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GIGANTIC BUILDING IS NEARING COMPLETION.

Will Have a Floor Space of Over Fourteen Acres and Nearly 4,000 Persons Will Find Employment—127 Presses Will Be Running.

The new government printing office is approaching completion and will be a gigantic affair, writes Rene Bache, the well-known Washington correspondent. It will cost \$2,000,000, and will provide a total floor space of over fourteen acres—more than two and a half times the floor area available in the present establishment. As yet the building is entirely covered with scaffolding, but it is substantially finished, except for the interior woodwork and painting. It will be the greatest printing shop in the world, employing the services of nearly 4,000 people. Accurately speaking, 3,880 persons will toil under its mighty roof, nearly 1,000 of them being women and girls. Each year it will expend the enormous sum of \$4,000,000, nearly three-fourths of it for labor, and in its main composing-room 824 printers will be engaged in sticking type. Eight hundred and eighty-five employees will be occupied in binding the books and documents produced, and an additional 965 will do nothing but fold the printed sheets. Figures like these give a notion of the gigantic scale on which the shop will be conducted. Each twelvemonth it will consume for bindings the skins of 36,000 sheep and 11,000 goats, in addition to 75,000 square feet of "Russia leather," made from cowhide. It will use up in a like period 8,000 tons of white paper, 40,000 pounds of printing ink and 37,000 pounds of glue, together with 7,000 pounds of thread for sewing books and pamphlets, and 4,000 pounds of gold leaf for the titles of volumes de luxe.

One hundred and twenty-seven presses will be constantly in operation in the great building, their total output in a working day of eight hours being just about 1,000,000 impressions. These presses are of every conceivable kind, one of them being capable of printing cards on both sides from a web of bristol-board at the rate of 65,000 cards per hour, while four other machines turn out 40,000 printed envelopes every sixty minutes. The quantity of type actually employed will be approximately 1,500,000 pounds, or 750 tons.

No other government spends anything like the amount of money on public printing that is squandered by Uncle Sam. In this particular Congress is always disposed to a reckless extravagance, and hence the huge size of the plant required. Public documents are an important requisite of Senators and Representatives, who scatter them broadcast among their constituents. One hundred tons of a single report now in press will be issued and distributed in this manner, and the total number of volumes of various kinds of literature turned out by the office in a twelvemonth is about 1,000,000, representing a total cost of somewhat more than \$1,000,000.

Nowadays government books, like other kinds of publications, require illustrations, and the cost of these ran up to about \$300,000 last year. It is safe to say that ten years from now Uncle Sam's printing shop will spend pretty nearly half a million dollars for pictures. The most costly illustrations are for the reports for the Department of Agriculture and the bulletins of the Bureau of Ethnology, many of these being in colors. Each bureau furnishes its own pictures, but the printing office has them reproduced by firms in Boston, New York and elsewhere. These firms print the illustrations and return them to Washington, ready to be bound with the text.

The most important job the big shop has to execute is the printing of the Congressional Record. This daily newspaper, which records nothing but the doings of the National legislature, is written from beginning to end by the official reporters of the House and Senate, who take down in shorthand every word that is said at either end of the Capitol. They dictate from their notes to typewriters, and the material thus reduced to typescript is sent over to the printing offices in batches by messengers. The Record is ready for distribution early next morning. One hundred compositors are employed exclusively in the business of setting type for it, one department of the printing office being devoted exclusively to this publication, which is "set up" and sent to press just like any newspaper, being delivered every day to about 9,000 subscribers. Each representative in Congress gets 22 copies daily, while a Senator is entitled to 42. Anybody may subscribe, the price being \$1.50 a month; but the paper is not directly profitable to Uncle Sam, inasmuch as it costs \$125,000 a year.

The printing of bills is another important feature of the work of the establishment. Though only a few hundred of the measures submitted to Congress in a year become laws, millions of copies of them have to be printed. A bill must go through a great many phases before it can become a law, and during the process of its evolution it has to be printed again and again—perhaps dozens of times. If finally passed, a single copy of it is printed on the finest parchment, and this goes to President Roosevelt for his signature.

MAN WITH A BIG VOICE.
Member of the "Spellbinders' Trust" Tells a Story on Himself.
Grouped in the lobby one warm day, taking in the light southerly breeze, were half a dozen of the House leaders.

CURIOUS SALT DEPOSITS.



One of the unique sights of California is the remarkable salt deposits at Salton. This region lies in a depression some 300 feet below sea level, and is thought at one time to have been the bed of an ancient sea or lake. The tract of land looks like a vast snow field. The rock salt deposits cover about 1,000 acres, and are now worked for commercial purposes. The output from this place is about 2,000 tons of salt annually, valued at from \$9 to \$34 per ton. The labor is done chiefly by Indians, who are able to withstand the intense heat of the desert (running up to 150 degrees in June) better than the white men. The method employed is as follows: The salt is first collected by a peculiar plough having four wheels, in the center of which sits an Indian to guide it. This is run by a cable from a distant dummy engine. This machine cuts a broad and shallow furrow eight feet wide and three feet long, throwing up the ridges on both sides. Indians follow in the wake of the plough with hoes and pile up the salt in pyramids.

Then and there the "Spellbinders' Trust" was formed. The coming campaign and the probable amount of speaking that would be required were discussed at length, and then the members of the trust drifted into anecdotes of the stump.

Charles Littlefield, of Maine, led off. "I'm going to tell one on myself," said he, and soon he had a large and increasing audience, including pages and doorkeepers. Mr. Littlefield's voice, it must be remembered, is famous from Seattle to Eastport, and his constituents in Maine insist that they can hear the rumbling when he speaks in the House.

"It was up in Buffalo in the '96 campaign," he continued. "A local lawyer and I had been assigned to a big meeting over on the tough side of the city. The local man, who was evidently making his first campaign appearance, was introduced first, and proceeded to draw from his inside pocket a manuscript, from which he started to read.

"It was a pretty hard crowd, taken all together, but at the same time they were a bright lot and up-to-date. My friend read on for some twenty minutes under great difficulty, and then the crowd began to cheer and shout in derision. Nothing like this, however, could stop him. All kinds of questions were fired at him, but he paid no attention and continued to read off long lists of statistics. At last the chairman of the meeting signaled the leader of the band to start up. The band played 'Home, Sweet Home,' as a gentle hint, but the speaker only waited until it finished and then continued. At the end of an hour of the worst rot I ever heard, my ambitious friend closed in what he thought was a blaze of glory.

"Three cheers for the speaker—for finishing!" some one yelled. "The cheers were given, and then I was introduced. It was a tough proposition, but I jollied along with the crowd for some fifteen minutes, and then launched into what I thought was my best line of talk. I finished all right, and the chairman said I had made a hit.

"In driving to the hotel after the meeting the local speaker said to me: 'Mr. Littlefield, if I only had your voice, with what I have to say, I would be a wonder.'"

Just then a roll call was announced and the trust adjourned.—Washington correspondence New York Herald.

HAS SOUVENIR OF KING.

It Is Only a Crust of Bread, but Chicago Woman Prizes It Highly.

A unique souvenir of the banquet given at the Richmond House in Chicago in 1890 to the Prince of Wales, now King Edward VII., is possessed by Mrs. Charles Hunt, of this city. Mrs. Hunt is the mother of Mrs. Moses J. Wentworth, wife of the nephew of "Long John" Wentworth, Mayor of the city at the time of the Prince's visit.

Mr. Hunt was City Treasurer then, and he and his wife were living at the Richmond House. In deference to the hotel's distinguished guest they gave up their suite of rooms for his use. After the guests had left the dining room at the close of the banquet Mr. Hunt went in with a number of others out of curiosity.

Seeing others seeking souvenirs, and thinking that, as he and his wife had given up their rooms to the Prince they were especially entitled to a souvenir, Mr. Hunt took a small piece of toast from the Prince's plate. He placed it in a little box and presented it to his wife "as a present from the Prince." She has carefully kept the crust, and it is in an excellent state of preservation, a little harder to bite, however, than it was 42 years ago.

In connection with the Prince's toast Mrs. Moses J. Wentworth tells an anecdote. It seems the Prince was not feeling well on the night of the banquet. He had so little appetite that a piece of toast was about all he cared to eat. Having satisfied his slender appetite, and been at the table as long as he wished, he announced, as is usual with royalty on such occasions, "I have finished." This was the signal for all persons at the table to quit eating, rise and then follow the Prince from the table.

Now it happened that "Long John" Wentworth, the Mayor, was a good deal hungrier on this occasion than the Prince was. He had started in to eat something of a "meal," when the

Prince's announcement, "I have finished," interrupted him.

"Well, I have not finished," he exclaimed, in a tone of good-natured but injured protest. However, he arose with the rest and left the table. But he afterward told one of his friends that he took advantage of the first opportunity to "skip off by himself" and get something more to eat.—Chicago Tribune.

English Landlord's Ways.

The secretary of the Tenants' Protective League sends us details of a particularly unjust and hard-hearted disrepair on the part of a Peckham landlord.

Last December a widow took a house in Peckham upon an annual tenancy, at a rental of £39, and was foolish enough to sign an agreement containing a clause which specified that the rent was to be paid quarterly in advance. She was allowed to enter without any prepayment, and on the 25th of March six months, £19, was demanded, one quarter due and one quarter in advance. This, of course, she was unable to pay, and before March had run out her home was stripped from kitchen to attic of all its furniture save and except what was contained in one small bedroom, where one of her daughters lay dying of cancer.

On Saturday last the broker paid a second visit and made a second disrepair, broke the lock and forced an entrance into the sick room, and cleared it of everything, even to the beef tea standing by the bedside, and would have taken the bed upon which the dying girl lay, but was prevented by the accidental presence in the room, when the door was brutally forced, of a well-known Church of England clergyman, who was tending to the girl dying of cancer spiritual consolation. His determined protest saved the girl her bed.

The Tenants' Protection League will take the earliest opportunity of holding a public meeting to protest against such barbarous proceedings. They have accordingly convened a meeting for 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon on Peckham Rye, where the chairman will give chapter and verse, names and details of the outrageous acts here described.—London Chronicle.

Anecdotes of the Queen's Girlhood.

Mrs. Sarah Tooley, in her recently published "Life of Queen Alexandra," tells some very interesting anecdotes of her majesty. As a child the Queen's surroundings were exceedingly simple.

"Mamma," said the little Princess one day, "why may not Dagmar and I wear muslin dresses?" "Because," replied her mother, "your father is not a rich man, and muslin dresses cost so much to get up." There were not many servants at the Gule Palais, where the Queen's early life was spent, and the young Princesses were required to dust their own rooms and to make themselves useful at meal times. A gentleman who was invited one day to partake of the informal family luncheon at the Palais recalls that the butter-dish chanced to need replenishing, instead of summoning a servant, turned to her eldest daughter and said: "Alexandra, will you fetch some more butter?" And the future Queen of England departed on the homely errand to the larder.

Reason to Fear.

The following conversation is said to have taken place between two Boer leaders when it was first announced that the Australians were sending a contingent to South Africa: "I see," said one, "that some people called Australians are coming over here. Do you know anything about them?" "Not much," was the reply, "but I hear that eleven of them beat All England a year or two ago." "Good heavens," cried the first—"and they say that five thousand of them are coming here!"

A Hard-Worked Hero.

"When I starred as 'The Drummer Boy of Shiloh,'" said the eminent actor, "I was on the stage during the entire play and spoke nine-tenths of the lines." "That," said the low comedian, "was a long roll."—Baltimore American.

The matter of kin settles whether a wedding is to be a home or church affair. Aristocratic kin who look well on parade means a church wedding; lots of poor kin means a "cozy wedding at home."

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