf of the government are found in the unique numbering machines at the United States bureau of engraving and printing—a sort of gigantic outgrowth of the familiar hand dating machine found on almost every office desk. The machines designed and constructed for the treasury department not only print in red ink but set their own type and number consecutively from 1 to 1,000,000.

The flat-top desk, with its numerous conveniences, not to mention sanitary advantages, is rapidly gaining vogue in officialdom as in the business world. As specimens of costly furniture the desks of most of our public men will not bear comparison with the massive mahogany pieces to be found in some banks and in the offices of some wealthy corporations, but your progressive public man has his desk equipped with all those attachments which grease the grooves for high tension work. There is a swinging stand to shift the typewriter out of the way when the machine is not in use; a balanced arm, adjustable in all directions, that lifts the telephone aside when it is not needed; special desk lamps that focus their rays on the work while sheltering the eyes of the worker from the glare, and rubber stamps with clockwork attachment, which print not only the date but the hour at which each letter or report has been received or been given attention. The improved pencil sharpeners and the cutting devices which open a whole package of letters at one sweep by clipping the ends of the envelopes deserve mention in the same category of time savers. So, likewise, do the various forms of printing telegraphs which record orders or bulletins simultaneously at various points.

The newest wrinkle in the conduct of Uncle Sam's business establishment—namely, the scheme for purchasing the supplies for all the government departments at Washington through one general purchasing agency—is expected to bring to the attention of our public officials many new office appliances and numerous improvements on old devices designed to adapt them to governmental requirements. With Uncle Sam's purchases thus lumped, the contracts to be awarded will be enough to stir inventors and manufacturers to the greatest energy in producing novelties that federal officials will include in their office installations. The central purchasing agency will also insure quality in all supplies by means of thorough tests. It is safe to say that under this new regime there will be no repetitions of the experience of the official who recently ruined more than \$50 worth of rubber stamps through the use of a new "quick-drying" which he had not had an opportunity to try out ere it was introduced in his offices.

New York's Literary Girls.

The young man who said he'd never eaten any, to somebody who asked him if he liked Trollope, was outdone the other day in a Fifth avenue book store. A girl of 17 came in and asked the clerk for "Prometheus," "by a man named Kelly or Sheets, or something like that."

"Oh," said the clerk, "Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound'?"

"Yes," replied the girl, "that's it. But, if you please, I'd rather have it bound. It's so easy to lose the pages, you know, if it isn't."

phone to be transmitted later to the president. This scheme has been found very convenient when other duties prevented the president from listening to the long distance conversation as it came over the wire.

The nation's officials are fully abreast of the times in the extent to which they make use of

governments

business.

Speaking of the use of the talking machine in governmental practice, it may be added that in all branches of the federal establishment the business phonograph is finding extensive employment. Many officials now talk into phonographs all their replies to correspondence and even reports and public addresses prepared in advance, thus effecting a clear saving of all that portion of the stenographer's time that would, under the old plan, be devoted to the taking of dictation. One of the most interesting exemplifications of the advantages to be derived from the use of this invention is found in the employment of the phonograph in the reporting of the debates of the senate and house of representatives. The expert stenographers who in the roles of official reporters make the shorthand record of proceedings on the floor of each legislative chamber save much time by simply reading their notes to phonographs and then going back to their duties on the floor, leaving the record to be transcribed by typewriter operators.

The fountain pen, one of the most familiar of time-savers, is held in high esteem by every member of the president's cabinet and will probably continue to be so long as custom decrees that the head of each government department must sign in autograph every letter dispatched from his office—a volume of correspondence that reaches hundreds, mayhap as much as a thousand letters a day. Signatures in typewriting or by autograph rubber stamp, such as are so common in the business world, are strictly tabooed in the higher official circles. The president escapes this ordeal because of the fact that the great preponderance of the mail sent out from the White House bears the signature, "Fred W. Carpenter, Secretary to the President." This plan of signing correspondence by proxy has also been employed by other high officials, notably army and navy officers of high rank, who are served in this capacity by aids, flag lieutenants, etc.

A phase of governmental work which has called into requisition a great number of modern business aids, representing a wide diversity of types, is the issuance of the daily and weekly and monthly bulletins, announcements, reports, statements, etc., which constantly emanate from all government departments and the purpose of which is to make notification of changes in various branches of the public service, the condition of treasury funds, etc., etc. It has lately been proposed that Uncle Sam shall follow the example of various foreign governments by issuing a gazette or official daily newspaper, in which shall be published all of these governmental announcements of whatsoever character, but up to date there has been no other method than to allow each public official to make his announcements in his own way.

Some of the daily statements of what Uncle Sam is doing in various lines of activity are now printed from metal type on ordinary printing presses, just as circulars or pamphlets are printed, but for the most part these daily broadsides are prepared in the office where the information originates, by means of some one of those numerous new inventions for duplicating or reproducing typewritten sheets. Some of these impromptu printing outfits in the government offices are operated by hand, but for the most part they use electrical energy and this is often well-nigh essential, since in many instances an "edition" of thousands of copies has to be printed within a few hours. In most instances young men set the type or prepare the wax stencils that are necessary for this duplicating operation, and since statistics figure in almost every one of these governmental announcements extreme care is necessary to insure accuracy.

A close second to Uncle Sam's printing and duplicating equipment, both in number and variety, is the array of governmental apparatus for handling the mailing lists to be used in sending out these various bulletins. That the machines for mechanically addressing envelopes and wrappers must be qualified for rapid work may be appreciated from the fact that some of these government announce-

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Recent advices from Canada, our next door neighbour, the neighbourly country across the boundary line, are that upwards of ninety thousand settlers from the United States went into Western Canada during the past year, most of them for the purpose of taking up and settling upon the vacant lands, 160 acres of which are given free by the government, and lands adjoining held by railway and land companies are selling at from nine to fifteen and twenty dollars per acre. Even if thirty and forty dollars per acre were paid, the price would be low, as the lands produce wonderfully, and at these higher figures there is a large interest on the money and labor invested. The ninety thousand settlers of last year, followed about sixty thousand of the previous year, and for several years the number has been running into these large figures. There must be a reason for it. It may be found in the single phrase, "they are satisfied." Nothing attracts people more than the success of others, and the news of this reaching other thousands, causes them to investigate. The investigation in this case is always satisfactory. The splendid land of Iowa, of Indiana, of Nebraska, Kansas, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and other States has risen to a high value, and it is worth every dollar asked for it. But there is not room now for all on these lands. With the ever increasing demand for grain, there comes the ever increasing demand for land. Canada is the only country on the continent in a position to supply it. Land there that costs, say fifteen dollars an acre, produces on a reasonable calculation, 25 bushels of wheat to the acre, or about \$20.00. The most liberal calculation as to cost makes the cost to produce \$7.50 per acre, leaving a balance of \$12.50 per acre. The \$7.50 carries good wages for the farmer, and all other conceivable contingencies. With conditions like this, covering the entire area of about 500,000 square miles, it is readily understood why 90,000 Americans should follow the sixty thousand of the previous year. Canadian Government Agencies at different points in the Union are always ready to give information regarding the free homestead lands, ready to advise the settler as to the districts which would suit him best.

ALL SERENE.

"De minister, he says dat at der last day every man will be judged by his works!"

"Well, dat needn't worry us any. We never worked!"

The Worst of it.

"Oh, she's awful. Whenever she tries to sing a song she simply murders it."

"But that's not the worst of it. If she'd only murder it outright I wouldn't mind, but she tortures it so long."

In Demand.

"That's a very popular man."

"Yes; he'll listen to the details of your summer trip without insisting on telling you about his own."

Rheumatism Cured in a Day.

Dr. Detchon's Relief for Rheumatism radically cures in 1 to 3 days. Its action is remarkable. It removes the cause and the disease quickly disappears. First dose greatly benefits. 75c Druggists.

Nothing that was worthy in the past departs—no truth or goodness realized by man ever dies, or can die.—Carlyle.

90,000 AMERICAN SETTLERS GO TO CANADA

THE YEAR 1909 HAS SHOWN AN INCREASE OF OVER EIGHTY PER CENT IN AMERICAN SETTLEMENT.

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