

# THE COURIER

Published Every Saturday

Entered in the Postoffice at Lincoln as second class matter.

OFFICE, . . . . . 920-910 P STREET  
TELEPHONE } Business Office, . . . . . 214  
                  } Editorial Rooms, . . . . . 90

## SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Per annum, in advance, . . . . . \$1.00  
Single Copy, . . . . . .05

## Safety Device to Prevent Wrecks

Ever since the collision at the southern end of the New York Central tunnel last winter, people who ride much on railway cars have been interested in means for stopping trains when engineers fail to see the signals. Several inventions of that class have been the subject of experiment in this country, but none have been formally adopted. There are signs that European countries may anticipate the United States in this particular.

In a recent report to the state department at Washington the American consul at Berne, Adolph L. Frankenthal, mentions a test which he witnessed at the request of an inventor. The consul rode in the cab of a locomotive drawing four passenger cars at a speed of thirty miles an hour. At a predetermined place the Westinghouse brakes were set without any action of the engineer. The stoppage of the train was indicated on a dial, the brakes were then released, and a whistle, which had already once sounded as a warning of trouble, now reported the brakes thrown off.

Two pieces of apparatus are necessary for this service. One is a lever on the track, which is raised into the right position whenever the signal is set to stop a train. It does not matter whether the signal itself is operated by a wire, compressed air or electricity. The lever moves when the signal does. The other part of the apparatus is mounted on the engine. There is an arm hanging down in such a position that it will be moved whenever it arrives at the place where the lever is, if the lever sticks up. One might suppose that the shock of contact would hurt either the lever or the arm; but the latter is mounted so as to swing in such a way as to escape injury, and yet perform the duty assigned to it. That portion of the mechanism which is up in the cab, when it is actuated by the stroke below, sets the brakes with a degree of rapidity that is variable and that is controlled by previous adjustment.

Mr. Frankenthal says that several trains on Swiss roads have been equipped with this apparatus provisionally, for purposes of experiment, and the hope is entertained that the government will require its general adoption. On trial trips in Switzerland a speed of thirty-seven miles an hour was developed. In Austria tests were made at various speeds, the maximum being sixty-two miles an hour. One road in Germany, on which several accidents have happened—the Grossherzogliche Badische—has ordered a number of its expresses to be thus equipped.

## The Proof-Reader Did It

The average reader of a newspaper does not appreciate the labor that has been given to the sheet of paper which he consults for the happenings of the day. The simple sheet of paper which appears so inconsequential is the result of many processes and much varied labor on the part of diverse workers. From the time that the newspaper exists only in the future as a tall spruce tree ready to be ground into pulp, until it is carried all folded and ready for delivery from the pressroom, the paper has occupied the attention of many persons, of whom the proof-reader is not the least important one.

When the news of the day has been coined, by the busy reporters, into copy of varying clearness and indifferent workmanship, it is hustled off to the composing room and there the news undergoes another transformation at the

hands of the linotype operator. This worthy is not more infallible than the reporter who writes the copy. The result of the work done up to this stage is a lot of hot type bars loosely set together in a frame. Here a sheet of moistened paper is laid on top of the type bars, the latter are inked and a roller drawn over them. The result is a rather ragged print of the matter which the reporter a few minutes before had drawn from a clicking typewriter and consigned to the tender mercies of the linotype man. This print is called the proof-sheet. It is whisked to the desk of the proof-readers. The function of these individuals is a peculiar one. It is, in fact, the detection of all the errors that may have been made in preparing the copy. The copy or manuscript is regarded as the first authority, but the proof-reader is supposed to be able to "pick up" any mistakes that may have been made in the copy. The rule laid down for the proof-reader is "stick to the copy as long as it is right and correct it when it is wrong."

The proof-sheet after it leaves the hands of the reader bears on its wide margin marks unintelligible to the layman. To the eye of the compositor, however, these marks are full of meaning. They guide him to the mistakes that have been made and point out the desired corrections. If a letter has been omitted, or if letters have been transposed or any of the numerous mistakes occur that are always being made, they are noted on the proof sheet, providing the proof-reader has done his duty.

The linotypist next makes the corrections desired and if the proof on which he has been working contains any glaring errors, another proof sheet is generally made. This second proof is called

a "revise" proof. This is sent out to the proof-readers and again an inspection is made for the discovery of mistakes either overlooked in the former reading or made anew by the compositor. When this second critical examination is made the news as it was embodied in type-metal is ready for the forms.

Thus it can be seen that much of the reputation of a paper for accuracy depends upon the care with which the proof-sheets are read. Though a work of dull routine, it involves great responsibility on the part of the persons reading the proof. The first place where the blame is laid for a verbal or grammatical blunder in the completed news-sheet is on the proof-reader. There the editor finds solace for his wounded feelings and thus reporters relieve themselves of responsibility for errors by saying: "The proof-reader should not have let it through." If it is an error on the part of the compositor the censor of the proof-sheet comes in for the blame too, because he did not exercise sufficient care in detecting errors. Take it all in all, it is one of the most thankless tasks on a newspaper, and at the same time one of the most important to the appearance and standing of the paper. Then, too, there are certain compensating features which offset some of the disadvantages and discomforts of the work. The proof-reader comes in contact with all forms of language and is taught discrimination and learns the use of English.

Occasionally women are employed as proof-readers, but as a rule they lack concentration and the capacity for patient effort so necessary in that kind of work. The work demands greater patience with routine than the average woman is possessed of.

She (to him)—Here's another one of those old jokes about the mistletoe—as if you cared whether the mistletoe was over one's head or not.

He—Tell me, Dearest, has any man ever kissed you?

She—Only one man and that did not count.

He—You mean he was a relation?

She—No; it was under the mistletoe.

## LILY LANGTRY IN AMERICA



Lily Langtry, popularly known as the Jersey Lily, is in this country to give Americans a chance to see "The Crossways," her new play which pleased King Edward so much. Incidentally, the Gotham critics do not take very kindly to her play.

## CHARMING DAUGHTER OF A SENATOR TO WED.



A wedding of national interest will be that of Miss Marion Cockrell to Edson F. Gallaudet, which will take place in February. The bride to be is the eldest daughter of Senator Cockrell, of Missouri. Her fiancé is the son of Dr. Edward M. Gallaudet, president of Gallaudet college.

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