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NEWSPAPERS TO-DAY

THE PAGEANT OF PROGRESS

General Editor: J. W. Bispham, O.B.E., M.A., B.Sc.

1 PHOTOGRAPHY TO-DAY

2 FLIGHT TO-DAY

3 RADIO TO-DAY

4 ENGINES TO-DAY

6 CHEMISTRY TO-DAY

7 CIVIL ENGINEERING TO-DAY

8 ASTRONOMY

9 ELECTRICITY TO-DAY

10 THE CINEMA TO-DAY

11 RAILWAYS TO-DAY

12 MOTOR CARS TO-DAY

13 IRON AND STEEL TO-DAY

14 MILITARY SCIENCE TO-DAY

15 THE POLICE AND CRIME DETECTION TO-DAY

16 THE MERCHANT NAVY TO-DAY

17 PRINTING TO-DAY

18 THE FIRE SERVICE TO-DAY

19 BUILDING TO-DAY

20 WATER SUPPLY TO-DAY

21 NEWSPAPERS TO-DAY

THE EDITORIAL CONFERENCE

Conferences take place in all newspaper offices to plan the contents of the following day's issue. The Editor or his assistant usually presides and among those who attend are the Foreign Editor, the Chief Sub-editor, the Night Editor, the News Editor, the Deputy News Editor, the Night News Editor, the Art Editor, and the Leader Writers.

The *Daily Telegraph* conference in the photograph above is presided over by the Assistant Editor.

ALAN PITT ROBBINS, C.B.E.

NEWSPAPERS TO-DAY

Geoffrey Cumberlege
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
1956

Oxford University Press, Amen House, London E.C.4

GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI CAPE TOWN IBADAN

Geoffrey Cumberlege, Publisher to the University

PRINTED AND BOUND IN GREAT BRITAIN
BY W. & J. MACKAY & CO. LTD., CHATHAM

PREFACE

So many of my friends in journalism have helped me in the production of this book that it is impossible to thank them all by name. There is the further drawback that some of them must remain anonymous by the rule prevailing in their offices. I hope, therefore, that they will be prepared to accept this omnibus vote of thanks in the knowledge that without their help *Newspapers To-day* would never have been written.

I desire particularly to thank the many editors of newspapers who gave me permission to reproduce photographs borrowed from their picture libraries and for the lively interest they displayed in the project when it was first put up to them.

March 1956 ALAN PITT ROBBINS

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THE GROWTH OF A GREAT INDUSTRY

THE DAILY NEWSPAPER is nowadays such an accepted feature of the life of every civilized nation that it is almost impossible for people to visualize the days less than three hundred years ago when it did not exist. It is true that there have been one or two painful reminders of the old days during the present century—first the General Strike of 1926 and then the more serious dispute which paralysed the London daily and Sunday papers in March 1955—but neither stoppage was absolutely complete. In 1926 *The Times* did not miss publication for a single day. The Government issued a newspaper of its own, *The British Gazette*, which the General Council of the Trades Union Congress countered with *The British Worker*, and many of the leading daily newspapers published outside London continued to appear. The strike in 1955 hit all the national morning newspapers published in London (and their Manchester and Scottish editions), the London evening newspapers, and the London Sunday papers, and smashed the proud record of *The Times* that it had not missed publication on a single morning since 1785. The newspapers published outside London, apart from the Manchester and Scottish editions of the London national newspapers, continued to appear.

There was also the news service provided by the British Broadcasting Corporation, which meant that very few people were deprived of, at any rate, the vital news of the day. A very different state of affairs from that period of our national history when the daily newspaper, the telephone, the telegram, the wireless and even the railway train were unknown and when the horseman travelling at breakneck speed was the carrier of news both good and bad and of rumour which it was not easy to overtake.

Even with the vivid imagination which is possessed by most newspapermen the producer of the *Daily Courant*, the first daily paper to be issued in England (in 1702), could not have

foreseen that he was founding an industry in which millions of pounds of capital would be sunk and that hundreds of millions of newspapers would be sold every day in all parts of the world.

The principal purpose of this book is to tell of the British newspaper of today, but at the outset a brief historical survey may be of interest. The *Daily Courant*, the first daily newspaper to be published in England, lasted from 1702 to 1735 and included among its contributors Daniel Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*. It was announced that the *Courant* was designed to give 'all the material news as soon as every post arrives and is confined to half the compass to save the public at least half the impertinences of ordinary newspapers'. Very appropriately the first of the daily morning newspapers was issued 'at Fleet Bridge' and on one occasion, at least, it published a special evening edition. The victories of the Duke of Marlborough in Flanders had stimulated the public desire for news, and after his great victory at Ramillies the *Daily Courant*, having published its usual morning edition, came out again with news from 'An Express arriv'd this Evening'. Within two months *The Evening Post*, published at 'six at night', came into the field, and so both the morning and the evening newspaper had now appeared upon the scene.

The oldest British newspaper which is still published is *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, which can claim direct descent from the *Worcester Post-Man*, first published in 1690 but not of course as a daily paper. Of the national newspapers now published from London *The Times* was established as the *Daily Universal Register* in 1785, changing its name three years later; the *Daily News*—now amalgamated with the *Daily Chronicle* as the *News Chronicle*—in 1846, the *Daily Telegraph* in 1855, the *Daily Mail* in 1896, the *Daily Express* in 1900, the *Daily Mirror* in 1903, the *Daily Herald* in 1912, the *Evening Standard* in 1827, the *Evening News* in 1881 and the *Star* in 1888. It is strange to think that while at one time there were nine evening papers in London there are now only three.

The reason for this is perhaps best explained in the report of the Royal Commission which was appointed in 1947 'with the

object of furthering the free expression of opinion through the Press and the greatest practicable accuracy in the presentation of news, to inquire into the control, management and ownership of the newspaper and periodical Press and the news agencies, including the financial structure and the monopolistic tendencies in control'. The Commission felt that the *Westminster Gazette*, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, the *Globe*, the *St James's Gazette* and the *Sun* had all died because they had lost their *raison d'être*. In the nineteenth century London transport was so slow that few members of the wealthier classes went home between work and an evening engagement; instead they went to their clubs and read their evening newspapers. The extraordinary improvement in London's transport in the twentieth century altered the social habits on which such modest circulations as they enjoyed had largely rested, and it has to be admitted that none of them had ever made large profits. There have been gallant efforts from time to time to start new morning papers in London such as the *Tribune*, the *Daily Citizen* and the daily *Recorder*. They failed largely because they could not compete financially with those newspapers which were already firmly established, and there is probably considerable truth in the belief that a newcomer to Fleet Street must be prepared to lose at least a million pounds in the initial stages of a new daily newspaper, morning or evening, unless it has the backing of one of the newspapers already in existence.

While the first London daily newspaper was published in 1702, it was not until one hundred and fifty years later that a daily newspaper was issued from any part of England outside the capital city. There were many reasons for this. Communications and transport were poor. There were heavy taxes which severely hit the newspapers. There was the stamp duty which had to be paid on every copy of a newspaper that was sold. There was a tax on advertisements and there was a duty on paper. These handicaps were not entirely disposed of until the period between 1855 to 1861, and then began the great development of the daily newspaper. The years between 1870 and 1914 may fairly be described as the golden age of journalism—

at any rate from the viewpoint of the owners if not of the staffs. The outbreak of the First World War caused a set-back and the newspapers had not really had time to recover when the coming of the Second World War hit them again. But since 1945 there has been a steady improvement and there seems no reason why the golden age should not return in spite of the competition of other means of news communication such as broadcasting and television. Increased prosperity must mean larger-sized newspapers and larger staffs, and it is with a view to giving the newcomer an idea of what life is like in the modern newspaper office that this volume has been written.

The purpose of the book, then, is to tell how a great national newspaper is produced and to outline the variety of departments which have a share in the preparation of the paper. Some information as to the publication of daily newspapers throughout the world will give an idea of the magnitude of the industry. Perhaps the most precise information on the subject is that which has been gathered after extensive investigation by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, to give UNESCO its full name. The figures which it has produced must be regarded as the lowest rather than the highest, because there were some parts of the world from which it was not possible to collect full details. But according to UNESCO 7,520 daily newspapers were published throughout the world, although there were fifty-three countries and territorities in which no daily journal was published at all. The number of copies printed daily was at least 217 million of which about 96 million were printed in the English language in 2,348 journals. The country in which the daily press had the largest circulation was the United States with 55 million copies or 24 per cent of the world total, but the country with the highest daily newspaper circulation per thousand inhabitants was the United Kingdom with 611 copies. This is a very striking figure when it is remembered that the world daily circulation is 88 for every thousand inhabitants and it suggests that in the United Kingdom many people buy a morning and an evening newspaper every day.

When UNESCO prepared its report it stated that of the 122 newspapers published in the United Kingdom 39 were morning and 83 evening papers, and their circulation was estimated at 31 million daily. This estimate compares fairly closely with the position as set out in the *Newspaper Press Directory* for 1955.

	Morning	*Evening*	*Sunday*	*Weekly*
London	16	3	11	93
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	13
English and Welsh Provinces	24	68	3	987
Scotland	7	9	2	167
Northern Ireland	3	1	—	46
Isle of Man and Channel Islands	1	3	—	10
Eire	4	5	2	70
Total	55	89	18	1,386
Grand Total	1,548			

These figures will give a good idea of the important part which the newspaper industry plays in the national life.

II

THE DAILY NEWSPAPER

BROADLY SPEAKING, THE daily newspapers published in Britain can be dealt with under two categories. They are the London newspapers and the newspapers printed and published outside the capital. Of the sixteen morning newspapers published in London nine are known as the 'nationals' because their circulation is distributed throughout the whole country. It is an expression which is used solely for convenience throughout the newspaper world and is not intended in any way to be a reflection on many of the leading papers published elsewhere such as *The Scotsman*, the *Glasgow Herald*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Yorkshire Post*, and the *Birmingham Post*, which may wield a greater power over the life and thought of the nation than some of the so-called 'nationals'. The nine 'nationals', placed in alphabetical order to prevent any argument as to their merits, are the *Daily Express*, the *Daily Herald*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Sketch*, the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Daily Worker*, the *News Chronicle*, and *The Times*. The other seven London morning newspapers are the *Financial Times*, the *Greyhound Express and Coursing News*, the *Industrial Daily News*, *Lloyds List and Shipping Gazette*, *Morning Advertiser*, *Public Ledger* and *Sporting Life*. There are also one or two journals published in foreign tongues for the benefit of immigrants who have settled in this country. The circulation of the 'nationals' range from the 3 or 4 millions of the *Daily Express* and the *Daily Mirror* to the hundred thousand or so of the *Daily Worker*. The question of the distribution of newspapers will be dealt with in more detail in a later chapter, but it should be mentioned that all the 'nationals' except *The Times* and the *Daily Worker* have additional printing plant outside London. They issue a northern edition printed in Manchester, and two also print in Scotland: the *Daily Express* in Glasgow and the *Daily Mail* in Edinburgh. This gives them an opportunity to give more local news than is possible with a paper which prints only in London and is com-

pelled to catch early trains if it is to be on the breakfast table in competition with the local journal. According to the Royal Commission, *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph* are known to the trade as 'quality' newspapers to distinguish them from the 'popular' papers which appeal to a mass readership. It is only fair to say that this distinction might be hotly challenged by the so-called 'popular' newspapers, which on occasion publish leading articles and special articles of a very high quality indeed. Equally *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph* might resent the idea that they are run by superior persons for the delectation of superior persons. But to whichever category papers belong they never overlook the fact that their primary purpose is to give the news, whatever trimmings they may surround it with. The three London evening newspapers, the *Evening News*, the *Star* and the *Evening Standard*, can hardly rank in the 'national' category, because for transport reasons their circulation must be restricted in the main to Greater London and the Home Counties.

There are twenty-four morning papers published in England and Wales outside London, and even in the difficult post-war period they were able to maintain a high standard. With one or two exceptions their circulation is not high and as a rule the profits are made by the evening paper if both morning and evening papers are issued from one office. The morning paper does not aspire to a mass readership. It is planned for the benefit of the business men and the professional men of a single area and for that reason the dividing line between 'quality' and 'popular' papers does not here apply. The local newspaper which did not specialize in news of local affairs would have a poor chance of survival, and that is perhaps one reason why the citizen living outside the Metropolitan area knows more of local conditions than the Londoner does. It would be difficult to discover any daily paper which consistently gives a good report of the meetings of the London County Council, despite the millions which it spends every year, but on the other hand the meetings of the Manchester, Leeds or Birmingham City Council are always well reported. It is true that some of the London weekly newspapers give a better show to municipal politics, but one doubts whether

the reports are widely read. The ideal of a provincial newspaper must be to give a judicious blend of national and local news. If it does not do so it will eventually fall by the wayside.

And here one is inevitably brought up against the question of chains and monopolies and their effect on the journalistic profession. The Royal Commission described a chain as an organization having single or multiple units in several widely separated places, and it named five chains with sufficient links to be worthy of the name. They were the Harmsworth chain, Associated Newspapers, the Westminster Press, Kemsley Newspapers, and Provincial Newspapers Ltd, and by their terms of reference the Commissioners were instructed to inquire into the control, management and ownership of the newspaper and periodical press and the news agencies, including the financial structure and the monopolistic tendencies in control. Their examination was certainly an exhaustive one and the accountants of the newspapers spent many days and nights in extracting the mass of information for which the Commission called.

In the nineteenth century the newspapers were commonly family properties, but the arrival of the popular journals like the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* with large circulations and vast financial resources transformed the picture. As competition became more acute and the great battle for circulations grew ever more bitter, making expenditure a minor consideration, the gradual evolution of groups and chains was possibly inevitable. It is only fair to the Royal Commission to say that it examined the subject most thoroughly and finally came to the conclusion that the case against chains had been overstated. Indeed it admitted that the system had some advantages in that the association of a number of papers, and particularly of national with provincial papers, spreads the financial risks and gives greater stability. By organizing central purchasing, advertising, news-gathering, and other services a chain effects economies which enable it to produce better newspapers. It can spend more on home and foreign news, features, salaries, and equipment, and in fact, in the opinion of the Commission, the papers acquired by chains have improved in quality.

The opponents of the chains argued that if for any reason a journalist is dismissed from, or cannot work happily on, one member of a chain he is excluded from employment on all the others. The Commission, however, replied that to the journalist, the chain, by reason of its size, can offer good pay and conditions, better facilities than a small undertaking for training, more varied experience, and better prospects of promotion. But in case the chains should become too self-complacent the Commission added that while it would not be alarmed by an increase in the number of relatively small chains it would deplore any tendency on the part of the larger chains to expand, particularly by the acquisition of further papers in areas where they were already strong.

III

AWAY FROM LONDON

ONE MUST NOT fall into the common trap of assessing the merits—or the demerits—of the British Press solely on the newspapers published within the London area. It may be helpful at this point, therefore, to refer briefly to the daily and weekly newspapers published in the English provinces, in Wales, in Scotland, in Northern Ireland, and in Eire. At the date when this chapter was written the position was as follows:

	Morning	*Evening*	*Weekly, bi-weekly, or tri-weekly*	*Total*
English Provinces	23	64	855	942
Wales	1	3	94	98
Scotland	7	9	169	185
Northern Ireland	3	1	46	50
Eire	4	5	69	78
Isle of Man	—	1	5	6
Channel Islands	1	2	5	8
Total	39	85	1,243	1,367

The geographical distribution according to counties was as follows:

ENGLAND

County	*Daily (Morning)*	*Daily (Evening)*	*Weekly, bi-weekly, or tri-weekly*	*Total*
Bedford	—	—	11	11
Berkshire	—	—	9	9
Buckinghamshire	—	—	11	11
Cambridge	—	1	16	17
Cheshire	—	—	40	40
Cornwall	—	—	21	21
Cumberland	—	2	10	12
Derbyshire	—	1	16	17
Devon	1	3	41	45
Dorset	—	1	8	9
Durham	1	4	16	21
Essex	—	—	43	43

ENGLAND (*cont.*)

County	*Daily (Morning)*	*Daily (Evening)*	*Weekly, bi-weekly, or tri-weekly*	*Total*
Gloucester	1	4	21	26
Hampshire	—	3	24	27
Hereford	—	—	8	8
Hertford	—	—	17	17
Huntingdon	—	—	3	3
Kent	—	—	42	42
Lancashire	6	10	99	115
Leicester	—	2	13	15
Lincolnshire	—	3	24	27
Middlesex	—	—	19	19
Norfolk	1	1	10	12
Northamptonshire	—	2	11	13
Northumberland	1	2	11	14
Nottingham	2	2	17	21
Oxford	—	1	10	11
Rutland	—	—	1	1
Shropshire	—	—	9	9
Somerset	—	1	21	22
Staffordshire	—	3	42	45
Suffolk	1	1	13	15
Surrey	—	—	42	42
Sussex	1	2	26	29
Warwick	4	4	24	32
Westmorland	—	—	2	2
Wiltshire	—	1	9	10
Worcestershire	—	1	16	17
Yorkshire	4	9	79	92
Total	23	64	855	942

WALES

Brecknock	—	—	3	3
Cardigan	—	—	3	3
Carmarthen	—	—	5	5
Caernarvon	—	—	9	9
Denbigh	—	—	11	11
Flintshire	—	—	7	7
Glamorgan	1	2	27	30
Anglesey	—	—	3	3
Merioneth	—	—	4	4
Monmouth	—	1	15	16

WALES (*cont.*)

County	*Daily (Morning)*	*Daily (Evening)*	*Weekly, bi-weekly, or tri-weekly*	*Total*
Montgomery	—	—	2	2
Pembroke	—	—	5	5
Total	1	3	94	98

SCOTLAND

Aberdeen	1	1	6	8
Angus	1	1	13	15
Argyll	—	—	6	6
Ayrshire	—	—	16	16
Banff	—	—	4	4
Berwick	—	—	2	2
Caithness	—	—	2	2
Clackmannan	—	—	4	4
Dumfries	—	—	6	6
Dunbartonshire	—	—	5	5
East Lothian	—	—	1	1
Fife	—	—	11	11
Inverness	—	—	7	7
Isle of Bute	—	—	1	1
Isle of Lewis	—	—	1	1
Kincardine	—	—	2	2
Kirkcudbright	—	—	2	2
Kinross	—	—	1	1
Lanark	4	3	22	29
Midlothian	1	2	10	13
Moray	—	—	5	5
Nairn	—	—	1	1
Orkneys	—	—	2	2
Perthshire	—	—	7	7
Peebles	—	—	1	1
Renfrew	—	2	7	9
Ross-shire	—	—	2	2
Roxburgh	—	—	4	4
Selkirk	—	—	3	3
Shetlands	—	—	2	2
Stirling	—	—	8	8
Sutherland	—	—	1	1
West Lothian	—	—	2	2
Wigtown	—	—	2	2
Total	7	9	169	185

NORTHERN IRELAND

County	*Daily (Morning)*	*Daily (Evening)*	*Weekly, bi-weekly, or tri-weekly*	*Total*
Antrim	3	1	10	14
Armagh	—	—	7	7
Down	—	—	12	12
Fermanagh	—	—	2	2
Londonderry	—	—	7	7
Tyrone	—	—	8	8
Total	3	1	46	50

EIRE

Carlow	—	—	1	1
Cavan	—	—	1	1
Clare	—	—	1	1
Cork	1	1	3	5
Donegal	—	—	3	3
Dublin	3	3	6	12
Galway	—	—	4	4
Kerry	—	—	3	3
Kildare	—	—	1	1
Kilkenny	—	—	3	3
Leitrim	—	—	2	2
Leix	—	—	1	1
Limerick	—	—	3	3
Longford	—	—	3	3
Louth	—	—	4	4
Mayo	—	—	4	4
Meath	—	—	1	1
Monaghan	—	—	2	2
Offaly	—	—	3	3
Roscommon	—	—	2	2
Sligo	—	—	2	2
Tipperary	—	—	3	3
Waterford	—	1	4	5
Westmeath	—	—	3	3
Wexford	—	—	5	5
Wicklow	—	—	1	1
Total	4	5	69	78

County	*Daily (Morning)*	*Daily (Evening)*	*Weekly, bi-weekly, or tri-weekly*	*Total*
ISLE OF MAN				
	—	1	5	6
GUERNSEY				
	1[1]	1	2	4
JERSEY				
	—	1	3	4

One thing which emerges from these statistics is the strength of the weekly newspaper. The daily national newspapers have a virtual monopoly of the Home Counties, for it will be seen that no daily journal is published in Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertford, Kent, Middlesex, or Surrey and this state of affairs is likely to continue indefinitely in view of the heavy cost of launching a new venture and the crushing competition which would have to be faced from the national papers. But there will always be a demand for local news and here the weekly paper can stand up to competition. It is rather remarkable to find that there are forty-three local weeklies in Essex and forty-two each in Kent and Middlesex. A well-conducted local newspaper carries great influence. The Editor is a power in the town and the reporter is a welcome and popular figure. For him the life is a varied one, with never a dull moment. If he is wise he will make a close study of local politics without taking a direct part in them. He must know something of the aims and aspirations of the neighbourhood. He should keep on good terms with the leaders of industry, both employers and workers, and he should be interested in the sports and pastimes of the neighbourhood. He will be expected to cover the daily happenings of the district, weddings, police courts, fires, and funerals, and if he is also able to write about the arts he will be gaining invaluable all-round experience in readiness for the day when he decides to turn his footsteps towards London. But it is only fair to add that

[1]The *Guernsey Star* is reckoned as a morning paper although, in fact, it publishes editions in the morning and the early evening.

Semper Eadem.

Numb. 185.

THE

WORCESTER

Poſt-Man:

Worceſter-Arms.

Semper Fidelis.

CONTAINING

The Heads of all the Remarkable Occurrences, both Foreign and Domeſtick.

From *Friday*, January 2, to *Friday*, January 9, 1712-13.

From Dyer's *Letter and other Intelligence.*
Saturday's and Monday's Poſt.
One Flanders and Two Holland Mails bring us the following Advices.

Madrid, Dec. 19.

A Courier is paſt through this City for Catalonia, with Orders for the Portugueſe Troops to return to Portugal, whither they are to march through Arragon and Caſtile. Advices from the Frontier of Catalonia ſay, 4000 Spaniſh Horſe and 10000 Foot are marching to Tortoſa, from whence they are to enter Catalonia the 25th inſtant, and advance to the Plain of Tarragona; and that 4000 Men are to enter it on the ſide of Lerida, to make a Diverſion. Theſe Motions perplex the Catalans the more, by reaſon of their being abandoned by the Engliſh and Portugueſe. 'Tis alſo adviſ'd, that the Diſorders continue in Barcelona, and that the Catalans have taken upon themſelves to ſerve as Guards to the Archdutcheſs, which they will not ſuffer the Germans to do.

They write from Leghorn, that the Engliſh Conſul who is in

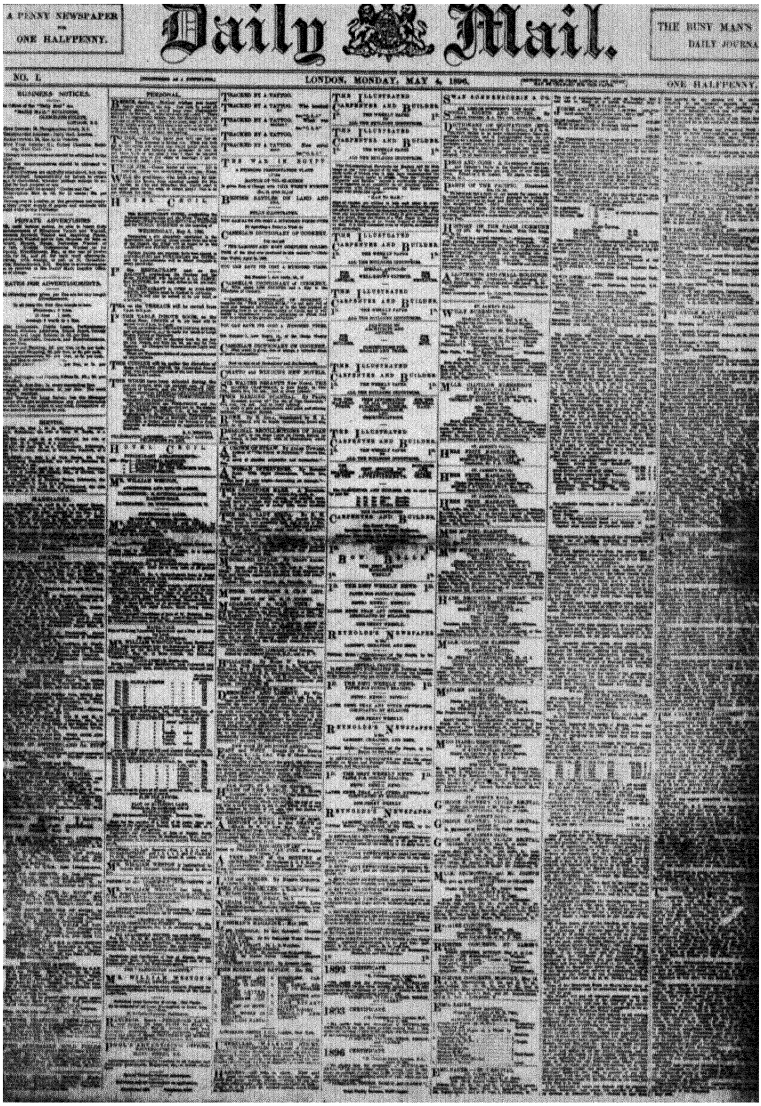
The earliest front page of the *Worcester Post-Man* known to exist. There is evidence that the paper was first published in 1690 and then irregularly until June 1709, when, in the words of the early Worcestershire historian, Valentine Greene, 'the publications assumed a regular and orderly appearance'. After several changes of title it took its present title, *Berrow's Worcester Journal*.

PLATE 2

THE TIMES
OR DAILY UNIVERSAL REGISTER
PRINTED
TUESDAY, JANUARY
(Price Three-pence.)

The Daily Universal Register was first published on January 1, 1785. It was not until January 1, 1788, that *The Times* was added to the title, and the front page of the first issue of *The Times or Daily Universal Register* is shown above.

PLATE 3


A PENNY NEWSPAPER FOR ONE HALFPENNY.

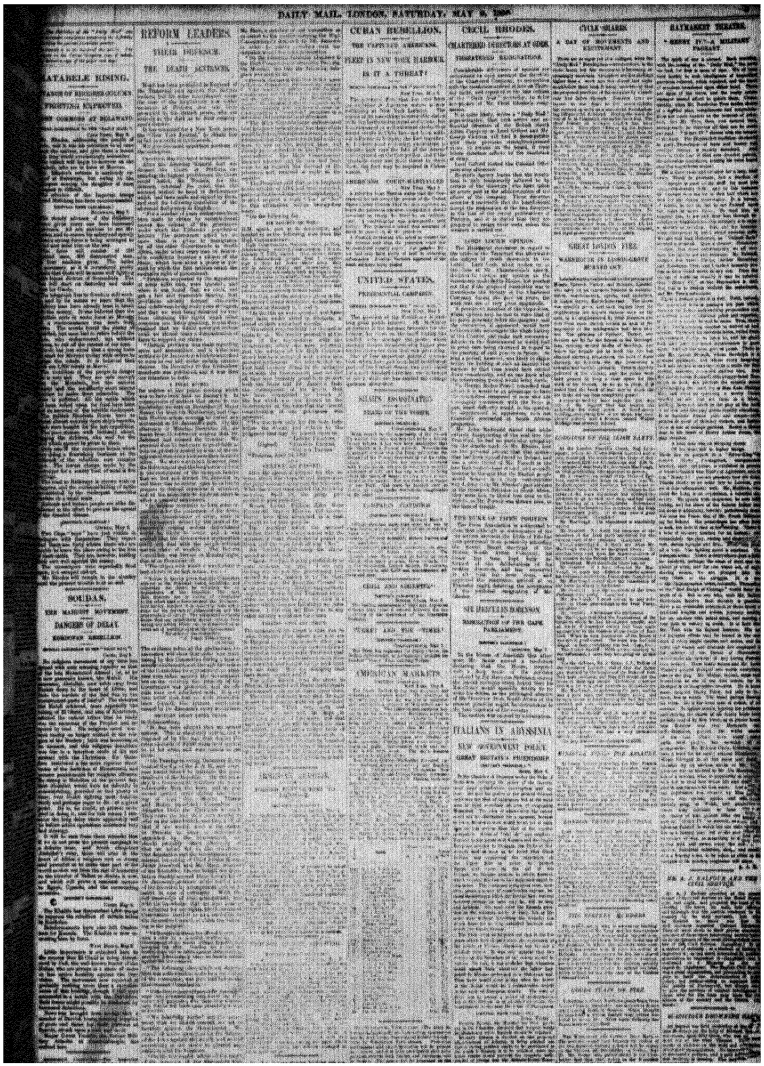
Daily Mail.

THE BUSY MAN'S DAILY JOURNAL

NO. 1. LONDON, MONDAY, MAY 4, 1896. ONE HALFPENNY.

When the first number of the *Daily Mail* was published on May 4, 1896, classified advertising filled the front page.

PLATE 4



DAILY MAIL, LONDON, SATURDAY, MAY 9, 1896

REFORM LEADERS

THEIR DEFENCE.

THE DEATH SENTENCE.

MATABELE RISING.

SOUDAN.

THE MAHDI'S SUPPOSED DANGER OF DEATH.

KORDOFAN REBELLION.

CUBAN REBELLION.

THE CAPTURED AMERICANS.

FLEET IS NEW YORK HARBOUR.

IS IT A THREAT?

AMERICAN COURT-MARTIALLED

UNITED STATES.

PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

KLONDIKE EXPEDITIONS

DEATH OF TWO MINERS.

CECIL RHODES.

CHARTERED DIRECTORS AT ODDS.

DISQUIETING RESIGNATIONS.

LORDS KNOW OPINION.

TO-DAY'S DEBATE ON THE JAMESON RAID.

THE FUTURE OF TRANS-VAAL.

SIR HERBERT TREE'S PRODUCTION OF "HENRY IV."

SIR HERBERT HERBERT TREE AS FALSTAFF.

CYCLE CLASH.

A DAY OF INCIDENTS AND EXCITEMENT.

GREAT LONDON FIRE.

WAREHOUSE IN LOMBARD-STREET BURNED OUT.

ITALIANS IN ABYSSINIA

NEW GOVERNMENT POLICY.

GREAT BRITAIN'S PROTECTORATE.

The main news page of the *Daily Mail* of May 9, 1896, dealing with the death sentences passed in connexion with the Jameson Raid, a rebellion in Cuba, the American presidential campaign, and Sir Herbert Tree's production of *Henry IV* at the Haymarket Theatre.

while many young journalists feel that London is their spiritual home there are a large proportion who fall under the spell of the small town with its friendly atmosphere and who have not the slightest wish to join in the pilgrimage to the Mecca of journalism. The salaries are lower but they are so much better than they were before the two world wars that life can be very pleasant, even if one does not work in the fierce limelight of Fleet Street.

If the young journalist is ambitious he can often, on a provincial newspaper, augment his salary. The news agencies and the national papers have representatives in every important centre. In a few cases they are salaried members of the staff, but obviously this is an expensive proceeding, and in most areas there is a local correspondent who is either a free lance or a member of the staff of a newspaper published in the district. Some of them may receive a retaining fee while others are paid for their contributions, and the wise News Editor watches very carefully the work of his local correspondents to see that it is properly recognized by the paying cashier, whether it has actually been published or not. A dissatisfied local correspondent can easily let the paper down at a critical moment by sending an inadequate message or by leaving its transmission to a late hour at which it just manages to miss the edition. It should be added that the working journalists' organizations hold agreements which govern the lineage scale, and they are much more satisfactory than in the old days. Where there is a free lance in a provincial town the News Editor may feel that he ought to employ him as against a staff man, but there is much to be said on both sides. The free lance may have more time to give to his message, but if he represents a number of newspapers he can send little exclusive matter and his stories are bound to be very much alike. If the correspondent is on the staff of a newspaper and his Editor does not object to his doing lineage work, he can obtain his material more easily with the help of friendly colleagues and it often happens that the lineage is organized in a pool in which reporters and sub-editors share. Recent experience, however, rather suggests that the staff man, now that he is

better paid, is not very keen on taking on lineage; and this will undoubtedly help the free lance. The work of a free lance is hard and difficult for many guinea or half-guinea messages have to be published to obtain a living wage. He is fortunate if he has at his back an additional form of income such as the taking of official shorthand notes. The cost of Press telegrams has increased so much in recent years that most newspapers expect their correspondents to send their messages by telephone on the transfer call system by which all charges are met by the newspaper.

Since the list in this chapter was compiled two provincial newspapers, the *Daily Dispatch* (Manchester) and the *Sussex Daily News* (Brighton), have ceased publication; and two Sunday newspapers, the *Empire News* and the *Sunday Chronicle*, which were both published in Manchester, have amalgamated. The *Norfolk Chronicle*, a weekly paper published at Fakenham, ended its career in November 1955.

IV

THE FUNCTIONS OF A NEWSPAPER

THE JOURNALIST IS often asked to express his views on the true functions of a daily newspaper. I would set them out under three main headings:

(1) to inform
(2) to instruct
(3) to entertain.

The first is obviously the most important function; but the other two must not be neglected if a newspaper is to make a lasting appeal to the public. It may be that in the old days too great a proportion of the editorial space was given up to the reporting of news, often in a very indigestible manner. *The Times* thought nothing of devoting two or even three pages to the day's report of Parliament and one cannot help wondering who was able, even in those more leisurely days, to wade through column after column of solid reports of speeches, particularly as the use of cross-headings to lighten the appearance of the page was unknown. But long reports were certainly read as one national newspaper found to its sorrow on a memorable occasion. A compositor with a grievance managed to insert in the middle of a statesman's speech a most offensive sentence which was not detected until the newspaper was on sale. It was the sort of incident which the paper could not apologize for publicly without aggravating the offence. The reactions of the readers varied considerably. Hundreds of them wrote pained protests to the Editor while others treated the affair as the best joke of the week and kept their copies of the edition in the family archives. The proprietors did their best to retrieve and even to buy back at a large premium the offending copies, but occasionally even today copies are returned to the publisher with an acid note saying that they have been found among the possessions of an ancestor.

If one of the great national leaders like Mr Gladstone went out on an election campaign he would be accompanied by teams

of reporters who might produce anything up to a page a day—a considerable achievement in the days when the telephone was unknown. Criminal trials also were reported at great length, and I myself helped to produce a report of the cross-examination of the celebrated Dr Crippen in a murder trial at the Old Bailey in the early part of the century, which filled nearly two pages of *The Times*. The coming of the popular papers like the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Express* brought about a change, for it was found that by skilful reporting and sub-editing they could produce a news story which left out few of the essential facts but which took much less space. Gradually the 'quality' newspapers decided that they could use their columns to much greater advantage and that many new and attractive features could thus be introduced. But it is a firm rule that real news must not be kept out of the paper to find room for instruction and entertainment. News must always come first, but if the treatment of the news can be made more instructive and entertaining, so much the better.

The first channel of instruction is the leading article which is the best medium at the newspaper's disposal for the interpretation of the news of the moment. The leader writer may not have quite the same influence on the reader that he had fifty years ago, for nowadays there are so many other ways of interpreting news to the public.

There is no need for the leading article to be as dry as dust. In fact, the short snappy leading article has become one of the most striking features of modern journalism. It can fairly be said that, if the reader studies the leading articles in his favourite newspaper every day, he can obtain a very good picture of international, national, and local affairs. One does not suggest that he should accept the views of the leader writer as the gospel, but the leading article should enable him to adjust his ideas and encourage him to think for himself. Instruction, of course, is also to be gained from many of the articles on specialized subjects, but here as with the 'light leader', which is becoming increasingly popular in many newspapers, one is approaching the third function—entertainment.

Every paper, by a process of trial and error, must discover what form of entertainment pleases most of its readers for the greater part of the time. Naturally the tastes of the readers of different journals vary considerably, and just as one would not expect to see strip cartoons in *The Times* one would not expect a popular newspaper to cover the more serious phases of entertainment for which *The Times* caters. But there is one thing on which most of the newspapers seem to be agreed and that is the continuing popularity of the crossword puzzle. When *The Times* first admitted the crossword to its columns many of its old readers felt that the end of the world was at hand and there were pained letters of protest. But the crossword quickly established itself and it would be a brave paper which, having once started to print a puzzle, decided to discontinue it. One has only to read the letters which reach the Editor when there has been a mistake in a clue to realize how large a section of readers indulges in this form of entertainment. One recalls an occasion on which a leading journal muddled up Cassius and Casca in *Julius Caesar*. The Editor received hundreds of letters and they all seemed to begin with the same expression 'I wonder if your attention has been called to' etc. 'Constant Reader' need have no fear that the sins of an Editor will not find him out.

The pictures, perhaps more than anything else, combine the three functions of the newspaper—information, instruction, and entertainment. Here again the decision on the part of some of the more seriously minded papers to introduce a picture page produced some protests against a 'vulgar innovation', and some readers even went so far as to stop their subscriptions, at any rate for a time. One suspects that they soon returned to the fold; and the art department is now a recognized section of every national newspaper. The pictorial record of the Queen's Coronation will long remain one of the most praiseworthy achievements in daily journalism.

But there are many other ways of entertaining the reader. Articles on every conceivable kind of sport, on bridge, on gardening, on chess (and even on canasta), on cookery and on the latest fashions can all achieve the same aim of giving the

reader, for a few moments at any rate, a welcome change from the cares and anxieties of everyday life. In the same way the cartoon is always welcome and there can be few fathers who do not (although perhaps surreptitiously) study the doings of Rip Kirby, Paul Temple, Li'l Abner, Pop, or some of the other heroes and heroines of the strip cartoon. The reader may complain that there is so much in his newspaper that he cannot read it all, but the aim of the Editor must surely be to provide something which will interest, instruct, and entertain every reader in every issue of his journal.

V

THE NEWSPAPER OFFICE

THE TIME HAS come to examine in some detail the organization which is functioning day and night to ensure that the daily paper, morning or evening, shall appear on time. Every office, of course, varies according to the ideas of those who control it, but it is possible to draw a general picture without in any way suggesting that one particular newspaper office has been taken as a model.

The various departments come within five general categories:

(1) Editorial
(2) Mechanical, including the composing room, the reading room, the printing presses, etc.
(3) Managerial
(4) Advertisement
(5) Publishing and Distribution.

Perhaps it will be wise to say at the outset that this list is not drawn up in any special order of importance or seniority, because the other four sections may well challenge the right of the editorial department to appear at the top of the list. That will be a matter for argument wherever and whenever newspapermen are gathered together. Various sections will be dealt with at a later stage but it will be useful here to set out their constitution. While the members of the editorial staff are under the direction of the Editor or his representative, it generally happens that appointments to it are made by the Manager on the Editor's recommendation. The Editor's immediate lieutenants are a Deputy Editor, possibly a Foreign Editor, and one or more assistant editors who, while they may have no departmental duties, usually take a special interest in one section such as the home news or the oversea news. Below this hierarchy come the

men who are actually in charge of the various editorial sections, among which—again in no special order of priority—are:

Home News
Oversea News
Home News Sub-editing
Oversea News Sub-editing
Financial News
The Parliamentary Staff (when a newspaper does not rely on a news agency for its reports)
The Leader Writers
The Entertainments Department
The Obituary Department
The Picture Department
The Reference Library (one of the most important features in every well-organized office)
The department dealing with Letters to the Editor
Features and Special Articles
Social News
and a number of subsidiary departments.

When in a later chapter we come to analyse the editorial department in greater detail an attempt will be made to explain how all these different sections are run. It is sufficient here to say that they all have their special part to play in the production of a daily newspaper.

All the other departments in a newspaper office are under the control of the Manager and, of course, the most essential of all is the mechanical department, for if this does not function efficiently the life of the newspaper will be precarious. So many different processes go to make up the copy of the newspaper which the reader handles that the mere threat of trouble in a single section of the mechanical department is the Manager's nightmare. Yet there are occasions, although happily they are rare, when this possibility of trouble has to be faced, as in the case of the General Strike of 1926. Under the direction of the Manager there is generally a mechanical superintendent who is responsible

for the daily or nightly running of the department and the various workers—the compositors, the readers, the moulders and casters, the engravers, the machine-room staff who are responsible for the mighty presses which turn out millions of newspapers every night throughout the length and breadth of the country, and the publishing department.

The managerial department inevitably plays a very important part in a newspaper undertaking. The editorial and mechanical staffs can produce the perfect newspaper, but it will not live for more than a few weeks without efficient management watching revenue and expenditure with a hawk-like eye, always looking for new channels of income and for methods of extending existing ones and always scrutinizing the expenditure but ready to launch out with vast new schemes when convinced that they will bring more grist to the mill. The member of the editorial staff who does not know all the facts is apt to regard the Manager as the Demon King who will never relax his grip on the money-bags. But the editorial man has not to contend with the nightmare of rising costs. In 1938 the London price of newsprint was eleven pounds ten shillings a ton; by 1955 it had risen to fifty-four pounds and the supply was severely rationed. All other costs, including wages and salaries, had risen steeply during the same period and the life of the Manager, as he waited for the better days which he hoped might be round the corner, must have been horrific, and it is a great tribute to the business acumen of the industry that so few newspapers have been forced out of existence by the economic blizzard. The Manager would have under his control a number of subsidiary departments including the advertisement department, the accountants and the cashiers, the circulation and publicity department, and the welfare department to deal with such matters as canteens, pension and sickness funds, playing fields, and similar amenities.

None of these departments will be watched by the Manager more closely than the advertisement department, which inevitably provides most of the life blood of the newspaper. The brutal truth, of course, is that no paper could live without its advertisement revenue, for the cost of producing a copy of the

paper far exceeds the price which the reader pays for it, particularly when it is remembered that the whole of the three halfpence, twopence, threepence or fourpence which he pays does not go into the paper's coffers. The wholesaler and the newsagent must both receive their reward for placing the paper in the hands of the public. When the critic complains of the high proportion of advertising which appears in certain newspapers the best plan is to ask him whether he is prepared to contribute to a newspaper which would publish no advertising matter and would charge a price which would cover the actual cost of production plus a very moderate allowance for the shareholders. In the first place he would be surprised at the price he would be compelled to pay, and in the second place it might be some comfort to him to know that his grumble is a long-standing one. As far back as 1861 Lord Palmerston felt it necessary to give Queen Victoria some information on the subject. The following letter from him appears in the third volume of *The Letters of Queen Victoria*:

'The actual price at which each copy of the newspaper is sold barely pays the expense of paper, printing and establishment; it is indeed said that the price does not repay these expenses. The profit of the newspaper arises from the price paid for advertisements and the greater the number of advertisements the greater the profit. But advertisements are sent by preference to the newspaper which has the largest circulation; and that paper gets the widest circulation which is the most amusing, the most interesting and the most instructive. A dull paper is soon left off. The proprietors and managers of *The Times*, therefore, go to great expense in sending correspondents to all parts of the world where interesting events are taking place, and they employ a great many able and clever men to write articles upon all subjects which from time to time engage public attention; and as mankind takes more pleasure in reading criticism and fault-finding than praise, because it is soothing to individual vanity and conceit to fancy that the reader has become wiser than those about whom he

reads, so *The Times*, in order to maintain its circulation, criticizes freely everybody and everything; and especially events and persons and Governments abroad because such strictures are less likely to make enemies at home than violent attacks upon parties and persons in this country.'

A modern public relations officer could hardly have made a better job of it. Lord Palmerston's letter deserves to be hung in the office of every advertising manager.

VI

A DAY IN A NEWSPAPER OFFICE

BEFORE SETTING OUT to describe the various departments in detail it may be helpful to give some idea of how the day and night pass in a newspaper office, and for this purpose we will take one of the morning national newspapers. Some of them never close their doors at all, although there is a tacit agreement that there shall be a definite time lag between the publication of the last edition of the morning paper and the first edition of the evening paper. Both descriptions, by the way, are misnomers. Although the morning paper is not generally seen by the public before about four in the morning, printing begins at ten o'clock at night or even earlier if the particular newspaper does not issue a Northern edition in Manchester or Scotland, and the run of the printing presses continues until about four o'clock in the morning. The early sporting editions of the evening papers are on the streets by ten o'clock and the run will continue until about five in the afternoon, with later editions on special occasions such as Budget Day.

The day in the morning newspaper office begins at, say, seven o'clock with the arrival of that wonderful body of women, the cleaners, whose duty it is to have the various departments spick and span before the general staff begins to arrive a couple of hours later. As one who worked in a London office during the Second World War the writer would wish to pay tribute to the charladies of the newspaper world for the wonderful courage and cheerfulness which they displayed throughout those troublesome years. They felt, and quite rightly, that they were a vital cog in the machine and that a good newspaper could not be produced in dirty surroundings. Some of the women live on the south side of the Thames within walking distance of the offices; others have to come from outer suburbs by the buses or the early trains. And yet in some mysterious way, even when the air attack on London was at its worst, they always seemed to arrive at their work on time although a few minutes might be lost at

the start of the day's work in swopping stories concerning the happenings of the night. They told of the amusing experiences but they kept the tragedy to themselves. Occasionally when a woman arrived late for work she might explain that her home had been blasted or even that a member of her family had been killed. But she did not ask for sympathy and was content to carry on. Their philosophic good humour was a definite asset which helped the morale of the newspaper offices and it is good to have this opportunity of saluting them.

The departure of the cleaners and the arrival of the Royal Mail happens at about the same time and from that moment the real work of the day begins. The postal department is ready to pounce upon the mail bags as soon as they arrive, for every department expects to have its letters on its desk when its day's work starts. The amount of mail coming into any newspaper office is enormous and specially so with a newspaper which makes a special feature of its classified advertisements, which invite replies to a box number at the newspaper office. One box number advertisement may produce a thousand or more replies and the 'classifieds' often fill many columns. At the same time the letters are bringing in the new advertisements, and as they often contain money in some form a careful record of them must be kept. A heavy batch of 'Letters to the Editor' may be expected, particularly if a controversial topic is interesting the public, and this specialized mail is in addition to the everyday correspondence concerning the running of the paper. But the mail department is so efficient that the rush of the first post is soon dealt with and the way is clear for the arrival of the later deliveries.

By ten o'clock most of the departments are fully at work. In the editorial offices the News Editors for home and oversea are already planning the coverage of the news for the following morning's paper. They have probably skimmed through the rival newspapers and are aware of the directions in which they have scored; they know what they have missed and they are ready for the 'inquest' which is certain to be held if the 'misses' have let the paper down. On the home side many of the staff

reporters have been given their instructions overnight and do not attend the office until they have completed their assignment. But the Home News Editor must never fall into the trap of depleting unduly the staff at his immediate command. There must always be reporters ready in their room to dash off to any part of the country where the latest news has broken out, and it is perhaps one of the real thrills of the reporter's life that he has no idea whether he will be sleeping in his own bed at night or possibly be attending at the pithead of a colliery or awaiting the return of a lifeboat which has gone out to a vessel in distress. The advent of the aeroplane has speeded up the *tempo* of the reporter's life, but at the same time it has added enormously to its variety. That is one of the reasons why the reporter can never expect to adhere too rigidly to trade union hours of work. He cannot put on his hat and coat when the hour strikes if his job is not complete. But at the same time he will naturally expect, and generally receives, a *quid pro quo* from his News Editor on a later occasion.

The Oversea News Editor will probably begin his day, after he has read the newspapers, by going through the news which has arrived but which has not found its way into the paper. It may be that editorial space has been unusually tight and even good news stories have had to be put aside. It may be, on the other hand, that, at the centre, the authorities have not attached the same importance to an item of news as did the man on the spot, and the Oversea News Editor must be in constant touch with his staff correspondents in all parts of the world, chiding them if they tend to become prolix, praising them for good work and giving them confidential background information as to what the Editor is thinking about matters which have arisen in their areas. Both News Editors must keep a watchful eye on expenditure, but the Oversea News Editor particularly so. The establishment of a flat rate of a penny a word for cabling within the Commonwealth was a tremendous help, but there are still some parts of the world where the cost is terribly heavy. During the Persian oil dispute, for instance, the cable charges incurred by the news agencies and newspapers reached astronomical proportions.

During this time the managerial and the advertisement departments have been getting to grips with the problems of the day for, broadly speaking, they both keep the hours of a normal business establishment. In the advertisement section the advertisements which have come in by post or which are handed over the counter are being checked and prepared for the composing department, which generally works in two shifts, one during the day for the setting of classified and display advertisements and any 'stock' matter which need not be set during the rush hours of the evening, and one which arrives during the afternoon and by a process of 'staggered' hours remains on duty until the last moment that copy can possibly be set. Meanwhile the work of the maintenance staff has been going on and paper supplies have been arriving on fifteen-ton lorries. During the war years, and for too many post-war years as well, the delivery of paper was almost a trickle compared with the years immediately before 1939 owing to the heavy restrictions and the ever rising cost of newsprint. But now there is a real improvement and there is no more inspiring sight to the Fleet Street man than the procession of newsprint lorries threading its way through the congested City streets.

In the editorial department the afternoon sees the arrival of the late duty reporters and the sub-editors who deal with the home and oversea news, the sporting news and the news from the City including Stock Exchange prices. By that time the size of the night's paper and the amount of editorial space available have been settled and the sub-editors can get on with the task of preparing and compressing the vast amount of news which is arriving in a steady stream. The constant cry of the composing-room is for early copy and if the demand can be satisfied, life proceeds smoothly and happily. Most newspapers have adopted the system of editorial conferences at which the heads of the various editorial departments are able to exchange ideas, assess the news of the day and arrive at a general agreement as to the amount of space which will be available for each section. Needless to say they do not always agree as to the relative importance of the different kinds of news, but this rivalry is healthy and

keeps everybody on his toes. By the time the sub-editors have their break for supper the back of the work has been broken and most of the copy for the first edition is in the hands of the compositors. In the meantime the men who work in the various mechanical departments which come into action after the copy has been set have been arriving ready for the jobs which long training has taught them to perform so efficiently. This work, the reading, engraving, moulding, and casting will be described in a later chapter. It is enough to say here that every process must be performed punctually if the men who have arrived to supervise the running of the giant presses are to begin work on time and, when all is said and written, this is the vital moment in the creation of a newspaper. If there is a breakdown at this juncture the publisher will wring his hands, for he knows that trains will not be caught at the termini, the paper will be late in reaching the newsagent and the reader who misses it from his breakfast table will be declaring that the *Daily* —— is not what it was and that he will really have to change his literature. But let us assume that the 'run' has begun punctually and that there is no mishap. The publishing department swings into action. As the bundles of papers arrive on the delivery belts they are checked and packed, addressed to the appropriate wholesaler or newsagent and then transferred to the waiting vans with their drivers impatient to make their wild dash to Paddington, King's Cross, or one of the other railway stations. Then to a certain extent the staff can relax, but there is still work to be done on the later editions which carry the additional news that has arrived during the night. The pace gradually slackens but it is not until about four o'clock that the tension finally eases, and there are a few quiet moments until the charladies and the male cleaners of the heavy machinery take command, and the day's work starts all over again.

VII

THE REPORTER

THE YOUNG MAN or woman who sets out to obtain a foothold in Fleet Street or some other newspaper centre is almost invariably thinking of the editorial side of the paper, and therefore it is only right that the detailed examination of the newspaper of to-day should be concerned first of all with the ramifications of the editorial department. But it should be added that the recruit will be better fitted for his task if he has at least a smattering of knowledge concerning the other departments which help to produce the paper on which his bread and butter depend. The question of training for journalism must be discussed separately and it will be assumed in this chapter that the newcomer has obtained his job and is ready to begin work for the first time—although it is doubtful whether his first position will be on a national daily newspaper. It has always been the writer's belief that the best place to learn the business is in a well-run newspaper office outside London where the young journalist has to do anything that comes to hand and is in no danger of becoming a specialist at too early a stage in his career.

It is because I believe, after a lifetime in journalism, that the competent reporter and sub-editor are the salt of the earth that I place them and their chiefs first in a review of the component parts of the editorial department. This does not imply that they are expected to remain reporters and sub-editors for the rest of their lives. Specialization should certainly be encouraged at a later stage. The Home News Editor, who has probably been a reporter himself, has a reporting staff under his direction which he has himself selected subject, of course, to the final approval of the Editor and the Manager. In some of the national newspapers it may consist of anything up to fifty men and women; in others the number is much smaller because the reporters are not engaged in the 'chores' such as police court reporting and the covering of comparatively unimportant dinners and public meetings. They are content to leave these

to the Press Association, an organization which does a wonderful job for the newspapers by looking after engagements large and small and by rarely missing an important item of news. This leaves the staff reporter free to undertake work in which his paper is particularly interested—he is in fact already becoming a specialist at an early stage of his career. The News Editor expects his staff to be able to cover any task satisfactorily but if he is wise he also encourages his reporters to study special aspects of the national life. It is a great joy for a News Editor to know that he has on his staff a man who can deal with, say, transport, social welfare, local government, science, or archaeology when required to do so but is still not too proud to investigate a murder or provide a full report of the local town council if called on to do so. One of the best reporters I ever knew (in his youth he had been a farm worker in Canada) could always be relied on, when the diary of engagements was light, to produce a charming story on a little-known spot in London or an unusual local custom in some remote part of the country, which would attract far more attention from the readers than the report of an everyday occurrence. He was my conception of the ideal reporter, for he could turn his hand to anything and never grumbled about the job he was doing. Life to him was a great and an ever-changing adventure, and that surely is the way in which the reporter should approach his work.

One is often asked whether shorthand is an asset or a handicap to the modern reporter. I have no hesitation whatever in saying that in my view it is definitely a great advantage, and never once did I regret the time after normal school hours which I devoted to wrestling with the mysteries of Sir Isaac Pitman. I was told as a youngster that, if one was a proficient shorthand writer, then one remained in a groove and never did any other work than straight-forward reporting. But I remembered that Charles Dickens had been a shorthand writer in the Parliamentary Press Gallery and I did not feel that he had ever allowed himself to remain in a groove. The great advantage of shorthand is that once one has mastered it one never entirely loses it, and in my journalistic career I found that it came back

to me naturally on the odd occasions when I wanted to use it. A journalist who afterwards became a distinguished High Court Judge found that, on the bench, his knowledge of shorthand was invaluable; and I shall never forget the surprise of an officer who was lecturing to a Cadet battalion during the First World War when he was provided with a verbatim report of his address by a journalist turned soldier. For occasional notes at Press conferences, which grow in number every year, shorthand makes the journalist's life much easier and it has been the author's experience that when a public man is being interviewed he much prefers the use of shorthand to laborious long-hand or reliance on the memory. There is another point which is worthy of consideration. Practically all copy from an out-of-town engagement is now transmitted to the newspaper office by telephone. If the reporter can prepare his message in shorthand many valuable minutes will be saved. The young reporter should also be encouraged to learn typing and thereby win the affections of the sub-editor and the compositor. The handwriting of some of the best reporters is simply atrocious and this is particularly difficult in the case of anybody like a dramatic critic who is writing against time. Some terrible and even libellous mistakes come up in proof, but mercifully they rarely escape the eagle eye of the readers, to whom every writer on the editorial staff is indebted.

The reporter should also try to develop a good speaking voice. When so much of his work is done over the telephone, vital time may be lost if the reporter's voice is not clearly heard in the office. The copy-takers do a grand job but they are not superhuman and they hate having to ask the reporter to repeat a sentence. They are working at top pressure and if the words of the reporter come to them in a steady flow instead of in spasmodic jerks life can be much more pleasant. Nothing probably impresses a visitor to the editorial department of a newspaper more than the copy taker's room into which correspondents are pouring their messages from all parts of the world.

Although he does not always realize it, interviewing plays a tremendous part in the life of the reporter and it may be worth while devoting some attention to it. Even the youngest reporter,

when he is making calls for information round the police stations, the hospitals and the fire brigade, is in fact interviewing, and the extent to which the authorities are helpful depends to no small degree on the way in which the newspaperman comports himself. If he is cheerful and polite without in any way being subservient he will find that his opposite number is only too glad to be helpful, and the same thing will apply throughout his later career. Every time the reporter is sent to investigate an unusual happening he is bound to interview somebody. From this it is but a short step to the set interview, which is arranged in advance in order to obtain from a leader in a particular walk of life his views on a special subject for publication either as a first person interview or as a special article which may or may not appear under the signature of the man or woman who has been interviewed.

I would say that in the national newspapers the set interview is not as popular as it used to be, but it can still be very effective on special occasions. A striking example was an interview with Sir Jack Hobbs which was published by *The Times* on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. The young reporter, who was given the assignment well in advance, spent a few days in studying the career of the great cricketer and in framing the questions to which he wanted an answer. Hobbs fully entered into the spirit of the thing and the result was a splendid two-column question-and-answer interview which attracted world-wide attention. If the interview is to deal with a specific subject and is not intended to be a general survey of the world or of the locality in which the newspaper is published, the reporter must make certain that he has at least a rudimentary idea of the matters which he wishes his man to talk about. It is no good being ushered into the great man's presence and then waiting for something to turn up. I learnt this lesson when still a schoolboy. I attended special classes in journalism which had been organized at the City of London School and a number of leading personalities agreed to place themselves at the disposal of the students for interviewing purposes. I had to call upon that striking literary figure of half a century ago, Sir William Robertson

Nicoll. I still remember the terror with which I entered his study, and my chief recollection of him is a charming Scottish voice and a pair of enormously long white cuffs which he seemed to shoot out at you as he spoke. I asked him a few halting questions and then dried up. He weighed up the situation and with a smile said, 'If *I* were interviewing *me I* would put the following questions to *myself*.' Then he asked the questions and gave the replies, and furnished me with a first-class interview for which I gained much credit.

The young journalist would be well advised to make friends with the office librarian, who can generally provide a host of ideas and cuttings when he is told the name of the man who is to be interviewed. The reporter will sometimes be asked to submit a proof of his article to the man he has interviewed and, if time permits, he should comply with the request and make the stipulation that when it is returned the 'O.K.' should appear on every page. There can then be no post-mortem either on the interview or the reporter. But it must be made clear that the general sense of the interview must not be altered and that in agreeing to the request for a proof the desire is that the interview should be rounded off and that occasional words should be altered if they do not entirely convey the intended meaning. But if it is proposed to change 'I will' to 'I won't', then such an alteration cannot possibly be accepted. One piece of advice which may be given to the young journalist is that, while he should do everything possible to put his man at his ease, he should not talk too much or air his own views. When lecturing a year or two ago to young journalists I gave them a few 'Do's' and 'Don'ts' to ponder over and it may be useful to reproduce them in this volume.

DO

As far as you can, thoroughly study your man and the subjects about which you wish him to talk.

Show interest in the job and try to get on easy terms with your man quickly.

Go on the job well-dressed but not over-dressed.

Get an understanding at the outset that you are at liberty to publish any of his remarks unless he asks for special points to be regarded as confidential and as 'off the record'.

Submit a copy of your interview to your victim if time permits and see that when he returns it he 'O.K.s' every page.

Always remember that there is such a thing as the law of libel and that the indiscreet personal remark may cause a great deal of trouble.

DON'T

Think that you know more about the subject than the man you are interviewing, because you definitely do not.

Adopt a servile attitude, but at the same time show that you respect your man for what he has done.

Outstay your welcome. When you feel that you have got all you require do not hang about talking of crops or cricket. Remember that he may have another appointment even if you have not.

Feel that it is necessary to argue with your man if you do not agree with some of the views he expresses, because after all the interview is not a meeting of the local debating society.

Flourish a notebook in your man's face as though it was the newspaperman's Bible.

So much then for the individual interview. But, of late, other kinds of interview have come into being. There is the Press conference at which a minister or a leading figure in the world of industry, science, entertainment, or sport wishes to inform the newspapers of a development. His Public Relations Officer is told to get the journalists together to hear the world-shattering pronouncement, and it is generally left for him to decide whether he will make it a 'free for all' conference or a gathering limited to specialists like the Parliamentary or the Industrial Correspondents. Generally a Minister prefers to meet a party of experts because he realizes that knowledgeable and sensible questions will be put to him after his pronouncement. During the Second World War there were many intensely interesting

interviews of this kind. There were many gatherings at the Ministry of Information, for instance, when matters of vital importance to the nation were communicated—often under the pledge of strict secrecy for the time being, and I cannot recall a single occasion when that secrecy was violated. But on the other hand it must be admitted that there are other Press conferences and interviews which are simply a waste of time, where the information could have been issued by the Public Relations Officer in the form of a 'handout'.

The journalist should watch most carefully when interviews are arranged by Public Relations Officers representing private interests to make certain that an attempt is not being made to issue material which should really find its place in the advertisement columns. This, of course, applies only to the mass production type of interview and not to those cases where, at the request of an individual journalist, the Public Relations Officer or Press Officer arranges for a meeting with his chief. There is always controversy where newspapermen are gathered together as to whether the Public Relations Officer is a help or a hindrance to them in their work. The general feeling seems to be that if he knows his job thoroughly he can be a very real asset, provided that he does not erect a barrier between the reporter and the heads of departments. The ideal P.R.O. is the one who, when he receives a request for information, knows exactly the man within the organization who can provide it and, if necessary, is ready to bring into direct touch the inquirer and the person with the knowledge he wants. The ramifications of Government departments have grown so considerably in recent years that some kind of central office, such as the Public Relations Department provides, is recognized to be vital, provided always that it does not stifle the zeal of the individual journalist who wants to dig out his own story.

Two other types of interview which are not prevalent in this country may be referred to briefly. I have been fortunate enough to attend some of the meetings which the President of the United States holds with the newspaper correspondents in Washington, usually once a week. The procedure here is that

written questions must be submitted in advance to the President's Press Officer, and when the President replies to them he indicates whether he can be quoted for the information he imparts, whether he is not to be quoted as the source of the news, or whether he is speaking entirely off the record. If he has a particularly important statement to make he will generally issue copies of it at the close of the conference; this is probably a wise precaution, because few of the correspondents in the American capital seem to write shorthand. Another type of interview has been adopted in Moscow, where from time to time an enterprising foreign correspondent submits a series of questions to the Soviet chiefs. If he is fortunate he receives in due course a series of answers to his questions and these are usually handed over at the same time to the official Russian news agency for general circulation. But they are written answers and thus there is no chance of obtaining the realistic atmosphere which is the reward of the cut-and-thrust of personal cross-examination. It is quite certain that this type of 'interview' would not inspire any ambitious reporter with great enthusiasm if he were entrusted with the assignment.

VIII

THE PARLIAMENTARY REPORT

IT MAY BE convenient at this point to deal with the way in which the proceedings of Parliament are covered by the newspapers and by the Press Association and the Exchange Telegraph Company, the two news agencies which supply most of the home journals with their reports. There were times when most of the national newspapers had their own full staffs of Parliamentary reporters, but that is not the case today. *The Times* is the only newspaper which now prints a report prepared entirely by the members of its own staff. Other newspapers have a certain number of reporters to supplement the reports provided by the agencies, to keep a watchful eye on matters of local interest, and to cover them more fully than an agency can possibly do. In the case of *The Times* the staff consists of a Chief who has at his command a deputy and a full corps of competent reporters who in rotation take turns in the Press Gallery and, having written up their copy, are free until the next turn of duty to eat, read, or sleep. If there is an all night sitting, which of course can only be reported briefly in the morning paper, two 'victims' remain on duty until the House rises, as a summary of the proceedings must appear twenty-four hours later in order to maintain the continuity of the record. The reporters cover the proceedings in both Houses, but the task in the Upper House is not so heavy, as it is only on special occasions that the Peers sit after the dinner hour. In former days the reporters' copy was either telephoned to the office or sent by messenger, but now the system of teletype-setting has been installed with considerable success and its working is described in a later chapter (*The Newspaper of the Future*). Owing to the restrictions on newsprint most of the newspapers heavily reduced their Parliamentary reports during the last war and the years that followed. But there is no doubt that of late there has been a revived interest in the proceedings of Parliament which may be reflected in longer reports in the Press, although there can be no question

of returning to the days when they might run to two or three pages.

The Parliamentary reporter needs other qualifications in addition to a first-class knowledge of shorthand. To be really competent he must keep himself informed of international, national, and even local affairs, for he must be largely responsible for the selection of the material which he incorporates in his share of the report. Obviously his Chief cannot be expected to sit in the Press Gallery all day to guide him in his choice, although it is the Chief who must take the rap if the report does not include material which the Editor expected to find there. The task of the Chief is an onerous one. It is his responsibility to see that the report does not exceed the space allotted to it, although it is only fair to say that the expert reporter does not often exceed the estimate which has been given to him. But there is always a natural tendency for the reporter to think that he has had the most important 'take' of the sitting.

In former days it was the custom for some of the Parliamentary reporters to be engaged on an annual and some on a sessional basis. The men in the latter category were thus able to spend their Parliamentary recesses in any way they liked, for they received no salary during those periods. The system had its attractions for bachelors who wished to travel abroad in days when money went farther and passport restrictions were unknown. But the system was abandoned and nowadays the Parliamentary reporter is available during the recess for duty either as a reporter on the general staff or as a sub-editor. And he naturally plays a considerable part in a General Election campaign.

Working in close touch with the Parliamentary reporting staff but not a part of it are two most important persons—the Political or Lobby Correspondent (sometimes with an assistant) and the Sketch Writer who provides the daily summary of the proceedings of Parliament. In some of the popular newspapers the sketch and the report are merged into one article; this can be done with considerable success by a skilled writer provided he remembers that the article should be a fair account of the day's

proceedings, without party bias. The life of the Sketch Writer is not an easy one because it may often happen that, having written a highly competent article on the earlier proceedings of the sitting, it must be entirely scrapped on account of a more important debate later in the evening. It is not an easy task to settle down to write an entirely fresh article at a late hour of the evening when everything must be done in a great rush and the brain is growing jaded. But the Sketch Writer accepts this as one of the hazards of his calling, and often he is agreeably surprised how well his rushed contribution looks when he sees it in print.

The Political Correspondent is one of the most important cogs in the whole editorial machine. His Editor must be able to rely with confidence on his complete integrity and on his political and journalistic acumen. His task has been described as a two-way one. He must tell the country what Parliament is doing and what Ministers are planning, and on the other hand, if he is good at his job, he will also tell Ministers and Members alike what the country is thinking and what it may be doing at the next General Election. He holds a position of great trust and he must gain the confidence of the politicians of all parties among whom he lives. Through the years Members of Parliament have come to learn that the Lobby Correspondent can be trusted implicitly and that a confidence entrusted to him will never be betrayed. The result is that there is a real and sincere friendship between the politician and the journalist which makes work within the Palace of Westminster a pleasure. But the hours are long and the work is arduous and a paper's Political Correspondent never knows when his day's work will be done. During times of crisis such as the Abdication, the General Strike, and the formation of a new Government he may be working round the clock, but he has the satisfaction, at any rate, of knowing that he is helping to make history. In the writer's opinion the work of the Lobby Correspondent has increased considerably in recent years—largely because of the growing number of Press conferences now held by Ministers and the leaders of political movements. The correspondent may find two or three

have been called for a single afternoon, and meantime he must be keeping in touch with the daily events of Parliament, with his office, and with his typewriter. He takes everything in his stride, only hoping that his labours are fully appreciated by the persons who really count, his Editor and his Manager. Sometimes one hears surprise expressed that more Political Correspondents do not try to become M.P.s. The reason possibly is that in his job he sees the good and the bad points in all the political parties and the causes for which they are fighting, and he prefers to remain on the outside looking in. If the Political Correspondent can keep his health and his sense of humour there is no more interesting and exciting job in the newspaper world.

IX

THE NEWS EDITOR

HAVING HELD THE position myself it is perhaps natural for me to think that the News Editor is one of the most important personages in the editorial set-up—or the two News Editors if it happens that the home news and the oversea news are dealt with as separate entities. There are certain qualities that the News Editor simply must possess. He must have an infinite amount of patience and a keen interest in news of all kinds. He must have a good general educational background with a fair amount of historical, political, and economic knowledge. He must try to keep himself informed on every important development in the workaday world. He must enjoy reading the newspapers, the weeklies, and the magazines. He must not think that he can keep normal working hours, for it is more true of the News Editor than of anybody else that he is always on duty whether at home or in the office. He must be a good mixer, he must be on the look-out for news all the time, he must learn to scan the newspaper, and—perhaps the most important asset of all—he must be able to retain his sense of humour however depressing the situation may be.

His working day begins early. Once he gets to his office there is so much to be done that he has little time to examine thoroughly his own paper and those of rival managements. Therefore he must begin his reading with his early morning cup of tea and continue it in the train so that when he gets to his desk he has a fair idea of the contents of the morning papers. His assistant will have arrived earlier and will have prepared a list of his paper's exclusive news items and a more depressing list, that of the stories which the paper has missed. He will probably regard the 'scoops' as in the natural order of things, but he will certainly want to hold an inquest on the news which has been missed, primarily to satisfy himself that there is not a fault in the paper's methods of news gathering which needs to be eradicated.

Having dealt with the past he must immediately concern himself with the future and launch his plan of campaign for the next issue. Probably his first task will be to decide whether there is anything in any of the papers which needs to be followed up. It used to be Lord Northcliffe's dictum that a first-class news story will always stand up to one or two 'follow-up' stories, and the reporters can be put on to these right away. Next he must mark the diary and assign the reporters to attend meetings which ought to be specially covered and not left to the news agencies. He must also allot men to the new stories which have cropped up and to inquiries which may not produce immediate results but which may be the preliminary step towards a first-class article a few days later. But he must watch his man-power closely. He must not fritter it away and he must not be left in the position that if later in the morning big news comes in the reporters' room is empty. It is certainly not false economy to have one or two reporters sitting idle; if they are wise they will spend their free time in reading newspapers, books, or periodicals which can always be borrowed from the office library. It is the great thrill of the News Editor's life that he can never guess when the big news will break. One News Editor certainly will never forget the moment when a pale-faced messenger tore an item off the tape machine and put on his desk the first news of the death of King George the Sixth. Or another moment when, as he sat quietly by his fireside, the telephone rang in the late evening and he was informed that his paper's special correspondent in Ireland had been kidnapped in the heart of Dublin and carried off to Cork.

Assuming that the morning is a normal one the News Editor, having allotted his reporters, will next turn his attention to the preparations for the morning news conference, for which he is primarily responsible. This is generally attended by the Editor or one of his assistants, the News Editors and their assistants, the picture editor, the cartographer, a representative of the City department, and a man from the circulation department, which should always be kept in close touch with the news as it arises. This conference is usually of an informal character

when ideas on the day's news and on space requirements are freely exchanged in preparation for the more important conference which will be held in the late afternoon. It will be surprising if during the morning his telephone has not been ringing incessantly—sometimes for good reasons but often for very little reason at all. It is amazing how many members of the public think it necessary to ring up their favourite newspaper if they have a problem to decide. It may be the time of the changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace; it may be a question about the precise meaning of a sentence in a complicated Act of Parliament; it may even be for advice on how to deal with a recalcitrant child or pet animal, but they all help to add a spice of variety to the News Editor's life. The morning of the death of King George the Sixth was particularly memorable. For reasons best known to themselves the B.B.C. withheld the news from the public for half an hour after the time at which it had been agreed that it should be released. But even without the help of the broadcasting service the news spread and every newspaper office was bombarded with telephone inquiries. The private exchanges were overwhelmed. As soon as one incoming call had been dealt with another took its place, and this continued throughout the day. Had it not been for the fact that every national newspaper has a number of lines which do not appear in the telephone book and which by-pass the office exchange the newspapers would have been entirely marooned at a most vital time.

The News Editor will also have been in communication with many of the special writers, who do much of their work away from the office, and with the heads of other departments. He will have gone through the 'marked paper', in which the contributions from everybody except salaried members of the staff and the news agencies is priced up, in order to make certain that correspondents have been sufficiently well paid for their labours, and he will make a mental note to write a letter of congratulation to any who may have specially distinguished themselves. It should be a definite policy on his part always to write a note of appreciation to any reporter, whether on the staff or not, who

has done a good job, for journalists are very human and welcome the occasional message of congratulation. Incidentally, if bouquets are handed out from time to time, the reporters do not resent the brickbat which may sometimes have to be hurled at them. There may be a few minutes left of the morning session in which some of his correspondence is transferred to his secretary's note-book, and then comes a welcome break for lunch. In the opinion of the writer the News Editor should not be chained to his desk all the time, because good contacts are necessary for the maintenance of a first-class news service. For that reason most of the News Editors of the national newspapers are given an entertaining allowance and most of it is spent at the luncheon table. One result of the Second World War and the aerial attack on London was that the habit of dining out largely disappeared and the most convenient way of transacting business was at lunch. This state of affairs has continued and the News Editor who is anxious to maintain his contacts should lunch out of his office two or three times a week. On other days he will be satisfied if he can snatch half an hour in the office mess.

By the time he returns to his room the pace has quickened. Copy is beginning to arrive in a steady stream and either the News Editor or his assistant should go through every line of it. News lurks in most unexpected places—in an apparently dry-as-dust Blue Book, in a list of Wills and Bequests, or in a company meeting. The early editions of the evening papers must be watched carefully. Preliminary arrangements must be made for covering engagements on the following day, accommodation must be booked for reporters who in the near future are going on out-of-town engagements, an inter-departmental conference may be summoned to discuss a new development, and, what is most important of all, the programme must be arranged for the editorial conference which is held in most offices in the late afternoon and which is really the central point of the day's activities. The custom differs in every office, but broadly speaking the conference over which the Editor presides is attended by the head of every editorial department. The agenda is a news

Daily Mail

BUDGET SPECIAL

NO. 18,819 THREE HALFPENCE FOR QUEEN AND COMMONWEALTH THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1955

BUTLER SQUEEZES THE WIVES

Purchase tax goes up on everything from mops to cars

Comment

MORE LESS BUDGET

Spending

Splurging

Shocking

DEARER

Telephones

Pots and pans

TV and radio

By Daily Mail Reporter

MR. BUTLER'S war on spending begins today—with sharp increases in purchase tax on everything from a kitchen mop to a luxury car.

In his 77-minute emergency Budget yesterday the Chancellor raised all purchase tax rates by a fifth and swept everything the housewife buys for the kitchen into the 30 per cent tax range.

LUXURY TAX IS UP TO 90%

CLOTHES, SHOES, GO UP—AND DOWN

TAX COMES OFF THE CRADLE

Turn to Page 2, Column 1

AB—RAB CADAB—RAB!

YOUR PRICES TODAY

CAR CONTEST WINNERS TOMORROW!

TRANSPORT MEN URGE STRIKE

Tory MPs warn on pay demands

Two in revolt over the Budget

METHODIST LEADER SPEAKS ON PRINCESS

DR. LESLIE WEATHERHEAD, president of the Methodist Conference, issued a statement last night about Princess Margaret. He is the first important Church leader to comment directly on the future of the Princess.

ROBIN GOODFELLOW

Turn to Page 5, Col. 3

Drastic housing changes by Sandys today

AND RENTS WILL GO UP

By WALTER TERRY

Clear the slums

In second place

Girl held on 'baby' charge

M Faure faces vital vote

Lonardi calls for austerity

Derek Roy's car stolen

TOOLMAKERS BACK

Dr A: Hint of heart trouble

WEATHER

Britain ousts oasis invaders

By NOEL MONKS

Two wounded

DAILY MAIL: FLEET ST. 6000

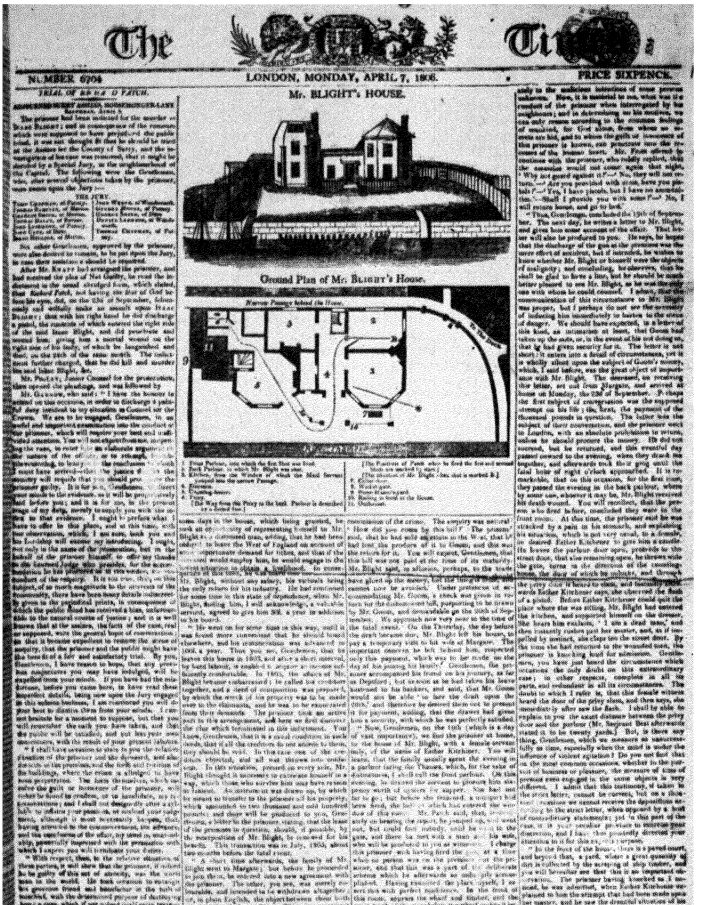
A WOMAN DOCTOR WROTE RECENTLY:

'Guinness helps the doctor and cheers the patient'

GUINNESS IS GOOD FOR YOU

The front page of the *Daily Mail* on the occasion of Mr Butler's introduction of the emergency autumn Budget in 1955. It will be seen that the page includes news, editorial comment, and advertising.

PLATE 6



The
LONDON, MONDAY, APRIL 7, 1806.
PRICE SIXPENCE.

NUMBER 6704

TRIAL OF BRUCE FOR MURDER.

Mr. BLIGHT'S HOUSE.

Ground Plan of Mr. BLIGHT'S House.

One of the rare instances of *The Times* publishing news on its front page, on the occasion of a trial for murder at the Surrey Assizes in the year 1806. The trial was held in the neighbourhood of London, and not in Surrey, in consequence of rumours which were supposed to have prejudiced local opinion.

THE TIMES WEDNESDAY JUNE 3 1953

THE CROWNING OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

One of several full pages of pictures published by *The Times* on the morning after the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The top picture shows the impressive moment when the Archbishop of Canterbury held aloft St Edward's Crown before placing it on Her Majesty's head.

PLATE 8

The British Gazette

Published by His Majesty's Stationery Office.

No. 1. LONDON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 1926. ONE PENNY.

FIRST DAY OF GREAT STRIKE

Not So Complete as Hoped by its Promoters

PREMIER'S AUDIENCE OF THE KING

Miners and the General Council Meet at House of Commons

FOOD SUPPLIES

No Hoarding: A Fair Share for Everybody

HOLD-UP OF THE NATION

Government and the Challenge

NO FLINCHING

The Constitution or a Soviet

COMMUNIST LEADER ARRESTED

Mr. Saklatvala, M.P., Charged at Bow Street

SEQUEL TO MAY DAY SPEECH

THE "BRITISH GAZETTE" AND ITS OBJECTS

Reply to Strike Makers' Plan to Paralyse Public Opinion

REAL MEANING OF THE STRIKE

Conflict Between Trade Union Leaders and Parliament

MILK DISTRIBUTION

Concern at Stoppage in the Metropolis

LAW COURTS AT WORK

Judge on the Chair at the Strand

LONDONERS' TREK TO WORK.

G.P.O. SERVICES

Restrictions on Telegrams and Letters

THE KING RECEIVES THE PREMIER

SPECIAL CONSTABLES

Appeal to Capable Citizens in London and Essex

RESERVE OF OFFICERS

PROSPECTS AT STAKE.

The front page of the first number of *The British Gazette*, the daily newspaper published the Government during the General Strike of 1926. The Editor was Mr Winston Churcl

schedule which has been prepared by the Home News Editor and his staff, with a separate page prepared by the Oversea News Editor dealing with all the news which has come in from his realm. The news of the day is listed as far as possible in its order of importance and it is the News Editor's job to explain it item by item. He must be ready to stand cross-examination on any detail, and the ordeal is a trying one, for he may have omitted to make himself familiar with the very point which other members of the conference consider to be the most important. It is then that the News Editor needs his sense of humour more than at any other moment.

Before the conference he has talked to the Chief of the Parliamentary staff so that he is able to report what is happening at Westminster and the amount of space which the Parliamentary Chief is asking for but does not always get. The hot news of the day having been examined, there is time for a brief examination of the other editorial features including the pictures, the entertainments page, the special articles, the City news and the sport, and it is probable that the Editor will indicate the subjects he has selected for the night's leading articles. The conference is attended by representatives of both the day and night staffs and its great value is that it enables the old guard and the new guard to exchange ideas before they disperse to their various stations.

When the conference is ended the News Editor can breathe more freely because his day's work is drawing to an end, emergencies excepted. A final glimpse at the evening papers; a perusal of the tape machines; a visit to the reporters' room to see that everything is running smoothly and that copy is not being held up; a talk with the Chief Sub-Editor to smooth out any difficulties which may threaten and then, most welcome sight, the arrival of the man who will relieve him, the Night News Editor. As the latter must remain on deck until the early hours of the morning it may have been impossible for him to attend the afternoon conference, so the News Editor must inform him of all that has happened to ensure that there is no lack of continuity.

The Night News Editor's work may not be as arduous as that of his opposite number, but it is performed under conditions of much greater difficulty. He is always working against time and big news has a nasty habit of breaking round about edition time. He and his assistant must gather preliminary news on the telephone, and one of his first tasks in the event of, say, a big railway or air disaster must be to see how quickly reporters can be got to the spot by road or by specially chartered aircraft. Members of the public should never be troubled unnecessarily on the telephone during the night, but there are occasions of sudden emergency when this cannot be avoided and the author seeks absolution on behalf of the reporters who have this delicate task to perform. The Night News Editor and the Chief Sub-Editor should always work hand in glove. There are times when the former is apt to tear his hair if he discovers that an important piece of news is lying on the sub-editor's desk and he has not been told. But there is, of course, the other side of the picture, when the Night News Editor has omitted to tell his colleague that he is working on a big news story that may require a fair amount of space which has not been budgeted for. Most of the news during the night will come in by telephone and a thoroughly efficient copy-taking department is essential. The importance of its work is not always fully appreciated even in the newspaper office, although the mis-hearing of a single word on the telephone may be disastrous. There was, for example, the occasion in 1920 when the then Lord Bessborough collapsed and died at a dinner in Birmingham. On the following morning a leading newspaper reported the death of Lord Desborough. Of recent years Press telegrams have taken so long in transmission and have become so expensive that there is really no alternative to the telephone for the transmission of late news. But both the copy-taker and the Chief Sub-Editor will always keep their fingers crossed to guard themselves against the undetected error.

X

THE SUB-EDITORS' ROOM

IT HAS OFTEN been said, and even by distinguished sub-editors in lectures to young journalists, that the Sub-Editor is one of the least popular men in the newspaper office. There may be some truth in this, but on the other hand the reporter soon comes to realize that the sub-editor's job is an immensely difficult one and that on the whole he is entitled to the sympathy rather than the censure of his colleagues. There are even occasions nowadays when the author of a story will admit that it has been improved by the pruning and trimming to which it has been subjected in the sub-editors' room. Arrangements differ on the various newspapers, but I should say that in the majority of the daily newspaper offices the sub-editing of home and oversea news is carried out in the same room although possibly by separate staffs. The old days of water-tight compartments are passing, and on the whole one feels that a single room makes for efficiency and smooth running. It is still desirable, however, that the sub-editor, however good an all-rounder he may be, should interest himself in one special subject so that the Chief Sub-Editor knows that he has around him a group of experts on whom he can rely.

The sub-editors' room on a morning paper begins its work in the early afternoon, and the first member of it to put in an appearance will be the copy-taster. His initial job is to go through the vast amount of copy which has already arrived; to discard the material which his paper will not be likely to use, and to assess the value of what still remains after his preliminary survey. If he is wise he will have consulted the news-room to discover how much editorial space is available and what later stories have still to come in before the first edition goes to press. He can thus obtain a rough idea of the space available for the various sections of the news. He knows, for example, that it is hopeless for the sub-editors to send out to the composing room a column report of a murder trial when there is no possible chance of

publishing more than a quarter of a column. By the time his colleagues arrive in the next few hours—and duties are staggered because the room must be staffed throughout the night—the copy-taster has decided which man will cope with a particular piece of news and to what length the story shall run subject to the overriding decision of the Chief Sub-Editor when the prepared copy is laid before him. The first hour or two are fairly heavy going because the composing room has to be supplied with a continuous flow of material and any hold-up in the early stages may have disastrous reactions later in the evening. But gradually the piles of raw material grow less as the sub-editor, having completed the preparation of a news story, submits it to the Chief for his final approval before it is sent out to be set. In some offices the staff of the room includes a 're-write sub-editor' who has full authority to reconstruct a story if it is felt that as written the material does not fit the style of the paper. But many papers do not approve of this additional stage in the sub-editors' room. They prefer to rely on the judgement of the reporters to produce the kind of copy that the paper wants, and they realize how heart-breaking it can be for the reporter who feels that he had written a first-class piece of copy to see a version of it in the paper which he cannot recognize as his handiwork and which he certainly does not appreciate.

Proofs of all copy when it has been set are sent to the sub-editors' room, and it should be a definite rule that every man should read in type the stories which he has dressed up, and give his 'O.K.' before they finally go forward into the paper. He can then discover whether he has inadvertently omitted an important point in the story or has let slip through a sentence with a double meaning, which is the nightmare of any newspaper. Particular attention should be paid to police court and other law reports to make certain that both sides are given a fair show and that the balance has been evenly held. One of the first complaints to be brought before the recently formed General Council of the Press was that a newspaper had omitted a remark by the chairman of a bench of magistrates that the bench had not taken into account certain allegations by the prosecuting solicitor against a

defendant because they felt that they had not been substantiated. The newspaper declined to publish an explanatory statement in a later issue when asked to do so and the Press Council expressed its regret that this had not been done. It is obviously impossible for any newspaper to publish a verbatim report of a police court case, but the sub-editor must remember that it is his duty to preserve a fair balance all round.

Having passed his proofs and having dealt with his last piece of copy the work of the sub-editor is complete, but if he is keen on his job he will, when he arrives on the following afternoon, examine the other papers to see how his rivals dealt with the stories with which he was specially concerned. The man who reads only his own paper will not go very far.

The sub-editors on early turns, then, have gone home, but there is still a skeleton staff on duty ready to prepare news which may arrive after the first edition has gone to press and which must be included in the later editions. This means that some of the stories already in the paper must either be removed bodily or cut and trimmed in order to provide the blank spaces required. This is a job which calls for great skill and tact and it must be accomplished speedily. The easy way is to cut out the last paragraph, but this may be disastrous if a piece of news is being told in chronological order. It was for this reason that Lord Northcliffe once issued a ukase that the vital news must be brought out in the first paragraph, and this course is now generally followed by the reporter for his own protection.

Mr H. W. Buxton, for many years on the staff of *The Times* and one of the finest sub-editors who ever lived, endeavoured in a lecture to the Institute of Journalists to describe the qualifications needed by a good sub-editor in addition to a sound general education, a wide range of reading, and a broadly sympathetic outlook on life. He should, said Mr Buxton, have an easy command of good English and be able not only to express clearly his own ideas but to turn the diffuse, slipshod, or roundabout language of others into direct, simple, and lucid wording without changing its meaning. He must be a man of even temperament able to keep a cool head when the pace is at its hottest

and not get rattled when late news necessitates a big and sudden change in the balance of a story. He must be scrupulously fair and always on his guard against doing an injustice through a fault of either omission or commission, whether the offence be actionable or not. I am indebted to Mr Buxton for permission to quote a list of the more important qualifications for which a colleague of his, a copy-taster, looked in the men round him at the sub-editors' table:

An instinct for news
Ability to make decisions
Ruthlessness
Conscientiousness, keenness on the job, and some ideals
A good memory
Health and sight which can stand the strain of continued night work
A sense of humour sufficient to forestall *Punch* and kindred papers.

If any reader feels that he possesses all these qualifications he can enter the journalistic field with complete confidence; for the perfect sub-editor is a *rara avis* who need never be out of employment.

XI

NEWS FROM OVERSEA

ONE OF THE great advantages that the Home News Editor has over his colleague who deals with the news from oversea is that he has direct personal contact with his reporters and with his representatives in the large centres outside London. The Oversea News Editor only sees his correspondents on the rare occasions when they spend their holidays in this country or when he is able to persuade the management that he should undertake a grand tour of the world's capitals to see for himself the conditions in which the journalist abroad has to work. It is very desirable that whenever possible the journalist who has been singled out for work as a Foreign Correspondent should spend some time as a foreign sub-editor in the paper's head office in this country. In this way he learns how oversea messages are handled and the importance attached at home to the various capitals. When he telephones his copy from Washington, Berlin, or Tokyo he will be much better equipped if he carries in his memory a picture of the conditions at the receiving end, for the telephoning of news from far-distant countries is a fine art at both ends. Literally pounds may be wasted if there is the slightest delay or hesitation in dictation or if words have to be repeated. The public have little idea of the heavy cost borne by a national newspaper in maintaining its oversea news service at a high standard.

The news from oversea reaches the newspaper from three main sources—its salaried whole-time representatives in the principal capitals and other important centres such as New York; its local correspondents who generally have other employment and represent the paper on a part-time basis; and the news agencies of which Reuters is the most important. There is hardly a spot in the civilized world where Reuters is not represented and the news which it issues in a never-ending stream is the lifeblood of journalism. Every newspaper, if it can afford to do so, prefers to have its independent sources of news supply,

and the reader likes to have the opportunity of reading more than one account of an important happening. During the Second World War it became necessary for the newspapers to pool their resources on some of the most important operations. But it was done reluctantly and nobody grieved when it became possible to end this state of affairs. The great merit of Reuters is that a newspaper can be assured that it will not miss an important news item, but it is certain that the Chief Sub-Editor will take out the Reuter copy from the paper as soon as the story from his own correspondent comes into the office.

The position of resident staff correspondent is one that is eagerly sought. If he can stand up to the job the representative of a British newspaper will hold an honoured position in a foreign capital, because it is recognized that only the pick of the profession are selected; and if he is a fluent speaker of the national language he begins with a great advantage. If he is wise he will keep in close touch with his office, and the memoranda which a newspaper receives from its correspondents are of the greatest value to the Editor and to leader writers. In the same way the Foreign Editor of the paper should keep his correspondents fully aware of the trend of thought in London. The task of the Foreign Correspondent is a heavy one, for he is often single handed and working under high pressure. There are times when he feels cut off from his colleagues and when he wonders whether the man in the office fully realizes that the difference in time may make working conditions terribly difficult for the correspondent who is in New York, Vancouver, or Buenos Aires. Like the workers at home he will appreciate the occasional message of encouragement and congratulation.

The ideal system would be to have a staff correspondent at every point, but obviously this is not possible and a local correspondent must be employed. He generally does a very good job, but does not carry the weight of the staff man. His first loyalty will always be to his own local newspaper.

The Oversea News Editor's day runs on much the same lines as that of the Home News Editor. On arrival at the office in the morning he will first compare the oversea news of his

own paper and that of his rivals. He may find an indignant message from the sub-editors that the correspondent at X has either sent nothing or far too much of a happening, and later in the day he will possibly be crossing swords with the sub-editors because they have held over what he considers to be a really important piece of news. He must always be watching the transmission costs, for they can easily become a crippling burden, and in some ways his administrative work may be heavier than that of his Home News colleague. He must plan his side of the news conferences; his work may at any time be interrupted by callers; and all the time he must be wading through the vast amount of news which is pouring in from all sources, in order to ease the burden of the sub-editors when they arrive. He must keep in the closest touch with the map department. In foreign messages a clear map, not too overladen with detail, is invaluable to the reader who is anxious to follow news intelligently. There must be continuous liaison with the picture department and it is vital that the picture editor should know at the earliest possible moment of any news which is likely to have a pictorial angle. One of the greatest 'scoops' of all time was secured when Lord Carnarvon agreed with Lord Northcliffe that *The Times* should have the exclusive news and pictures of the finding of the tomb of Tutankhamen in Egypt. The news was tremendous and was read eagerly in every part of the world —but the pictures which followed were perhaps even more impressive. The same can be said of the pictorial record of the conquest of Mount Everest. The wonderful coverage of both these events was only made possible by the complete co-operation of the news and the picture departments, and one of the most striking features of the production of the daily newspaper is the comradeship which exists between all the departments. A well-run newspaper is a companionship in the best sense of the word. One is often asked whether the publication of the Everest news on the morning of the Queen's Coronation was just a happy coincidence or whether it had been held up. It was most definitely a coincidence. The news did not reach London until late on the previous afternoon, and in any case no journal would

be rash enough to hold up an exclusive piece of news and risk seeing its thunder stolen by a rival.

There has of recent years been a tremendous speeding up in the transmission of news and the day has long since passed when it was necessary to hire special ships to get the news to England, to rely on a pigeon post, or to use balloons to receive intelligence from a beleaguered city. But the Mount Everest story is a reminder that there are occasions when great difficulties have to be overcome and the most careful preliminary planning is essential. *The Times* gave some indication of this in an article which it published on 12 November 1953, when it said:

> 'The news that Everest had been climbed was brought into the Editorial conference in the late afternoon of June 1. Mr. William Ridsdale, head of the Foreign Office News Department, had at that moment telephoned to pass on the brief message from the British Embassy in Katmandu "Everest climbed Hilary Tenzing twenty ninth all well". The Special Correspondent of *The Times* with the Expedition learnt the news on May 31 in Camp IV at 22,000 feet. With the help of a member of the expedition, he made the descent of the Cwm and the Icefall—rendered more difficult than ever by a thaw —reaching Base Camp long after dark. There he typed out a code message "Snow conditions bad stop advanced base abandoned May 29 stop awaiting improvement all well." This, decoded, gave the information exactly as received.
>
> 'A runner took the dispatch by first light to the small wireless station at Namche. From there it was flashed to Katmandu, whence it was sent, by courtesy of H.M. Ambassador, to the Foreign Office. Thus it was that the news reached London in time for publication on the day of the Coronation.'

There is one other aspect of the Oversea News Editor's work which should be touched on briefly. Many of the national newspapers recover a part of the cost of their foreign service by sharing it with perhaps one or two papers in Britain which they do not consider to be in serious competition with them, and

XIII

THE SPECIAL WRITER

IT IS PROBABLY accurate to say that the national newspapers and most of the leading papers published outside London have at their command writers who can deal with almost any subject under the sun at a moment's notice. It does not follow that they are whole-time salaried members of the staff, for there are many subjects on which special guidance may not be required for weeks on end. In such cases the writer either receives a retaining fee or is paid space rates for the material which he contributes, and this of course is only one part of his income. Whether these articles are signed or appear under the heading of 'our special correspondent' depends on two things, the eminence of the writer and the policy of the newspaper, which may prefer that all its articles shall appear anonymously, however distinguished the author may be in his own walk of life.

But the special writer who is a full-time member of the editorial staff is generally a very busy man indeed. As an example one can take the case of the journalist who has decided, usually after a spell of general reporting, to concentrate on labour and industrial matters. In the early part of the century the general reporter would take any labour news in his stride, but with the growing power of the trade unions and the political labour movement, specialization became necessary, until to-day the Labour or Industrial Correspondent is one of the most important cogs in the editorial machine. He must be a man of many parts. As he usually attends the annual conference of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress he must be a good descriptive writer who can paint a vivid picture of the proceedings and give the reader a good idea of the cut and thrust of the debates. He must be strictly impartial in his reports, but at the same time he must be able to advise his Editor on the merits and demerits of any proposal which is brought forward. He must be well read in the history of the Labour movement and, if he is going to be good at his job, he must be a good

mixer who can meet the leaders of capital and labour with equal facility.

A position which carried with it very heavy responsibilities during the World Wars was that of the writer who dealt with matters of national defence. Nowadays some newspapers have a Defence Correspondent who looks after the activities of all the service departments, but others still retain separate Naval, Military, and Air Correspondents, and possibly a member of the staff who devotes special attention to civil defence although not as a whole-time job. In war-time these members of the staff carried in their heads much highly confidential information, imparted to them under the pledge of strict secrecy. One Military Correspondent told me that in the days immediately preceding the allied invasion of Europe he was almost afraid to retire to rest because he might talk military secrets during his sleep. In peace-time the Service writers are as much concerned with policy as with exercises and manœuvres, and though their work may not be as hard as in war-time it is still of the highest importance. The Air Correspondent is probably the most travelled member of the staff. One day he may be working in his office and the next he may be in Africa with Australia looming ahead at the week-end. He must be prepared to fly anywhere at any time and in any type of machine, and he must keep himself fully informed about machines which are still on the Air Ministry's secret list and those which have only reached the drawing-board stage. There must be occasions when the Air Correspondent wonders how much longer his luck will hold, but he never betrays it in his writings and the author would like to pay a respectful tribute to the men who carried out so many dangerous assignments under war conditions and never lost their sense of humour.

With the vast developments in the British motor industry, the position of Motoring Correspondent has become one of special responsibility. When competition between the various manufacturers is so acute, the public must to some extent rely on the judgement of the writers on motoring both in the general and in the technical press, for it is the natural tendency of every maker

of a new type of car to inform the world that it is the'best ever'. The Motoring Correspondent must therefore have considerable technical knowledge and must be prepared to express his views without fear or favour, and also without regard to the feelings of his advertisement department. If he is wise he will regard himself as the friend and adviser of the ordinary everyday motorist not only about the car in which he rides but about the roads on which he travels. He should keep himself well informed of traffic conditions in all parts of the country and of all legislation affecting the traveller. He will expect to cover all the big motor shows and road events, and with some of the correspondents it is probably true to say that they are almost as well acquainted with the route to Monte Carlo as with the Great North Road. It is perhaps superfluous to add that the writer on motoring must be a man of the strictest integrity who would never under any circumstances accept a favour from a car manufacturer who was trying to gain an advantage over a rival.

The remarkable development of sound broadcasting and television in recent years has created a new class of special writer, the Wireless Correspondent, and his job is definitely a full-time one on the national newspapers. He must have a technical knowledge of his subject, but he must also have a critical mind that is able to assess the merit of programmes from the viewpoint of the average listener. The criticisms of both sound and sight programmes are studied with deep interest by a large proportion of readers and the critic must be able to put himself into sympathy with the fireside listener. Even the most distinguished dramatic critics are not averse to expressing their written views on the more important television plays, and they can be of great assistance to the ordinary viewer, particularly if there is to be a second performance of the play later in the week. But they must not have their heads in the clouds; if the viewer feels that 'that is just what I should have liked to say if I had the power of expressing myself' the critic is satisfying his public without in any way surrendering the right to express his personal opinions and to criticize without fear or favour.

The production of the nation's food, particularly in time of

war, has become such a vital subject that there is room for a member of the editorial staff to deal exclusively with agriculture and with food. Here again the journalist must have specialized knowledge, but he must also keep himself up to date in the political field as much as in the cornfield, for in modern conditions food and politics have become closely interwoven.

Naturally the custom on every newspaper varies, but broadly it may be taken that the writers who specialize in politics, labour affairs, defence, broadcasting, television, agriculture, motoring, the arts, and on the many aspects of sport, are full-time members of the staff. But the News Editor also has at his command those other part-time specialists who deal with almost every conceivable subject from astronomy to zoology, from archery to horticulture and from archaeology to stamp collecting.

XIV

OTHER EDITORIAL DEPARTMENTS

IT CAN BE assumed that by this time a great deal of the material which is to appear in the following morning's edition will be in the composing room. It will have received a large amount of the copy supplied by the staff reporters, the local correspondents, and the news agencies which the home sub-editors have been preparing. The first batch of copy from oversea correspondents and news agencies will likewise be in hand; most of the leading articles are being put into type unless some urgent subject has arisen at a late hour; stock exchange prices and most of the sporting news will be in type, and it is time that one looked round some of the other editorial departments which will be contributing their quota of copy. One of the most important to a quality newspaper is 'Letters to the Editor', the great forum in which all points of view can be freely expressed. Letters are submitted to the newspaper on the basis that no payment will be made for them and that the widespread publicity which is obtained is in itself sufficient reward. The number of letters submitted is far in excess of the space available, and there are some persistent letter writers who insist on airing their views on every possible occasion. Few newspapers have any use for the persistent and generally boring correspondent. It is safe to say, however, that every letter is carefully read and judged, although obviously not by the Editor himself who can only have time to read a few which have been selected by his assistants. Broadly it may be said that the letter which comes from somebody who knows his subject from top to bottom and can express himself clearly is always welcome, whether the writer is a leading politician or a coal miner, a teacher or a taxi driver, a city magnate or a housewife. If he or she will obey the injunction to keep the letter short it will stand a far better chance of publication than if it is spread over several pages, and if he is wise he will see that his letter is sent to one paper only. *The Times* and some of the other quality papers make it a strict rule not to

publish a letter which has been sent elsewhere. It may be argued that such a course reacts harshly if the letter is pleading for some charitable cause, but in such cases the newspapers are generally prepared to publish a summary of it in their news columns. The publication of a 'Letter to the Editor' may sometimes cause a political sensation, but in the same way the refusal to publish may have repercussions. Possibly the best-known example of this was the refusal of *The Times* during the First World War to publish a letter from Lord Lansdowne because Mr Geoffrey Dawson, the Editor, felt that it was against the national interest to publish an appeal from anybody, however highly placed, for peace by negotiation before the victory had been won. The *Daily Telegraph* accepted the letter a day or two later, but Dawson, although he was severely criticized, had no regrets for trying to stop the publication of what *The Times* described as 'an extraordinarily foolish and mischievous letter'.[1]

A letter to the Editor on any subject generally leads to a spate of others and it then becomes a difficult and delicate matter to decide when a correspondence is to be closed. Somebody will always complain that the gag has been applied to prevent him putting his views forward, but this of course is nonsense. Space is limited and if any topic, however popular, were allowed to run indefinitely, new subjects, which are always cropping up, would be stifled. It is essential that a correspondence column should deal with the vital matters of the moment in which the readers are interested. More than one complaint has been made to the General Council of the Press that a correspondence has been closed before the views of a particular organization have been expressed, but the Council rightly takes the view that it is solely for the Editor to decide when the guillotine must fall. The number of letters which come into an office is very large. The general practice is to index them and for a member of the editorial staff to go through them and sort out the grain from the chaff so that the Editor or an assistant editor can make a final selection of the letters for publication. In some cases a rejected letter may be returned to the writer, but this is never guaranteed.

[1] *The History of The Times*, Volume IV, pages 335–40.

The obituary department must be regarded as something of a macabre institution, but it is absolutely necessary. Presumably there are very few people nowadays who believe that the appreciation of a departed public figure which they read in their morning paper was written in the limited time available between the reception of the news and the printing of the obituary. Every newspaper must contain in its archives thousands of these estimations of men and women, which they hope will not be required for many years, and it is the task of the head of the obituary department and his staff to see that these articles are not only in stock but are always kept up to date. There are few things in the editorial columns which are likely to be so full of traps. If the notice has been written for some years and has not been revised, the subject of it may have held new offices which are not recorded; he may have married or have been divorced; he may have had more children or lost them. The head of the obituary department realizes that he must emulate Agag and walk delicately. But the greatest tragedy of all comes when, perhaps owing to the mishearing of a name on the telephone, a living person appears in the obituary column. This, as mentioned earlier, *has* happened in some of the most important newspapers. The wise course to adopt after the accident is for the Editor to print in a very prominent position a full and handsome apology and to make no effort to hide or gloss over the mistake. On the whole the public man has a keen sense of humour and he will probably relish the newspaper's assessment of his contribution to the national life—always providing that it is a just one.

The head of the obituary department must keep a close eye on the world's news in order to see that his records are as complete as possible. The little-known politician of to-day may be the dictator of to-morrow; a new star may arise at any moment in the world of entertainment or sport, a scientist may achieve sudden fame, and the newspaper must always be ready to make its assessment. It is remarkable how rarely it is caught napping, although the writer recalls one memorable occasion when a soldier with a world-wide reputation died suddenly and a national newspaper was completely unprepared. It happened

that the news came early in the day and few readers of the newspaper, when they read the perfect tribute on the following day, could have guessed at the agony through which the obituary department had passed. One of the troubles of the department is the number of people who wish to write tributes to a friend after the obituary notice has been published. There can only be room for one or two at the most and it is a delicate task to make the choice.

Turning to a brighter side, the entertainment department will also be making its call upon editorial space. Broadly speaking the department deals with all the arts including drama, music, painting, sculpture, films, broadcasting and television, and the work of the department has grown so considerably in recent years that the chief of it must have at his disposal an army of critics and news gatherers. The day has long passed when the newspapers were inclined to regard both films and wireless as curiosities which hardly called for serious critical comment. Lord Northcliffe was one of the newspaper proprietors who, even before the arrival of the 'talkie', recognized that the film would in the near future play a large part in the national life. He gave instructions that the 'pictures' were to be regarded seriously in all the newspapers with which he was associated. Nowadays the film critic is as vital a part of the newspaper organization as the dramatic critic and the music critic, and some of the best writing to be found in the newspapers comes from his (or her) pen. In the same way the broadcasting and television programmes are skilfully analysed by critics who have made a special study of these new media of entertainment.

The work of the critics, and of the dramatic critic in particular, is done under considerable difficulty in modern conditions, when the morning newspapers go to press at a much earlier hour than in previous days. The time has passed when critics like A. B. Walkley and William Archer could travel to their offices in a hansom cab after the final fall of the curtain, light up a cigar, and settle down comfortably in their rooms to write a notice with the welcome feeling that they had an hour and a half or two hours in front of them in which to marshal their

thoughts, and then award their praises and their strictures. Nowadays the critic must rush away, perhaps even before the National Anthem has been played, beg the taxi driver to put on all possible speed, and begin his writing with the certain knowledge that the sub-editors will be clamouring for his copy within half an hour or three-quarters of an hour, and will probably demand each page as it is written. How, under such conditions, the critics can produce an intelligent and readable survey of a new production must always be a mystery, but the fact remains that dramatic criticism, although necessarily abbreviated in form in the morning newspapers, retains a remarkably high standard. It has often been suggested that notices of new productions should either be written after the dress rehearsal or be held up for a time. But to either course there are grave objections. A dress rehearsal is liable to be a ragged business as compared with the first night performance, and no morning newspaper is ever likely to adopt a policy by which its evening rivals give the public the first news of a theatrical success or failure.

For the critic of the other arts the rush is not quite so great. Concerts, although not the opera, end at an earlier hour of the evening and the notices to be written are generally shorter. The critics of painting and sculpture visit the galleries during the daytime, and for the film critics it is the general custom to provide a special morning showing before the film is released to the public. On the other hand the televised play must be reviewed at the time it is shown on the screen, although the critic has the one advantage that he can see it in his office and does not have to scramble back to it after the performance as the dramatic critic does. By the time the critics have done their work another considerable section of the editorial space has been filled.

No account of the inner workings of the editorial department would be complete without some mention of the reference library which is maintained in all newspaper offices. This department, which has been described as 'the memory of the editorial brain', has reached, in some offices, a high state of efficiency. To the library go editors, leader writers, sub-

editors, reporters—in fact every branch of the editorial staff relies on the library for the supply of facts and figures and background material with which to build up the stories of the day or check the outpourings of the many contributors to each day's paper. In addition to a large library of books, thousands and thousands of newspaper cuttings upon every conceivable subject are classified and filed in some form or another ready for quick reference. Much of this work must be done in a matter of seconds, and the leisure with which most libraries are associated is absent from a newspaper office library.

XV

THE ART DEPARTMENT

THE ART DEPARTMENT is one of the most vital parts of the editorial machine, for no daily paper would be complete nowadays without its pictures. This was not always the case. There were great heart searchings among the readers of *The Times* when it decided in 1922 to launch a picture page. The decision was taken by Lord Northcliffe, who was shrewd enough to realize that the pictorial record of events must not be allowed to become the monopoly of the popular newspapers. There had been occasional illustrations in *The Times* long before this and probably the first to appear was that printed on the front page in 1806 to show the scene of a murder with stars to mark the points at which the shots were fired. The historians of *The Times*, by the way, are quite unable to say why on this occasion news—and that not of a very exciting character—was printed on the front page, but the general assumption is that a last-minute tragedy had happened and that the front page of small advertisements had fallen to pieces. Most of the important newspapers have staff photographers, although many pictures are supplied by the admirable picture agencies which seem to be at hand whenever anything of interest happens. There is also a system of pooling photographs on special occasions when the accommodation for photographers is limited, and this is employed successfully on many tours undertaken by members of the Royal family. Now that the transmission of pictures by wireless from the most distant parts of the world has become a commonplace, the pooling system allows the newspapers to keep down the cost of what must inevitably be a very expensive service.

In the early days of illustrated journalism there seemed to be an idea in the public mind that anybody who was prepared to push his way into the front of a crowd and press the button of a camera could do all that was necessary, but that idea must long since have disappeared. The importance of the pictures is

recognized by the fact that the photographer has now been included in the scheme for the training of young journalists. The work of the photographer demands inexhaustible patience, a news sense which enables him to appreciate where the good picture is to be found, and the eye of the artist to discover the perfect background for his subject. In the early days of the picture page it was thought to be sufficient to print a large number of small pictures dealing with the news of the day, but gradually larger reproductions were introduced and it will be generally agreed that the large pictures of the British countryside which appear in *The Times*, the *Manchester Guardian*, and many other papers are a delight to the eye and a credit to British journalism. While the Art Editor is responsible for the pictures which appear in his paper it is a fact that many of the subjects are suggested by the photographers themselves, who may in the course of their wanderings stumble upon the perfect picture. The man who goes out to photograph a colliery disaster or a railway accident may come back to the office with an additional picture of young lambs or of a placid village occasion in his knapsack. While in many of the newspapers the names of the descriptive writers are published, the general rule is for the photographers to be anonymous and they do not therefore always receive the full recognition of the public for work done often under most hazardous conditions. There are even times when they face death in their effort to serve their papers, but they seem to have a happy knack of taking everything in their stride, always hoping that sooner or later they will secure on their plates the picture of the year.

The Art Editor must have a journalistic flair and considerable knowledge of photography and of picture reproduction. He must also, in these days, have real organizing ability if he is to plan pictorial campaigns, to see that his cameramen are at the right spot at the right moment, and possibly to sell prints of his pictures to non-competing newspapers oversea. There may also be a considerable revenue from the sale of attractive pictures to the home public. One wonders, for instance, how many hundreds of thousands of prints were sold of one of the most

delightful pictures of all time, the smiling Queen riding in her coach to open her first Parliament. The Art Editor must agree with the Night Editor how much space will be available for pictures, and this will probably be done directly after the afternoon editorial conference. He must then fix the size of each individual picture and give the necessary instructions to the blockmakers. He must also confer with his caption writer as to what is to be said concerning the picture. The writing of captions is nothing like as easy as it appears, for much has to be said in very few words and a mistake or an unfortunate phrase in a caption is much more glaring than in a news story. One recalls a caption of some years ago which read, 'Ten people were killed and many others lost their lives in a disastrous fire', etc. In the actual report of the fire such a slip might have passed unnoticed. The caption writer, by the way, must keep in close touch with the sub-editors to make certain that any fact which he gives is covered in the news also, and he will be wise to obtain the 'O.K.' of the chief sub-editor for every caption which he sends out.

While in the main the Art Editor relies for his pictures on the work of the staff photographers or of the picture agencies, any picture submitted by a member of the public will be considered and paid for if accepted. Perhaps the most notable picture of this kind ever to be published in this country appeared in the *Daily Mail* during the First World War. It showed the German warship *Blücher* on its side and just about to disappear under the waves. The crew are clinging to the vessel or sliding down into the sea and the impression left by the picture of the stark horror of naval warfare was quite unforgettable. The photograph was taken by an officer of a ship standing by which was trying to give help. The appearance of the negative in the offices of the *Daily Mail* caused a sensation. To a man with a camera there is always a chance of an unexpected picture. On one occasion the author was holidaying in Cornwall when a seaside hotel caught fire. While he collected his story his wife took snaps with her camera and the joint results of their work appeared in his newspaper next morning. On another occasion a relative in Johannesburg sent him snaps of grave rioting there. This was

before the days of the airmail and the letter reached him at his home by the late evening post, whereas the picture agencies were not likely to receive theirs until the following morning. He dashed back to his office and thus gained a 'scoop', but he was rather disappointed on the following day when Lord Northcliffe stated that he did not like the pictures because they were too painfully reminiscent of the pictures of the First World War which had just ended.

XVI

THE NIGHT EDITOR

ONE THING WHICH has impressed me during my long journalistic career has been the development of much closer and friendlier relations between the editorial and mechanical departments. Fifty years ago a wooden door covered with green baize separated the two sections in the office of *The Times* and it was a legend—which by the way was quite untrue—that the head of one department could only pass through the door with the express permission of the head of the other. But the legend was at least indicative of the feeling that existed that the two departments were different worlds with separate interests. There could be no greater misunderstanding of the true position, for the production of a successful newspaper must depend very largely on the spirit of companionship and co-operation which exists between every single department of the organization. A state of friction between, say, the editorial and the advertising department or the managerial and the mechanical department would have an insidious effect upon the paper itself which the reader would be bound to notice very soon.

There is one man who can probably do more than anybody else to maintain good relations between the two sides of the 'green baize door' and he is the Night Editor, the 'make-up' man, or whatever his official title happens to be. In many ways his task is the most important in the office, and now that we have got most of our editorial copy out to the printer it may be helpful to describe his work. It is always arduous and often nerve-racking, and on the skill with which he performs it may depend the punctual starting of the printing presses and the catching of the trains. He reaches the office in time to attend the afternoon conference, when he learns what the size of the paper will be and the number of columns which will be available for the editorial matter. He will also obtain a broad idea of how much space should be devoted to each section of editorial news. An early caller upon him will be the Advertisement Manager or

his representative, and they will have to decide where the advertising matter is to be placed. The Advertisement Manager will naturally want the most prominent positions and his favourite dream is said to be that he has been successful in getting advertising matter on to the leader page. The Night Editor on the other hand must take a broad view of the appearance of the paper as a whole, while realizing that the advertiser who provides the paper's revenue has a right to suggest the tune although certainly not to demand it. But if there is a difference of opinion the view of the Editor's representative must prevail. The Editor has the final responsibility for every inch of the paper, and in more than one case which has come before it the General Council of the Press has laid it down that the Editor has the absolute right to reject any advertisement and he need give no reason for his decision.

By the early evening the Night Editor will have composed a 'dummy' of the night's paper and once this has been done a start can be made with the planning of the various pages and with putting the advertisements in position. Having submitted the 'dummy' to the Editor for his approval the Night Editor will then confer with the heads of the sub-editorial rooms and decide which items of news are to be 'splashed', which should be heavily pruned, and what material is to be set for the early pages. This is obviously a matter of vital importance, for the copy should be so organized that it flows out to the compositors in an orderly stream. At no time should they be idle because there is no copy ready for their attention. Some matter, such as the news from America, must inevitably be late owing to the time factor, and therefore no early copy such as reports of police courts, luncheons, and meetings held during the morning or afternoon should be allowed to accumulate. This is something which the reporter should remember quite as much as the sub-editor, and the policy of any good reporter must be to make straight for his office and turn in his copy at the earliest possible moment. Either the Night Editor or his assistant should make a point of touring the various rooms in which copy is being prepared several times during the evening in order to see that

THE BRITISH WORKER

OFFICIAL STRIKE NEWS BULLETIN

Published by The General Council of the Trades Union Congress

No. 1. WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 5, 1926. PRICE ONE PENNY

IN LONDON AND THE SOUTH

Splendid Loyalty of Transport Workers

EVERY DOCKER OUT

"London dock workers are absolutely splendid," said an official of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

"So far as they are concerned, it is a 100 per cent. strike. There is no trouble and everything is going smoothly."

POLICE HELP REFUSED

At Swindon the railwaymen are obeying Mr. Cramp's injunction to remain steady and to preserve order. The Great Western works are, of course, closed, and no trains are running.

It was stated at a mass meeting of the N.U.R. that Mr. Colbeck (the chief mechanical engineer) had declined the use of the police and the military to guard the railway works, saying he could rely on the strikers to preserve law and order.

Railway workshops at Wolverton, Crewe, and elsewhere are closed.

CHANNEL SERVICES

At Dover the whole of the transways staff are out. The cross-Channel boat service is greatly curtailed, and a large number of passengers are awaiting the opportunity to cross.

The General Council suggests that in all districts where large numbers of workers are idle sports should be organised and entertainments arranged.

This will both keep a number of people busy and provide amusement for many more.

NOT ENOUGH!

From 2½ to 3 millions workers have ceased work.

The Government announced by yesterday's wireless that 30,000 volunteers had registered, expressing willingness to take the strikers' places.

It doesn't seem enough!

Published for the General Council of the Trades Union Congress by Victoria House Printing Company, 9, Carmelite-street, London, E.C.4. Telephone (8 lines): 8210 City.

WONDERFUL RESPONSE TO THE CALL

General Council's Message: Stand Firm and Keep Order

The workers' response has exceeded all expectations. The first day of the great General Strike is over. They have manifested their determination and unity to the whole world. They have resolved that the attempt of the mineowners to starve three million men, women and children into submission shall not succeed.

All the essential industries and all the transport services have been brought to a standstill. The only exception is that the distribution of milk and food has been permitted to continue. The Trades Union General Council is not making war on the people. It is anxious that the ordinary members of the public shall not be penalised for the unpatriotic conduct of the mineowners and the Government.

Never have the workers responded with greater enthusiasm to the call of their leaders. The only difficulty that the General Council is experiencing, in fact, is in persuading those workers in the second line of defence to continue at work until the withdrawal of their labour may be needed.

WORKERS' QUIET DIGNITY

The conduct of the trade unionists, too, constitutes a credit to the whole movement. Despite the presence of armed police and the military, the workers have preserved a quiet orderliness and dignity, which the General Council urges them to maintain, even in the face of the temptation and provocation which the Government is placing in their path.

To the unemployed, also, the General Council would address an earnest appeal. In the present fight there are two sides only—the workers on the one hand and those who are against them on the other.

Every unemployed man or woman who "blacklegs" on any job offered by employers or the authorities is merely helping to bring down the standard of living for the workers as a whole, and to create a resultant situation in which the number of unemployed must be greater than ever.

The General Council is confident that the unemployed will realise how closely their interests are involved in a successful issue to the greatest battle ever fought by the workers of the country in the defence of the right to live by work.

MESSAGE TO ALL WORKERS.

The General Council of the Trades Union Congress wishes to emphasise the fact that this is an industrial dispute. It expects every member taking part to be exemplary in his conduct and not to give any opportunity for police interference. The outbreak of any disturbances would be very damaging to the prospects of a successful termination to the dispute.

The Council asks pickets especially to avoid obstruction and to confine themselves strictly to their legitimate duties.

SOUTH WALES IS SOLID!

Not a Wheel Turning in Allied Industries

'MEN ARE SPLENDID!'

Throughout South Wales the stoppage is complete, and every wheel in the mines is loyally observing the orders of the T.U.C. to refrain from any conduct likely to lead to disturbance.

So unanimous has been the response to the call of the leaders, that not a wheel is turning in the industries affiliated to the T.U.C.

MONMOUTHSHIRE

Complete standstill of industries in the eastern valleys. Absolute unanimity prevails among the rank-and-file of the affiliated unions, and not a single wheel is turning in the allied industries.

Monmouth Education Authority—which has a majority of Labour representatives—has arranged to feed the school-children where required.

ABERDARE VALLEY

All railway and bus services are at a standstill. The miners' attitude indicates that they are absolutely loyal to the advice of their leaders to refrain from anything in the nature of riotous behaviour.

NEATH

The workers have unanimously responded to the call in support of the miners, and the stoppage is complete.

With one exception, safety men are remaining at their posts.

The behaviour of the men is splendid.

AMMAN VALLEY

Every industry and almost the entire transport services are at a standstill at Ammanford and throughout the populous Amman Valley.

GLAMORGANSHIRE

The men are obeying implicitly the instructions of their leaders not to create any disturbances. Crowded meetings of miners have registered their unanimous intention to stand by the T.U.C.

ABERTRIDWR

At the Windsor Colliery, Abertridwr, a deputation of the men and the management met and agreed to safety men being allowed to work.

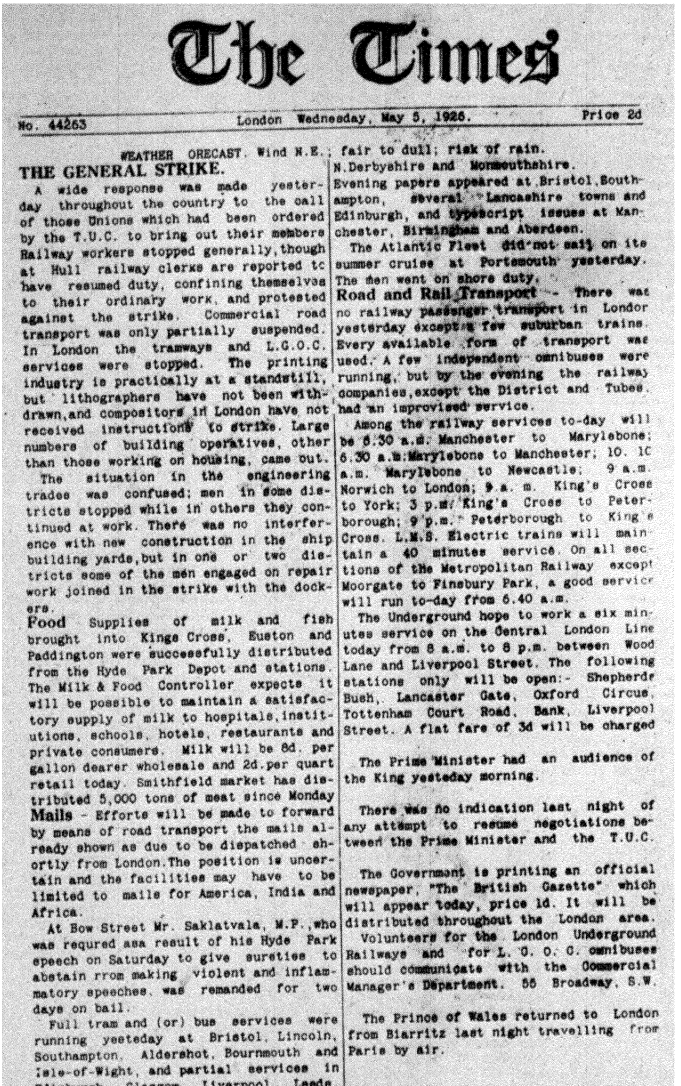
A Trades Council, composed solely of branches affiliated to the T.U.C., has been formed to act as a Lockout Committee for Abertridwr and Senghenydd.

PORT TALBOT

Perfect order is being maintained at Port Talbot, where all the industries are shut down.

During the General Strike in 1926 the General Council of the Trades Union Congress issued an official strike news bulletin called *The British Worker*. The front page is reproduced above.

PLATE 10



The Times

No. 44263 | London Wednesday, May 5, 1926. | Price 2d

WEATHER ORECAST. Wind N.E.; fair to dull; risk of rain.

THE GENERAL STRIKE.

A wide response was made yesterday throughout the country to the call of those Unions which had been ordered by the T.U.C. to bring out their members Railway workers stopped generally, though at Hull railway clerks are reported to have resumed duty, confining themselves to their ordinary work, and protested against the strike. Commercial road transport was only partially suspended. In London the tramways and L.G.O.C. services were stopped. The printing industry is practically at a standstill, but lithographers have not been withdrawn, and compositors in London have not received instructions to strike. Large numbers of building operatives, other than those working on housing, came out.

The situation in the engineering trades was confused; men in some districts stopped while in others they continued at work. There was no interference with new construction in the shipbuilding yards, but in one or two districts some of the men engaged on repair work joined in the strike with the dockers.

Food Supplies of milk and fish brought into Kings Cross, Euston and Paddington were successfully distributed from the Hyde Park Depot and stations. The Milk & Food Controller expects it will be possible to maintain a satisfactory supply of milk to hospitals, institutions, schools, hotels, restaurants and private consumers. Milk will be 8d. per gallon dearer wholesale and 2d. per quart retail today. Smithfield market has distributed 5,000 tons of meat since Monday

Mails - Efforts will be made to forward by means of road transport the mails already shown as due to be dispatched shortly from London. The position is uncertain and the facilities may have to be limited to mails for America, India and Africa.

At Bow Street Mr. Saklatvala, M.P., who was requred asa result of his Hyde Park speech on Saturday to give sureties to abstain rrom making violent and inflammatory speeches, was remanded for two days on bail.

Full tram and (or) bus services were running yesteday at Bristol, Lincoln, Southampton, Aldershot, Bournmouth and Isle-of-Wight, and partial services in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, Leeds, Northampton, Cardiff, Portsmouth, Dover N. Derbyshire and Monmouthshire. Evening papers appeared at Bristol, Southampton, several Lancashire towns and Edinburgh, and typescript issues at Manchester, Birmingham and Aberdeen.

The Atlantic Fleet did not sail on its summer cruise at Portsmouth yesterday. The men went on shore duty.

Road and Rail Transport - There was no railway passenger transport in London yesterday except a few suburban trains. Every available form of transport was used. A few independent omnibuses were running, but by the evening the railway companies, except the District and Tubes, had an improvised service.

Among the railway services to-day will be 6.30 a.m. Manchester to Marylebone; 6.30 a.m. Marylebone to Manchester; 10. 10 a.m. Marylebone to Newcastle; 9 a.m. Norwich to London; 9 a.m. King's Cross to York; 3 p.m. King's Cross to Peterborough; 9 p.m. Peterborough to King's Cross. L.M.S. Electric trains will maintain a 40 minutes service. On all sections of the Metropolitan Railway except Moorgate to Finsbury Park, a good service will run to-day from 6.40 a.m.

The Underground hope to work a six minutes service on the Central London Line today from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. between Wood Lane and Liverpool Street. The following stations only will be open:- Shepherds Bush, Lancaster Gate, Oxford Circus, Tottenham Court Road, Bank, Liverpool Street. A flat fare of 3d will be charged

The Prime Minister had an audience of the King yesteday morning.

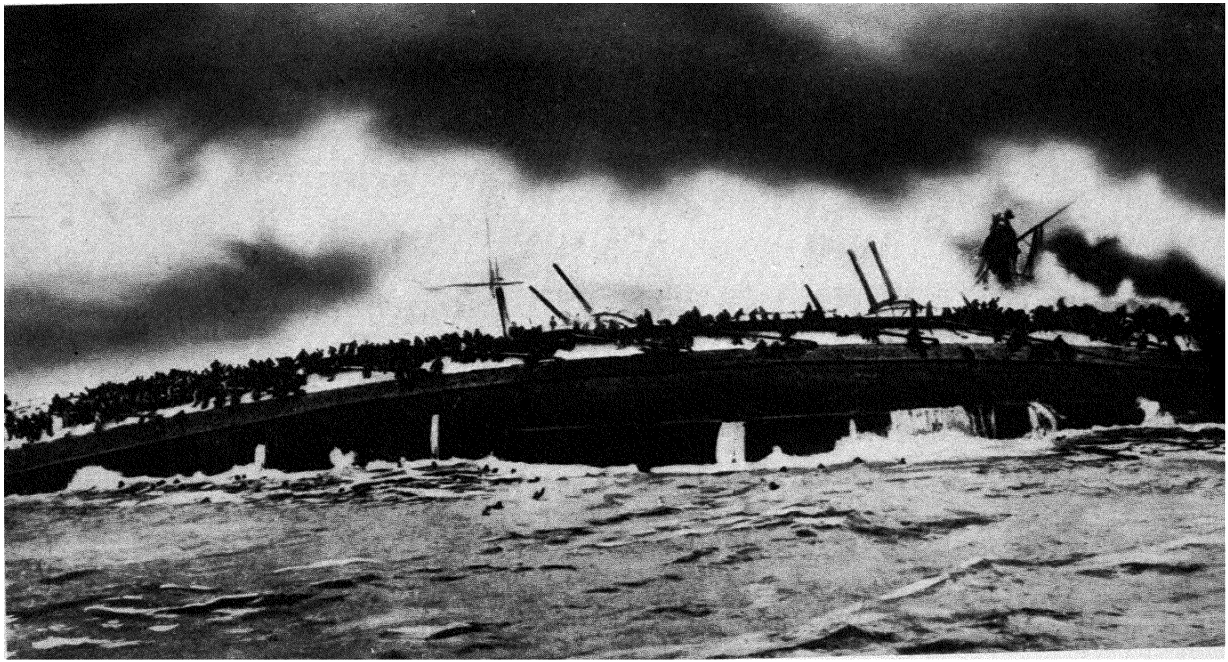
There was no indication last night of any attempt to resume negotiations between the Prime Minister and the T.U.C.

The Government is printing an official newspaper, "The British Gazette" which will appear today, price 1d. It will be distributed throughout the London area.

Volunteers for the London Underground Railways and for L. C. O. C. omnibuses should communicate with the Commercial Manager's Department, 55 Broadway, S.W.

The Prince of Wales returned to London from Biarritz last night travelling from Paris by air.

On one occasion during the General Strike of 1926 *The Times* was unable to publish a printed edition, but continuity of production was maintained by the issue of a duplicated sheet. The front page is shown above.



The German warship *Blücher* was sunk during the first World War, and the *Daily Mail*'s picture of the sinking, taken by an officer in a British ship, was possibly the greatest pictorial exclusive ever obtained by a British newspaper.

PLATE II

PLATE 12

In many newspaper offices the editorial work is mainly performed in one large room This picture shows the editorial department of the *Daily Sketch* with the following key 1 Associate Editor 2 Assistant Editor (Features) 3. News Editor 4. Picture Editor 5 Art Editors. 6 Day Editor. 7. Chief Sub-editor 8 Copy Taster. 9. Lawyer. 10 Reporters 11 Artists. 12 Sub-editors 13 Sports Department. 14. Retouchers.

everything is running smoothly, and he should also be in constant touch with the Night News Editor to make certain that telephoned copy is arriving steadily. At the same time he must see that in their enthusiasm the sub-editors are not sending out far more copy than the paper can possibly hold. 'Over-matter' is both annoying and expensive. Throughout the evening the Night Editor must keep his finger on the pulse of the whole machine, and it is always something of a thrill to him, as it is to every visitor to a newspaper office, to see the sections of type falling into place, the columns filling up and the pages being locked up after taking their final form. There may be a few minor delays. The main story may fall short; another piece of news may be ten lines too long and need to be adjusted; a line of type may be out of place or upside down; a glaring misprint may be detected which must be corrected. These mishaps cause little anxiety. The make-up man takes them all in his stride, and when the last page has gone through to the foundry he can sit back and breathe freely.

But his night's work is not at an end. The first copies of the first edition which come from the printing presses are taken to his room and the replanning of the paper for later editions begins. It would be a liberal education to the newspaper reader to examine, even on a single day, the various editions of his favourite journal. He would be amazed at the things which he had not seen in his own copy. The first edition is in many ways a trial trip, for the news of the night is still pouring in from all parts of the world while the early copies are being printed. The Night Editor may think that the first edition is packed tight but he knows that he will still have to find space for two or three more columns of news which simply cannot be held over. He must harden his heart and be completely ruthless. Some of the stories in the first edition must be removed in their entirety, others must be heavily compressed, even the size of the headings may be reduced in order to gain a few more precious lines of space. The sub-editor should always watch the headlines, for nothing irritates the reader more than to see a heading which is not borne out by the news story to which it is attached.

Somehow the impossible is achieved. The fresh news is tucked in and there is very little over-matter.

This is a nightly problem, but there are occasions when the problem is wellnigh insurmountable. A sudden disaster or the unexpected death of a world-famous personage may mean that the main news page, the leader page and the picture page, have to be transformed and other pages changed to carry the material which has thus been displaced. Perhaps it is this uncertainty which makes the life of the Night Editor so exhausting but at the same time so utterly thrilling.

XVII

THE MECHANICAL DEPARTMENTS

So far we have dealt with the preparation of the raw material which is to be incorporated in the newspaper. It is time now to describe shortly the various processes which make up the journal as the reader sees it on the following morning or on the same afternoon. The journalist who knows nothing of the mechanics of his newspaper is not properly equipped, for it is absolutely essential that he should have some acquaintance with the tasks and the problems with which other departments have to contend. He ought to remember that if a single one of the departments breaks down the public will never read his priceless prose.

Broadly speaking the mechanical department is divided into the following sections—type-setting and proof-reading; engraving; moulding and casting; the machine room with its mighty printing presses; and distribution. In the composing room there is still a certain amount of type-setting by hand; in the case of advertisements for instance, which demand many styles and sizes of type which are not seen in the news columns. But, in general, copy is set by machines which produce solid lines of type—such as the Linotype and the Intertype; or the Monotype which is really two different machines in one: a keyboard for producing a perforated roll of paper, and a caster for making single characters of type from those rolls and assembling them in lines.

The Linotype and Intertype machines are operated by compositors who have gone through a seven-year apprenticeship before they are regarded as proficient in their job. The operator depresses the keys of his machine, which is something like an elaborate typewriter in appearance, and thus releases from the magazine a matrix or mould of the line of copy which has been set. The matrix consists of a flat plate which has on its vertical edge the die of a character and has in its upper portion a series of teeth which are used for selecting and carrying it to its proper

place in the magazine. The object of the keyboard is to assemble the matrices in the order required for arranging the words in a line. When the operator depresses a key it releases a matrix from the magazines. It falls on to a revolving belt by which it is passed into a line-assembly box with variable wedge-shaped space bands inserted between each word. When a complete line has been set the operator presses a lever at the side of his keyboard and the line passes to an elevator for the process of casting. Thus the line of matrices and space bands comes into position in front of a mould before a pot which contains molten metal. One of the most fascinating features of this process is that in the twinkling of an eye, before the line is cast, a bar beneath it pushes out the space bands and thus allows the variable wedges to space out the line equally between the words and to extend it to the exact width of the column. Next the metal pot moves itself forward and the line of matrices, the mould and the pot are sealed tight. The metal is pumped into the mould and the line is cast, trimmed and ejected. Meanwhile the used matrices, having served their purpose, are elevated from the mould and picked up by an arm which takes them to the top of the machine and returns them to the magazine in order that they may be used again. The selecting teeth control the matrices and allow them to drop into their proper places in the magazine as they are propelled along a distributing bar.

The Monotype process is entirely different. In this case the compositor depresses keys and holes are punched in a spool of paper somewhat similar to the rolls used for Pianola music. As the key is struck a pointer moves along a fixed scale indicating the amount of the line that has been composed. Just before the end of the line is reached a warning bell tells the operator to end his word or syllable. The second section of the Monotype process is the casting machine. When the perforated spool is placed on the casting machine it controls a matrix case over a mould to make single type characters. The matrix case contains dies of all the characters likely to be required and it is guided to its proper position over the mould ready for a casting to be made from the required die. This is done by means of compressed air which is

blown through the two perforations in the spool. The air raises stop pins which control the position of the matrix case and a coned pin then enters a corresponding coned hole in the back of the die. This causes it to be aligned accurately and clamped firmly over the mould. Molten metal is now pumped from below into the orifice of the mould. The metal is solidified by a water cooling system and each letter is ejected individually until the line is complete. Where advertisements which require special sizes and styles of type are set by hand the type can be cast on a special Monotype casting unit or on a Monotype super caster which produces type up to one inch square. This system has the advantage of ensuring that new type is used for advertisements.

As soon as the copy has been set, proofs are pulled and sent with all possible speed to the Reading Room where the Correctors of the Press—to give them their ancient and well-deserved title—are waiting to detect errors made either by the compositors or by authors whose weaknesses in spelling may sometimes escape the eagle eye of the sub-editor. The proofs and the original copy go to the desk of the Head Reader and he distributes them among his subordinates, taking good care to see that the matter most urgently needed by the man who is making up the paper is dealt with first. A reader and a copyholder work together. The copyholder reads aloud the manuscript or typescript to the reader, who has the printed proof in front of him. It is the responsibility of the latter—who is the senior member of the team—to see that the proof corresponds exactly with the copy and for marking in the margin all errors of composition, grammar, fact, date, and style. If he thinks that there is a mistake in the original copy it is his duty to bring it to the attention of the Head Reader and through him to the sub-editors. The writer would like to take this opportunity of paying his tribute to the remarkable work which the readers carry out. They have saved him from making grave blunders on many occasions, and very rarely do they trip up. The ideal reader takes a keen interest in much more than his actual job. If he follows politics closely, for instance, he can quickly spot the

little errors which are so annoying when they are not detected. Nothing annoys a member of the House of Commons more than to be described as Labour when he is in fact Conservative, or vice versa, but few of them realize how often the readers have saved them from this indignity. In one newspaper office I know of there is a reader who is a very enthusiastic bridge player, and if the Bridge Correspondent slips up in setting out a problem this reader is the first to detect it and to win the author's unstinted gratitude.

When the proofs have been read they are returned to the composing room for the corrections to be made. If the copy has been set on the Linotype machine a whole new line must be composed. In the case of Monotype a single letter can be replaced. A second proof of any corrected matter is then pulled and sent to the readers for their final revision. When the final page proofs are received there is a further scrutiny to ensure that the right heading has been placed above the news story, for this is always a terrible trap when, at the last moment, there has been a general post of the news in order to make the page look more attractive. When the paper is printed, early copies from each machine are sent to the Reading Room for a final scrutiny, and this is particularly important if the newspaper prints an Index to the pages on which the news appears.

When in 1867 Charles Dickens presided over a meeting of Correctors of the Press, he paid this tribute to them:

> 'I know from some slight practical experience what the duties of Correctors of the Press are and how those duties are usually discharged. And I can testify, and do testify, that they are not mechanical—that they are not mere matters of manipulation and routine but that they require from those who perform them much natural intelligence, much superadded cultivation, considerable readiness of reference, quickness of resource, an excellent memory and a clear understanding.'[1]

Every journalist will be glad to endorse this testimonial from a master of his craft.

[1] *A Newspaper History* 1785–1935 (Times Publishing Co. Ltd), page 136.

The compositors and the readers have done their work, the type has been locked up in columns and then into pages. But much has still to be done before the pages of type are converted into the semi-cylindrical form in which they are locked into position on the printing presses.

XVIII

GOING TO PRESS

AS THE FORME or page of type leaves the composing room it is flat, but on the way to the printing presses it must be converted into a semi-cylindrical mould to be fitted on to the rotary printing machines. The first stage, therefore, is the moulding, which is carried out by placing the 'flong'—a previously prepared sheet of dampened papier mâché—together with felt blankets on the page of type. Hydraulic pressure of from 100 tons to 200 tons according to the amount of matter on the page is applied and simultaneously heat is also applied to dry the mould for the next process of casting. During this period the pressure is reduced to about thirty tons. Having been removed from the hydraulic press the mould is 'packed' to ensure that the large blank areas where there is no type are supported against the weight of metal during the casting. This packing consists of thick felt paper and is pasted on the back of the mould wherever it is judged that reinforcement is needed. This is specially the case with display advertisements. The mould, having been carefully examined and passed, is sent by a special mould lift to the casting room where it is trimmed in size to fit the casting box. Having been dried and curved to shape, it is placed in the auto-plate casting machine. This consists of two major parts—one a large crucible containing tons of molten metal which is an alloy of lead, antimony, and tin, and the other a curved casting box with a cylinder. The mould is set in the casting box, face outwards, and is held by clips. A pump forces seventy pounds of molten metal into the casting box and this completely fills all the recesses made in the mould by the type under hydraulic pressure. Water passing through the casting box and cylinder solidifies the metal in twenty-five seconds. The casting box is then opened to withdraw the mould; the cylinder is rotated half a circle and an exact replica of the original page, but now in semi-cylindrical form, is obtained. It is slightly over half an inch thick and it has bevelled sides to fit the locking

device on the rotary press. Further plates are cast according to the number of printing presses that are running.

The plates are next carried to the auto-plate shaver. A set of fingers on travelling racks convey the plate to an arch where it is lifted into position and bored to the correct thickness of half an inch. A second set of fingers moves the plate on to a cooling saddle where water is sprayed on to the inside and the plate again moves forward for brushes to remove any loose shavings. All this having been completed, the plates are ready to be locked into position on the cylinders of the printing presses. In the meantime the original page of type, when it has cooled down, is returned to the case-room for any alterations that have to be made for later editions of the paper.

To the casual visitor to a newspaper office, the mighty printing presses offer perhaps the biggest attraction of all, and to a journalist there are few more thrilling sights than the locking of the final plates into position as a sign that the day's issue will come to life within the next few moments. Then one sees the slow careful starting up of the machines, with the speed gradually increasing until the maximum required to produce the necessary number of papers is reached. The number of printing presses obviously varies according to the circulation, but some idea may be gained from particulars of the presses of *The Times* with its circulation of about a quarter of a million and of the *News of the World* with its gigantic circulation of over eight million. In the press room of *The Times* there are two lines of twelve-unit rotary printing presses and one line of six units making a total of thirty units with nine deliveries carefully disposed between them to give a complete range of production up to a possible maximum of a forty-eight-page paper. Each unit of the presses prints two sections of eight pages, each in one revolution of the cylinders. The presses have to be adapted daily according to the size of the paper fixed by the Editor and the Manager. The *News of the World* is printed simultaneously in London and Manchester and between the hours of seven o'clock on Saturday night and half past four o'clock on Sunday morning 6½ million copies are delivered from the London presses and more than

2 million copies from the Manchester presses—probably the greatest achievement in the matter of quick production in the whole history of printing. In London the miracle is accomplished by twenty-eight sextuple presses capable of producing twenty-four-page papers. Eleven of these presses run at a speed of 50,000 copies an hour and the remaining rather older machines at 26,000 to 28,000 copies hourly. When this chapter was written, however, these older machines were about to be replaced by machines capable of turning out 60,000 copies an hour. While some preparation is made during the week in the composition of the paper, such as advertisements and special features, the main body of the paper is set almost wholly on Saturdays. Twenty-two compositors are engaged upon the make-up and fifteen Linotype operators do the bulk of the composition. There are thirty-three Linotype machines which would be necessary if it were possible to print pre-war sized newspapers.

When the stereo plates arrive in the machine room they are locked in position on the cylinders of those presses which are to be used for the night's run. Some of the presses will always be held in reserve either for overhauling or to be used in case of an emergency. The movable lipped blocks which hold the plates fit over the bevelled sides. When the machine is running the 'web' of newsprint passes between the plate cylinder, which is inked by mechanically propelled rollers, and the 'impression', which is of exactly the same size as the plate cylinder and is covered with a rubberized 'blanket'. While it is passing through the machine the web receives successive printings from each stereo plate. The proper supply of ink is obviously one of the most important points. It is piped from a central reservoir to pumps, one of which supplies each side of the unit. They are designed so ingeniously that each column width of the paper has its own small pump. While the press is running the supply is controlled by a thumbscrew which will release just enough ink. The ink is fed into the 'distribution' where the action of rubber rollers, running against steel drums and at the same time moving to and fro, reduces the ink to the necessary consistency for

printing. Rollers known as 'inkers' roll the ink on to the plate. After the web has been fed outwards through one half of the unit to print one side it turns in and passes through to the other half of the unit for printing the reverse side of the paper. The printed web next passes into the superstructure for the run over 'adjustment rollers' which ensure that each page is in register with the rest.

Nothing fascinates the visitor to the machine room more than the transformation of the web of printed paper into the neatly folded newspaper which he will see on his breakfast table next morning. The webs are led to the folder, where a 'former' or 'kite' makes the fold in the back of the copy. The webs are brought together at the top of the 'former', which is an inverted triangle of steel with a shaped nose. They are drawn down it by rollers which force the edges together and make the first fold. Then comes the folding cylinder, where needles engage and draw the complete printed product round it until it has completed a half-circle. At this point a complete copy of the paper is wrapped half round the folding cylinder, but so far it has not been severed from the web. A knife, revolving in a cylinder on the other side of the web is brought into action. It comes against a buffer in the folding cylinder and cuts off the copy of the paper. The needles which have drawn the copy round the cylinder are then withdrawn in order that the paper may be released. Next a blade set in the folding cylinder emerges, tucks the centre of the copy down between two nipping rollers, and folds it in half. A second set of needles engages the web above the cutting knife and draws the next copy in its turn round the folding cylinder. The copy which has been freed is shot down by nipping rollers which press the second fold and propel the paper down into the paddles or 'fan'. These are set like the spokes of a Catherine-wheel and, revolving away from the copy, first receive it and then lay it down a little behind the previous copy on delivery belts which move slowly and steadily out of the press. As every quire is passed a kick mechanism pushes forward the twenty-seventh copy so that the output is counted as it is delivered. It is almost inconceivable to the lay mind that the

paper can be pulled from the reel, printed, collected together, folded, counted, and delivered by the action of a single machine.

And so your morning newspaper is being printed and the final task remains of getting it to the breakfast table.

Now that the machines are running and papers are being delivered in a regular flow there is time to examine the machine room in a little more detail. The presses are mounted on heavy cast-iron structures which support three-arm reel-stands from which the paper is fed continuously to the presses. The continuous supply of paper passes up from the understructure into the centre of each printing unit and, as it is essential that the paper is fed to the presses with absolute consistency, strict control of its tension is vital. The nightmare of the machine room must always be the possibility of a 'paper break'. If the newsprint tears while the machine is running at top speed the results may be disastrous. At the best there must be delay while the torn paper is removed and a fresh start is made. At the worst there may be serious mechanical damage as the torn paper, now completely out of control, winds itself around the inner working of the machine like an angry hissing snake. For that reason the running of the machine must be watched for every second. Directly a tear is noted the signal is given to slow down and then to stop the machine. The frightening part of the business, of course, is that it is not possible to guard against a break. It comes without warning and for no obvious reason. If the luck of the machine room is in, it may not happen at all for several nights, but on the other hand there may be three or four breaks in a single night's run which reduce the overseers and all concerned with getting the paper out on time to a state of mental and physical exhaustion. There is an independent supply of paper to each press, so that a break affects only one machine and not all of them. But in a newspaper office at this time of night every second is of vital importance. A certain number of papers must be at each railway terminus at a fixed time, and if the printing of even a few thousand copies is held up, calculations are upset and fresh adjustments have to be made. The firm which can

invent a roll of newsprint which is guaranteed never to tear during the run will make a fortune for its shareholders.

An idea of the gigantic size of the modern printing press can be gained from some facts which were published in 1954 when a new line of printing presses was installed in the offices of the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Manchester Evening News*. The new line of double-width presses delivers at six folder points, can provide six sixteen-page papers or three thirty-two-page papers, and has a running speed of up to 50,000 copies an hour. To make way for the new machines old presses had to be cleared out, and the site for the new presses had to be excavated from solid rock to a depth of fourteen feet. It was estimated that 6,000 tons of rock had to be removed in order to take the driving gear and the reels of newsprint. The excavation of the site was certainly a spectacular operation. The main cast-iron stanchions of the building, six stories high and of an estimated weight of 5,000 tons, had to be removed and repositioned in steel to take the new presses. It was said to have taken six years to dig the necessary hole and then to line the sides of the excavation. With the delays caused by recurring crises in the nation's finances and the insistence of the Government that the makers of printing machines must give precedence to orders coming from abroad, it was estimated that nine years passed between the start of the work and the day on which Mrs Constance Scott, wife of Mr L. P. Scott, the Managing Director, pressed the control button which brought the machines into use.

The journey from the machine room to the publishing department now begins. As the papers pass on elevators to the men who are waiting to dispatch them they are counted electrically and they are then carried by conveyor to the packers. waiting at their steel benches. Beforehand the section has received from the circulation department complete information as to the number of papers required. The circulation varies every day according to the estimate made by both the wholesalers and the newsagents as to their likely requirements. In normal circumstances the fluctuations will probably be slight, but on days when a great national happening has to be recorded the circulation

will leap up. On the morning after the Queen's Coronation millions of extra copies of the newspapers, both national and local, must have been printed, for there are always readers who wish to preserve such an issue for the sake of posterity.

As a normal rule there are three methods of preparing the papers into parcels ready for distribution. Firstly the postal subscribers must be dealt with. Wrappers for their copies have been addressed and franked during the daytime and sorted in the early evening by clerks from the General Post Office. Packers fold the copies singly into wrappers and place them in postal bags which are sealed and taken to the railway stations in order to catch the mail trains. Supplies intended for the London wholesalers are sent out in bulk, the bundles being loaded into vans sent by the agents from their depots where, together with the supplies of all the other national newspapers, they are packed and distributed. For the agents of wholesalers and the retailers in the provinces the parcels are made up in prepared wrappers which are labelled and contain instructions about the number to be packed. Once packed, the parcel is placed in a conveyor belt which passes between the benches where the packing is in progress. This takes it to a checking bench from which it is loaded into a van, and immediately the complete consignment for a particular train has been loaded the van departs for its own particular railway terminus, where the parcels are transferred to the train at a speed and with a skill which always amazes the onlooker. As a rule there are only seconds to spare between the completion of the loading and the time set for the train's departure. The loss of a minute or two on the road between the newspaper office and the railway station may be a very serious matter, for the greatest tragedy in the life of the publisher is the missing of a train, with all the consequent confusion and the dislocation at the end of the journey, where the agent, also working to a very close time-table, is waiting for the arrival of his newspapers. But the representatives of the publisher are generally on very good terms with the railway authorities and, if the guard finds that for reasons of his own it is occasionally necessary to delay the train's departure for a

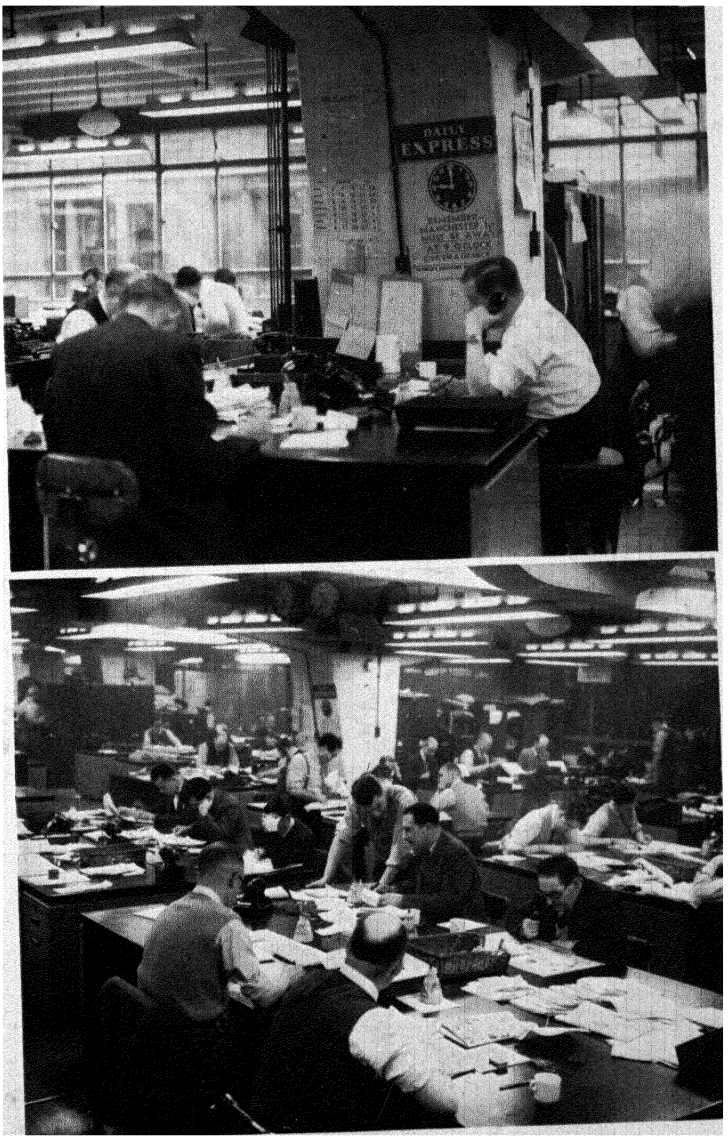
minute or two which can be made up during the journey, nobody worries particularly although, of course, late arrival at the terminus must not be allowed to develop into a habit.

The author would like to pay his humble tribute to the work of the van drivers during the war. The way they carried on during the blackout was almost incredible. Night after night they would make the hazardous journey from newspaper office to railway station with no thought of their own personal safety but determined not to let the side down. The heaviest blitz did not deter them, and they always had to remember that what the night before might have been a good main road could now have become a yawning chasm—and there were no street lamps to point the way to them. Some of the journeys were of a hair-raising kind, but the drivers always returned calm and collected to the office canteen to drink their mugs of tea or coffee before the next journey. Their behaviour was typical of the way in which every department of a newspaper office conducted itself at a time of crisis.

XIX

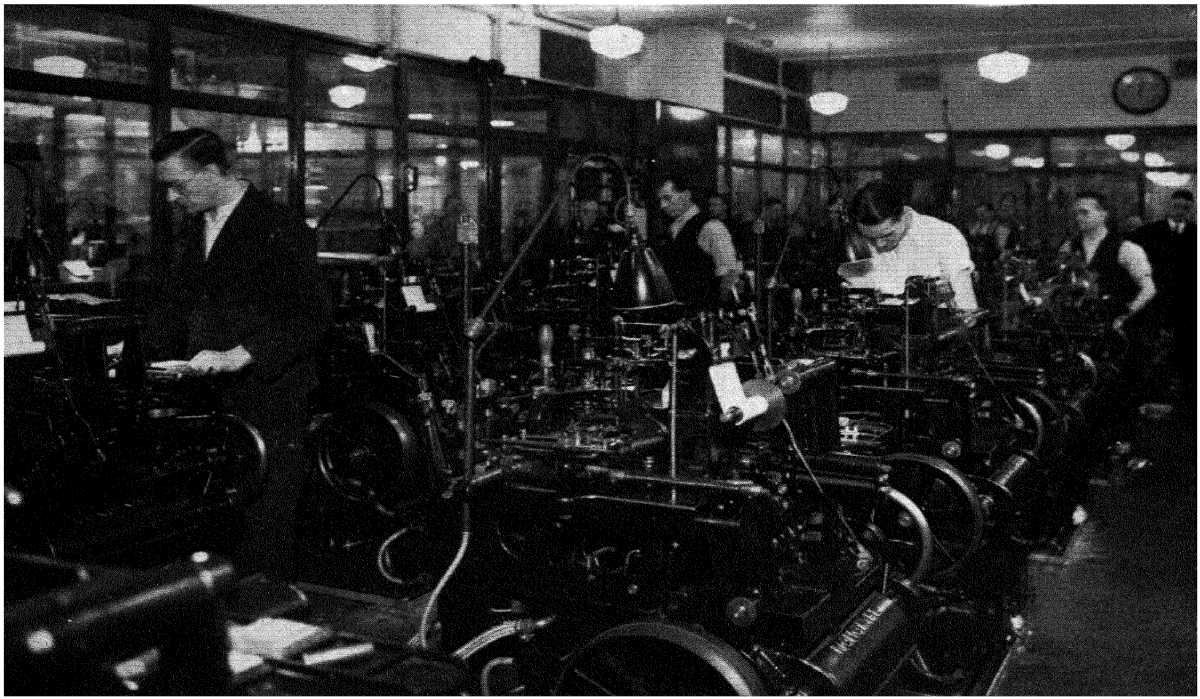
THE ADVERTISEMENT DEPARTMENT

THE EDITORIAL and mechanical departments have been considered, and it is time that we looked in on the advertisement department. However regrettable it may be to some of the purists, it is an inescapable fact that without the revenue which it derives from advertising the daily newspaper could not survive. It has often been said, even by people who should know better, that the editorial contents of a newspaper and, in fact, its policy are at times influenced by the large advertiser. It is a good thing that the Royal Commission went into the subject very thoroughly and took the trouble to obtain the views of fourteen advertisers, ten advertising agencies, and four associations representing advertisers and advertising agents. The Commission felt that there was some evidence that individual advertisers occasionally sought to influence the policy of a newspaper or to obtain the omission or insertion of particular news items. Such an attempt by an advertiser to exploit his position was condemned by the Commission, which was glad to put on record the fact that the effort appeared to be infrequent and unsuccessful. The Commission obtained no evidence of concerted pressure by advertisers to induce newspapers to adopt a particular policy, and it was convinced that the Press is alert to any attempt to use such pressure and ready on all occasions to repulse it. According to the figures published by the Commission the revenue received by the national morning and the London evening newspapers from advertising was 53 per cent of the whole income in 1937 and 25 per cent in 1946. In the latter year, of course, there was severe restriction in the size of newspapers, which inevitably meant that the amount if not the price of advertising was cut to ribbons. But now that the position as regards newsprint has eased the percentage of revenue from advertising must have risen considerably and the Commission suggested that in normal times a newspaper depends on advertisements for about half its revenue.



Early evening in the editorial office of the *Daily Express*, with the reminder on the wall that there is also the Manchester edition to be thought of.

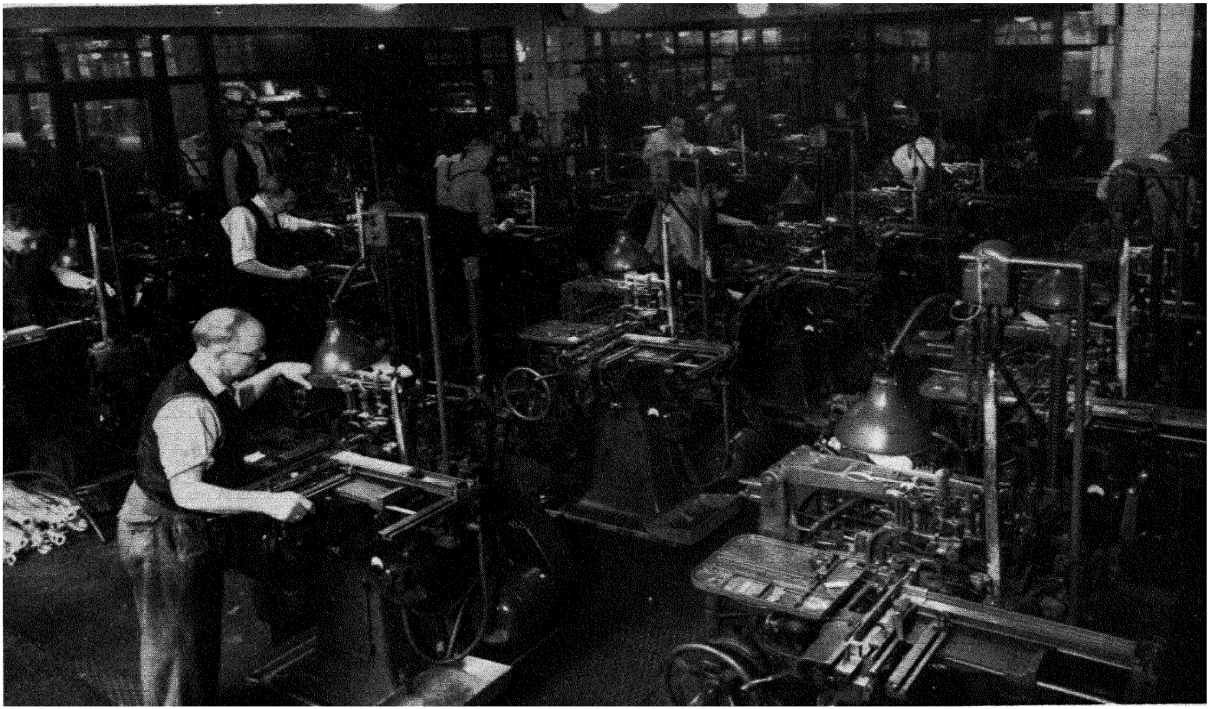
Part of the Linotype installation in the composing room of *The Times* The first machine on the right is a teletype-setter on which the Parliamentary reports are set automatically as they are transmitted from Westminster.



The Monotype casting room in the offices of *The Times*.

PLATE 15

PLATE 16



The Monotype machine room at the offices of *The Times*.

The competition to secure advertising is acute and will become fiercer still when commercial television is established. The advertisement department of a newspaper, therefore, must be alive and efficient and the Advertisement Manager must hold one of the key positions in the organization. He has to cope with three different kinds of advertising—display, classified, and financial—and each section demands its own technique. Display advertising, as we know it to-day, was brought to this country by two American business men, Messrs Hooper and Jackson, when they acquired the rights for publication in England of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Although the type of advertising then introduced may have annoyed the reading public, it was very effective, and it was undoubtedly the beginning of the development of the very fine examples of display advertising practised to-day. The quality of display advertising has improved enormously in recent years and a welcome feature of the post-war period has been the return of the half-page display and occasionally the full page which gives the advertisement designer wonderful scope. With keen competition among manufacturers to sell their wares there has also come a realization that the stall must be well laid out if the attention of the newspaper reader is to be attracted away from the news columns to the advertisements. It can truly be said that some of the present-day display advertisements are real works of art and some of the finest artists of the day are not averse to entering this field. But display advertising does not fall into the newspaper offices as manna from Heaven, although it may have done so during the days of newsprint scarcity when the journals were in a better position to pick and choose. Most of the large manufacturing corporations set aside a fixed annual sum to cover their advertising, and there is intense competition among all classes of newspapers and periodicals to obtain a share of the allocation. The Advertising Manager, and his assistants who look after display advertising, must therefore always be on the alert and in constant and friendly touch with the advertising agents and with the public relations officers of the big manufacturing concerns and the large retailers. In this way it is possible to design the advertisement

which is likely to appeal specially to the class of readers for which the paper is catering. Readers who admire the whole-page display advertisement of the day would probably faint with horror at the sight of the first full-page advertisement which *The Times* published in January, 1829, when Messrs Harding and Lepard, publishers, of Pall Mall East, were extolling the merits of Edmund Lodge's *Portraits and Memoirs of the Most Illustrious Personages of British History*. The heading, opening paragraphs and tail-piece were set across two columns and the names of some of the illustrious characters dealt with in the book occupied the rest of the space. To the modern eye it looks to be what Lord Northcliffe called 'the don't read me' type of advertisement, but history does not record whether the outlay upon it was justified by results. One of the first advertisers to realize the pulling power of a well-designed, pictorial full-page advertisement was Mr Gordon Selfridge, who marked the opening of his store in Oxford Street by a beautiful series of display advertisements which are still a joy to the eye.

Classified advertising, generally known as 'the smalls', is a highly profitable source of income to all the newspapers and covers almost every conceivable subject. To mention but a few there are the births, marriages and deaths, the personal column, public appointments, situations vacant and wanted, the entertainments, public notices, legal notices, shipping intelligence, houses to be sold and flats to be let. The competition is so keen that many of the evening papers have a special department which takes certain types of classified advertisements, such as 'situations vacant and wanted', over the telephone with the guarantee that if they are received in the early morning they will appear in that night's edition; as a result a flat which is placed in the hands of an evening paper in the morning may be let before midnight. There is the danger in this procedure that the newspaper may be the victim of a hoax, but the classified department seems to have developed a sixth sense which enables it in almost every case to spot the practical joker. Presumably there will always be a few people who will try to fool the newspaper, but they rarely succeed. One does remember, however,

the occasion on which a national journal announced in its advertisement column the birth of a son (Whalley George) to Testudo, which was in fact the pet tortoise at an Oxford College. There is little delay nowadays in the publication of 'smalls', but the situation was very difficult during the Second World War, when they might be held up for perhaps six weeks. Naturally the births, marriages and deaths were given priority because they possessed a news value. A difficult position arose when the bombing of London was at its height. The total suppression of death notices was seriously considered on the ground that they gave considerable information to the enemy as to where bombs had fallen. An instance of this was the bombing of the Guards Chapel in London. The newspapers appreciated the difficulty and agreed to a system of voluntary censorship by which neither the victim's address nor the date of his death was disclosed. The system worked well, although it was not always easy to persuade the bereaved relatives that such secrecy was imperative. There is no doubt that in wartime the enemy scans the advertisement columns for his information quite as eagerly as the news columns. What seems to be a perfectly harmless advertisement for canteen hands, for instance, may reveal the whereabouts of a new munitions factory.

The personal or 'agony' column deserves a special paragraph to itself. Nobody seems to be certain who first referred to the 'agony' column. As *The Times* said in its 150th anniversary number on 1 January 1935, 'the great man who bestowed it is among the illustrious unknown. Besides the agonies of griefs and tears there are the "agonies of wild delight" as Pope knew and the column was seized upon by those who knew with Shakespeare that agony can be charmed with words and were willing to pay so much a line for solace. The name covered a multitude of human hopes and fears and manners and innocent joys and sins . . . The largest human reading of all perhaps is to be found in the Personal column for there speaking in accents uncouth, it may be, is found the Average Man himself, that abstract arbiter to whom historians appeal.'

The personal column has been found on the front page of

The Times since at least the beginning of the last century and though, perhaps, it may now have lost some of its original flavour it can still be vastly entertaining. It may fairly claim to be the forerunner of the broadcast S.O.S., for it is well over a hundred years since the following 'personal' appeared:

> 'If the youth that left Islington on Sunday evening can remember that he ever had a Mother, he is informed he will soon be deprived of that blessing, except he immediately writes with particulars, or personally appears before her.'

It has often been suggested that in wartime the personal column may be used as a means of communicating with the enemy, but in fact there is no evidence to support this notion. Every advertisement is scrutinized with a microscope by members of the newspaper's staff who have been doing the job for years. If they have the slightest doubt they invite the co-operation of Scotland Yard. As far as one can trace there was not a single complaint against the personal column of any newspaper during either of the World Wars. On the other hand there have been cases in which malefactors have been brought to heel through it, and there was one remarkable case in 1845 when there was a plague of threatening letters, and facsimile extracts from three of them were published in the 'agony' column of *The Times*.

To some of the national and provincial newspapers the most lucrative form of advertising, particularly at a time when the nation's trade and industry are prospering, is the financial advertising made up of prospectuses of new companies and reports of company meetings. There is no doubt that an attractively presented prospectus, to which possibly a whole page may be devoted, has great pulling power, and in the same way the chairman of a company can present a more telling account of what is being done to a wider audience than the shareholders who put in a personal appearance at the annual meeting. At the same time the fact that a company meeting is being advertised must not exclude from the news columns mention of anything which may have happened, for the advertised report usually is

limited to the chairman's statement and the formal business. It may not deal with the criticisms made by dissatisfied or angry shareholders, and the advertisement is only accepted on the definite understanding that it does not impose any form of disguised censorship on the news of the day. The cost of advertising a company meeting on a large scale in a number of newspapers will be heavy, but the general feeling seems to be that it is money well spent if the company wishes to establish good relations with the investing public. With nationalization of some of the leading industries the revenue of the newspapers from financial advertising undoubtedly suffered, but as the post-war trade situation improved many more of the smaller undertakings felt justified in indulging in this form of expenditure. A few of the leading newspapers employ a special staff of reporters to cover company meetings and, even if the material for the advertisement is supplied in advance by the company, it is desirable that a representative of the newspaper should hold a watching brief at the meeting.

In the general way, advertising does not spill over into the news columns, but there is one exception which should be noted here. This is the social news, and it cannot be denied that the leading newspapers derive quite a substantial revenue from news of forthcoming marriages, of comings and goings, and even of Christmas greetings to friends from people who are either too busy or too lazy to send out cards. Some of the forthcoming marriages are undoubtedly news of general interest and are accepted as such, but the mere fact that Mr A is about to enter into holy matrimony with Miss B cannot normally be regarded as a world-shattering event. Great care, by the way, must be used in accepting paid announcements of this kind. The writer well remembers the excitement that was caused some years ago when a national newspaper announced the engagement of a young couple. It did so in good faith and it was not until solicitors got busy that it was found that the two persons referred to were both young women. A libel action was threatened and the Editor was brought into the discussions with the lawyers. A deadlock seemed inevitable until the Editor blandly

observed that, if the parties wished it, he was quite prepared to print a further statement that the marriage arranged between So-and-so and So-and-so would not now take place. There was a burst of laughter, the situation was eased, and it was agreed to let bygones be bygones. The cautious newspaper will insist that the announcement of an engagement be signed by both the contracting parties, and that when an engagement is broken off the announcement is signed not only by the two people concerned but also by their legal representatives. This obviates any danger that the engagement may have been broken off by the parents. In dealing with news of social movements one must also be on guard against the practical joker who wishes to record the arrival in London of a foreign visitor with a most imposing title. If he cannot be tracked down in the reference books the notice should not be allowed to go into the paper. And, speaking from experience, the writer would say that every such name should be read both forwards and backwards just to guard against the 'leg-pull'.

XX

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE FUTURE

HAVING DEALT WITH the history of the newspaper and of the daily paper as one sees it to-day, one ought to spare a little space for the newspaper of the future, with complete confidence that, whatever competition it may have to meet from other methods of communicating information to the public, it will continue to hold its own in any civilized community. Changes there will certainly be, for almost imperceptibly a constant process of evolution goes on. The layout is changed; new type is brought into use; the proportion of space allotted to news and pictures is varied, and the reader of any newspaper, whether quality or popular, would be amazed if he studied his favourite journal as it was served up to his father or his grandfather. This is true of *The Times*, the *Daily Telegraph* or the *Manchester Guardian* quite as much as it is of the *Daily Mail* or the *Daily Express*, for no self-respecting Editor is prepared to sit back and regard his newspaper as a sacred trust which cannot be altered and improved from generation to generation. It is sometimes said that the newspaper of to-day is not so interested in news as were its forerunners. The truth may be that journalists have learnt to present the news in a more attractive garb and to give the readers so much more by way of entertainment to add savour to the meal that the contents of the paper are better balanced than in former generations. The newspaper of the future will certainly still regard the provision of 'all the news that is fit to print' (as the slogan used to be) as its main purpose, but there may be a tendency for the invididual items of news to be even more compressed if the tempo of life continues to increase. The time available for the reading of the news seems to get less and less and probably with most people it is limited to the scanning of the morning paper in the train to work and of the evening paper on the journey home. Once by the fireside there are the counter-attractions of the wireless and the television set and it is doubtful whether much more newspaper-reading is done. What appears

to be an interesting article is set aside for examination at the week-end, but by Saturday afternoon some other interest has come along and eventually the article is consigned to the waste-paper-basket. But, whatever may happen in the future, the news will continue to be read, and if the news has already been broadcast in a tabloid form, this merely whets the appetite. The ordinary person likes sooner or later to *read* his news and thereafter to make his own appraisal.

The coming of wireless has called for a great speeding up of all news services. A subject which has been dealt with on the nine o'clock news at night, or even on the midnight summary, must be fully dealt with in the morning newspaper, and the reader has no idea of the blood, sweat, and tears that have gone into the collection and the presentation of the news. Obviously in this respect the wireless has a tremendous advantage, for once the B.B.C. reporter has established contact with his headquarters the transmission of the news to the waiting public can be effected in a matter of seconds. However quickly the newspaper reporter gets his story into the office there are still all the technical processes which have been described to be gone through in the way of mechanical production and distribution. Normally the newspaper has fixed edition times which cannot be altered at a moment's notice: the broadcast programmes can be broken into at any time. It should not be assumed that the newspapers adopt a *non possumus* attitude in the face of wireless competition and there is little doubt that, in the newspaper of the future, the time lag between the arrival of the news and its appearance in print will be reduced considerably. And the same applies to the interval between the printing of the newspaper and its delivery to the reader.

So far the aeroplane has not played any considerable part in the delivery of newspapers inside Great Britain, but the coming of the helicopter may change the situation. One great difficulty has been the time that must be lost in getting the bundles of newspapers to an airport many miles from the centre of the city. If, on the other hand, the papers could be taken by helicopter from a terminal in the centre to the airport in a few

minutes, or even from the roof of the newspaper office, one might see a great transformation. It would certainly be an enormous boon for *The Times*, which does not have printing presses at Manchester.

Another point which will require careful consideration, both from the view of practicality and of expense, is the arrival of the papers at the receiving end as distinct from their dispatch from the transmitting end. Are they to be dumped at aerodromes in the large centres and then delivered to the agents by road, or are they to be dropped by parachute, quite a possibility in view of the steady development in the technique? There is one real drawback which will always be liable to give the publisher a headache. The records of the Meteorological Office show that in every year there are a certain number of mornings when it is impossible for aeroplanes to take off. Will it be necessary, therefore, for the newspapers, if they decide to adopt delivery by air, to maintain a reserve organization relying on the existing methods of delivery for use on those few occasions when the air is out of commission? The thought is a frightening one, but no newspaper would accept the position that on, say, ten mornings a year, the reader does not find his newspaper on his breakfast table. There will be a great deal of anxious thinking before the air is accepted as the normal method of inland newspaper delivery.

With regard to delivery oversea the prospects are much brighter, although the cost of air delivery of newspapers of the normal weight must be extremely heavy. It is possible that in the future the special air edition will be considerably developed, but it is difficult to see how it can ever become an economic proposition. When in August 1954 *The Times* recorded the tenth birthday of its air edition it stated that the special paper on which it is printed is four times as expensive as normal newsprint, and yet the air edition is sold at the normal price of fourpence a copy with the addition of the cost of the air journey. Accordingly a single copy is sold in Gibraltar at ninepence halfpenny and at two shillings and twopence in Australia. It is doubtful whether, at this price, there are a large number of

individual subscribers, but by means of the air edition *The Times* reaches Ministers and departments of oversea governments, embassies, colonial Governors and High Commissioners, business houses, foreign newspaper offices, broadcasting stations, banks, supreme courts, commissioners of police, libraries, clubs, and service messes in a matter of hours rather than days. The *Daily Telegraph* also has an air edition, but other national newspapers are unlikely to produce one on the special paper which *The Times* employs—some of which ends up as the wrapping of cigarettes in Africa, to the great delight of the native servants.

The idea of an air edition really began during the Second World War when a miniature *Times Weekly Edition* was produced with the encouragement of the Government as a help towards getting the Allies' cause known in all parts of the world. This was printed on flat-bed presses running at a slow speed, but when the possibility of a daily air edition was explored, it was found to be essential that the rotary presses should be used in order to provide quick service. Specimen reels of paper were tested with an ink which dried by oxidization and not by penetration. Adjustments had to be made also in the folder mechanism so that it might handle the thin, light paper. The results were so successful that the printing of the air edition is now a normal nightly occurrence, and although only half as heavy it is exactly the same in contents and size of page and type as the paper which is read at home.

The more general use of the teletype-setter may herald the time when a national newspaper can be produced simultaneously in many provincial centres and in London. But this may come first in America, where the distances are so much greater and where it is impossible, under present conditions, to publish a national newspaper which will cover the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific. *The Times* gave an interesting description of the process when it adopted it for the setting of its Parliamentary report.[1]

At that time it was already in use between London and the

[1] *The Times*, 6 June 1951.

head offices of *The Scotsman* and the *Glasgow Herald*, but it was an innovation for the system to be installed within the Palace of Westminster. The apparatus necessary for remote control of a Linotype machine which can set mixed type faces is naturally somewhat complicated. All intelligence is conveyed by a six-unit code system which is peculiar to teletype-setting. In *The Times* room at the House of Commons are a keyboard controlling a code-perforating machine; the transmitter which translates the mechanically punched tape carrying the report in six-unit code form into its electrical equivalent for transmission over Post Office lines to Printing House Square; and a monitor printer which produces the message in plain language for checking purposes. The installation is operated by an accredited compositor who handles the report, which has already been sub-edited.

In the composing room at Printing House Square, a receiver reconverts the electrical pulses created by the transmitter into perforated tape form, exactly similar to that produced at the House of Commons. This is fed into a Linotype keyboard control unit and actuates the machine so that lines of type are cast according to the coded paper tape. The process is entirely automatic, the lines having been made an exact length to suit the width of the newspaper column by the compositor operating the transmitter. A monitored copy of the text is produced simultaneously on a separate machine and used as 'author's copy' by the reading staff for comparison with proofs taken from the galley of type: type which has been set by an operator at the House of Commons on machines inside the composing room at Printing House Square.

It is claimed that the process which was devised by the Teletypesetter Corporation of Chicago and is handled in England by the Western Electric Company Ltd allows an output of just under nine lines of type a minute, and is capable of all kinds of 'mixed' setting without any need either to stop or to adjust manually any of the equipment while it is running.

There is no indication of any revolutionary change in the appearance of the newspapers 'now that practically all of them

have gone over to the policy of printing the news on the front page. It does not look as though *The Times* will ever make this alteration, partly because it rightly regards its present front page as brimming over with news—of births, marriages and deaths; of personal news in the 'agony' column; of public appointments, and of legal notices. But changes are in fact going on all the time, many of them so subtly that the reader may not realize them. The good Editor and the shrewd Manager are always trying to gauge the taste of their readers and of the readers of rival organs. While it is always said that the newspaper must give the public what the public wants it is also true that the taste of the reader can be guided and possibly improved if the process is carried out without violence. At the moment of writing it seems as though there is a determined effort on the part of the popular national newspapers to interest the children and the teenagers by devoting special sections to their particular interests. The possibility of a daily newspaper catering exclusively for women is constantly being explored, but it is doubtful whether women will approve of being segregated in this fashion. Lord Northcliffe had high hopes that he could run a women's newspaper when he founded the *Daily Mirror*, but the idea was a financial failure and the *Daily Mirror* only began its successful career when its transformation into a general picture paper was effected. It is quite certain that the newspaper of the future as of to-day will still have three main purposes, to inform, to instruct and to entertain.

XXI

THE MOBILE NEWSPAPER

TUCKED AWAY SOMEWHERE in England, carefully guarded and preserved, is an outfit which one devoutly hopes will never have to be used, though it is ready for action in time of grave national emergency. It is the mobile printing press which was shown to the public by *The Times* at the 1953 British Industries Fair at Olympia. The reader may feel that *The Times* is mentioned too frequently, but the plain fact is that, ever since the second John Walter built the first steam-operated printing press in 1814, and thus introduced the greatest improvement in the art of printing since its foundation, *The Times* has always been in the van of progress in the production of the daily newspaper. Many of the evening papers have used a mobile van for printing football results in the stop-press column so that an enthusiast can read them within a few minutes of leaving his own particular arena, but the exhibit at Olympia was something entirely different which would, in an emergency, allow a complete newspaper to be produced from start to finish. It was, in fact, a printing office on wheels.

When the unit (which was built and ready for the road in eighteen months) is in convoy, it includes two articulated vehicles each comprising a Beaver tractor and a semi-trailer. These together contain the complete printing plant. A Dennis lorry contains stores and tows a diesel trailer in which plant for generating electricity is installed, and the convoy is completed by four Landrover utility trucks which carry the staff responsible for gathering news, and other trucks reserved for the task of distributing the printed newspaper. When the unit arrives at its chosen destination it can be assembled by a crew of six and made ready for printing in about two hours once the vehicles are level on the ground. When it has been assembled you have a newspaper printing office of 2,600 square feet, miniature admittedly but complete in every respect. It contains all the plant necessary for the preparation and production of an eight-page

newspaper with the one exception of half-tone blocks. Everything has been designed to make the working of the unit as simple and easy as possible. The two semi-trailers are set in a parallel position separated by fourteen feet of space. The inner sides of the two vehicles, which are in fact hinged flaps, are lowered by hand-worked winches and meet exactly to form the centre of the floor. Powerful screw jacks, built as fixtures to the chassis of the semi-trailers, level the unit, and adjustable pedestals support the centre floor. All the heavy machinery is mounted over the chassis of the semi-trailers.

The outer sides of the semi-trailers are split horizontally in half and hinged. The lower half falls outwards to extend the floor and the upper half rises upwards to extend the roof. A heavy canvas ceiling is supported by light aluminium cantilever trusses. The floor is covered with plastic non-slip tiles and nineteen fluorescent tubes, suspended from the roof, light the whole unit including the decks for the sub-editors and readers. There are two Linotype machines, one equipped for radio type-setting. A hydraulic moulding press produces the matrix for casting the stereotype plates, either by the hot or cold method. A combined make-up, imposing, and proofing surface, and a casting furnace which provides the metal in ingot form for the Linotype machines complete the equipment carried in the first of the two semi-trailers. The second semi-trailer contains the remainder of the stereotyping equipment, including the matrix drier and two semi-automatic casting boxes with metal pots electrically heated to produce ribbed plates five-sixteenths of an inch thin. The plates are shaved to precision on their inner surface in a plate-boring machine and, after cooling off in a specially designed tank, they are ready for the press.

The rotary printing press is secured to the floor of the semi-trailer on special resilient mountings and has an over-all size of 14 feet long, 6 feet 9 inches high and 5 feet 9 inches wide. Its output is 12,500 copies an hour and at the British Industries Fair a special eight-page folio newspaper was run off by the unit and may in time become a collector's piece. The necessary electric power, heating, and lighting is obtained from a four-

wheeled trailer 15 feet by 7 feet 6 inches and the twin generating sets of this miniature power station comprise two 55 h.p. Leyland six-cylinder engines coupled to two alternators. Spare cable is carried to enable the plant to draw upon any public electricity supply. On all the vehicles in the unit, low-voltage batteries provide the lighting when the generating plant is not running. The fact that the news must be got to the unit before the paper can be printed has not been overlooked. A radio telephone connects the printing truck with a fleet of cars and with the four Landrovers. The transmitters have a maximum output of fifteen watts and the range of reception is approximately twenty miles, depending upon the topography of the country in which the unit is located. The aerial is a self-supporting mast fitted on the roof of the semi-trailer which houses the Linotype machines. It is telescopic to allow travelling on the road, but can be lengthened to 25 feet for operation on the site. A smaller aerial is also installed on the roof of the vehicle to enable radio communication when the unit is moving from place to place.

XXII

THE LOST WEEKS OF 1955

NO ACCOUNT OF the British daily newspaper would be complete without a reference to the period in 1955 when London was deprived entirely of its national morning papers, its evening papers and its Sunday newspapers, and the editions of those journals which were being published outside the Metropolis were also stopped. The threat of a stoppage had been engaging the anxious attention of the newspaper proprietors for some weeks, but it came as a bombshell to readers when on the morning of 25 March they were informed that newspapers would not appear after eight o'clock that morning. They probably hoped that the stoppage would last for a few days only, but, in fact, publication was not resumed until the morning of 21 April after heavy financial losses had been inflicted on all the newspapers.

The story of the dispute is a somewhat complicated one, almost as complicated as the wage structure of the newspaper industry was shown to be when the Government set up a Court of Inquiry in an effort to find a way out of the deadlock. Its report showed that the newspapers which were members of the Newspaper Proprietors Association had approximately 23,000 non-editorial employees, but the dispute directly concerned only 700 members of the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Electrical Trades Union who were employed on the maintenance of the printing machinery. For a generation or more all the non-editorial employees had been within one wage structure, but there was no joint negotiating machinery and a revision of wages involved the N.P.A. in discussions with no fewer than fourteen trade unions and the conclusion of twenty-two separate agreements covering more than a hundred different minimum wage rates. Roughly 90 per cent of the employees were members of trade unions which were affiliated to the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation and it was the custom of the N.P.A. in the first place to discuss its proposals informally with the Federa-

Setting type by hand from a case with some sixty separate containers of varying size holding the pre-cast type. The compositor assembles the type, letter by letter, in a holder known as a composing stick.

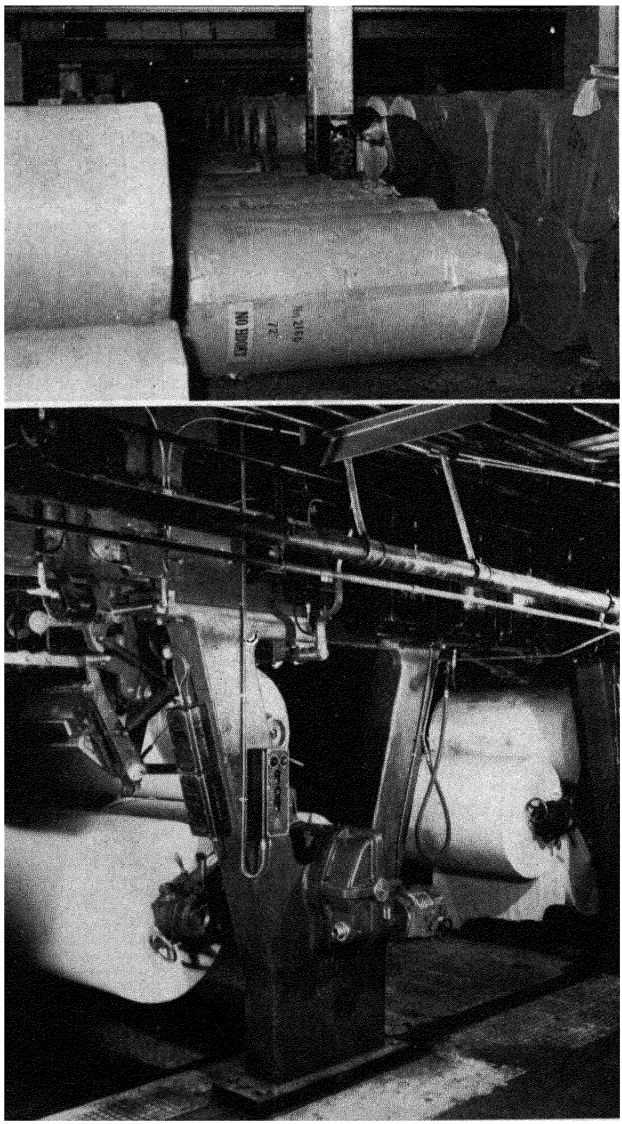
PLATE 17

PLATE 18

PLATE 19

A general view of the lay-out of the printing presses in the London machine room of the *News of the World*. Between 7 p.m. on Saturday and 4.30 a.m. on Sunday six-and-a-half million copies are printed in London on a battery of twenty-eight sextuple presses capable of producing twenty-four-page papers. During the same period more than two million copies are printed in Manchester The papers are taken by special newspaper trains to all parts of the country and are distributed throughout the country by 8 a m on Sunday.

PLATE 20



Top: Reels of newsprint ready for use in the machine room of *The Times*.

Bottom: Newsprint in position below the presses of the *News of the World*.

tion, although it seldom spoke fully for all its affiliated unions and had no authority to enter into binding collective agreements on behalf of its member unions. The weakness of the whole position was that neither the Amalgamated Engineering Union nor the Electrical Trades Union was in the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, although in the past they had sought affiliation without success.

At the time of the dispute the two sides in the industry were trying to agree on a new wage structure owing to the fact that the agreements which had been entered into in November 1951 had expired on 1 November, 1954. They had provided for basic wages to be stabilized for three years and for the addition of a cost of living bonus of one shilling per point in accordance with changes in the index of retail prices. By the middle of January 1955 and after hearing the reactions of all the unions concerned including the A.E.U. and the E.T.U. the Council of the N.P.A. had made what was described as a final offer which was:

(*a*) to terminate altogether the 1951 settlement with its stabilization and its cost of living payments;

(*b*) to consolidate into basic rates the accrued cost of living bonus figure, but using for that purpose a figure of 23 shillings as if the cost of living bonus system had in effect continued after 31 October 1954;

(*c*) to make, in addition, a series of graded weekly payments of twelve shillings less half a guinea or nine shillings as a fixed bonus not subject to cost of living fluctuations but not to be reckoned as additions to basic rates for the purpose of overtime calculations.

At the time of the strike four unions holding thirteen agreements with the N.P.A. had accepted this offer. The Typographical Association had intimated that it would be prepared to go to arbitration and discussions were proceeding with seven other unions. Neither the A.E.U. nor the E.T.U. accepted the offer and they handed in fourteen-day strike notices to expire on 25 March. A further meeting was arranged, however, with the N.P.A. for 21 March and the strike notices were withdrawn.

Nothing came of these talks; the strike notices were reinstated, and the newspapers stopped publication on 25 March. Four days later the N.P.A. gave notice to terminate the employment of the remainder of its non-editorial staffs as from 15 April and it was at that point that the Minister of Labour set up a Court of Inquiry, which acted with commendable speed and presented its report on 13 April. The Court felt that no method of negotiating general increases of wages in the industry was likely to be regarded as satisfactory by the maintenance men unless it provided for their being represented at all stages, and it did not think that the general wage pattern of the industry could be satisfactorily settled unless all the other unions recognized by the N.P.A. were similarly treated. It accordingly recommended that the fourteen unions with whom the N.P.A. customarily concluded agreements should co-operate to establish an appropriate central body to negotiate with the N.P.A. on questions of common concern including rates of pay, conditions of service, and the wage differentials applicable to the various grades of workers employed. Pending the establishment of such a central negotiating body the Court was of opinion that the strikers should return to work without prejudice on the basis of the employers' existing offer.

The N.P.A. at once accepted the report, but the A.E.U. and the E.T.U. declined at first to agree, with the result that the dismissal notices came into effect for the other workers in the industry. The tragic result was that many workers found themselves unemployed for the first time in their career. Happily, after intervention by the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and by the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, it was eventually found possible to devise a formula which was accepted on all sides. It provided that there should be a resumption of work on the basis that the offer made by the N.P.A. was accepted by all the unions as an agreed settlement pending further negotiations. These negotiations were to begin not later than eight weeks from the resumption of work and the new agreement would operate from the expiry of the eight weeks subject to completion within three months. The publication of

all the newspapers was accordingly resumed as from the morning of 21 April.

London and the Home Counties were thus deprived of their daily and Sunday newspapers for four weeks—an experience which nobody relished and which did not happen even during the General Strike of 1926 when *The Times* continued to appear and the Government and the Trades Union Congress each issued a daily newspaper. The members of the N.P.A. had agreed that in the event of a dispute none of them would attempt to publish a paper and the agreement was loyally observed. The *Daily Worker*, which was not a member of the N.P.A., failed to appear during the early part of the stoppage because of a dispute about the dismissal of some compositors. But when this dispute was settled it reappeared on 7 April after agreeing with the trade unions that it would not print more than its normal circulation number and would not distribute more copies in London than it did before the strike. The B.B.C. did its best to fill the gap by increasing the length of its news programmes. This was satisfactory up to a point, but it lacked the personal touch and the colour which only the newspaper can provide. A few printed broadsheets appeared on the streets, but they were poor affairs and seemed to be mainly concerned with the racing results and runners. A number of business houses issued duplicated sheets which included Stock Exchange prices for the benefit of their customers. Londoners who were able to obtain from friends day-old copies of provincial newspapers considered themselves fortunate, but the provincial papers made no attempt to flood London with copies—partly on the basis that dog does not eat dog and partly because they had no wish to use their newsprint on what must prove to be ephemeral circulations. The people for whom London had the greatest sympathy during the strike were the unfortunate street vendors of newspapers who suddenly, through no fault of their own, found themselves deprived of a living.

The financial cost of the strike will probably never be assessed with complete accuracy. A spokesman of the proprietors said afterwards that there had been a loss of 4 million

pounds, but it is probable that a good deal of this was represented by lost advertising, much of which was regained in the larger papers which followed the return to work. An official answer in the House of Commons by the President of the Board of Trade said that the estimated quantity of newsprint saved during the period of non-publication was 36,000 tons and permission was given to the newspapers to use this amount at any time until the middle of August. As a result *The Times* was able to publish a large number of twenty-four-page issues and all the other national newspapers increased their sizes. One immediate result of the strike was that when they resumed publication the three London evening newspapers increased their price from three-halfpence to twopence and later the three-halfpenny London morning papers went up to twopence.

XXIII

NEWSPAPER ORGANIZATIONS

THERE ARE SO many organizations associated with the newspaper world that it is impossible to describe them all. It may be helpful, however, to give information concerning some of the most important, which has been supplied from official sources. In order to avoid any misunderstanding it may be as well to explain that they are set out in this chapter in no special order of merit and that they are all doing admirable work for the profession as a whole or for the particular section of it with which they are concerned.

THE GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE PRESS

The General Council of the Press came into being on 1 July 1953 and consists of twenty-five members all drawn from the newspaper industry. Colonel the Honourable J. J. Astor, now Lord Astor of Hever, was the first chairman, and Sir Linton Andrews the first vice-chairman. He succeeded Colonel Astor in the chair when he resigned owing to ill health in June 1955. The Royal Commission on the Press, which was appointed in April 1947 and reported in June 1949, proposed that a Press Council with an independent chairman and including five lay members should be set up by the Press itself, but the scheme finally accepted by seven constituent organizations representing proprietors, editors, managers, and working journalists rejected the idea of any members from outside the industry. The Press Council is financed entirely by the constituent bodies and receives no subsidy whatever from the Government or any other outside source. The defined objects of the Council are:

(1) to preserve the established freedom of the British Press
(2) to maintain the character of the British Press in accordance with the highest professional and commercial standards

(3) to keep under review any developments likely to restrict the supply of information of public interest and importance
(4) to promote and encourage methods of recruitment, education, and training of journalists
(5) to promote a proper functional relation among all sections of the profession
(6) to promote technical and other research
(7) to study developments in the Press which may tend towards greater concentration or monopoly
(8) to publish periodical reports recording its own work and reviewing from time to time the various developments in the Press and the factors affecting them.

The Council meets quarterly, but it has a General Purposes Committee which meets once a month or more often if required to consider complaints which have been received and to submit recommendations to the full Council after the evidence has been sifted. The Council is 'required' only to consider complaints from persons actually affected, but if it so wishes it may consider complaints which come from any source. It issues an annual report on its work. Its offices are at 1 Bell Yard, Fleet Street, London, W.C.2.

NEWSPAPER PROPRIETORS ASSOCIATION

The membership of the Newspaper Proprietors Association is restricted to the morning, evening, and Sunday newspapers published in London, together with their Manchester editions. It was formed in 1906 as the result of a strike which threatened the London general printing trade. Until then, newspaper employees were governed by general printing wages and conditions, so that trouble in a general printing establishment might have jeopardized the publication of all the London newspapers. The N.P.A. makes separate wage and working conditions agreements with the unions on the basis that any labour dispute between the newspapers and printing unions should be restricted to issues arising out of their own particular agreements. Membership of

the Association in no way affects complete freedom of action in regard to each member's conduct of his own business. There are no provisions in its constitution which require a minority to be bound by the decision of a majority other than in respect of the domestic affairs of the Association as distinct from those of the individual member.

The business of the N.P.A., as it is generally known in Fleet Street, is conducted by a Council comprising one representative from each member newspaper which meets as and when required. There is no executive committee or other body delegated to control the affairs of the Association on behalf of individual members who have no direct representation. Its activities cover a wide field. There is a Labour Committee which deals with negotiations with trade unions regarding wage rates and conditions of employment and the settlement of labour disputes within the industry. Matters concerning advertising, such as the recognition and supervision of agents, the scrutiny of advertisement copy, and consideration of matters of common interest affecting the insertion of advertisements generally, are dealt with by a committee made up of the Advertisement Managers of each member newspaper. In the same way the circulation managers of each member newspaper sit on a Daily Circulation Managers Committee and a Sunday Circulation Managers Committee. They deal with such matters as the practical arrangments for the distribution of papers by road, rail and air, the appointment of wholesale agents, and the investigation of applications to start new retail points of supply. Other matters with which the N.P.A. deals are those of internal and mutual concern arising from the conducting of similar businesses, and those which arise externally such as the scrutiny of Parliamentary and local legislation, and the distribution of facilities for press reporting and photography. All matters of policy are dealt with by the Council.

The following newspapers are members of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association:

Morning papers: *The Times, Daily Telegraph and Morning Post, Daily Mail, Daily Express, News Chronicle, Daily Herald,*

Daily Mirror, *Daily Sketch*, *Morning Advertiser*, *Financial Times*, *Sporting Life* and *Greyhound Express and Coursing News*.

Evening papers: *Evening News*, *Evening Standard* and *Star*.

Sunday papers: *News of the World*, *Observer*, *People*, *Sunday Express*, *Sunday Dispatch*, *Sunday Times*, *Sunday Pictorial*, *Reynolds News* and *Sunday Graphic*.

THE NEWSPAPER SOCIETY

The Newspaper Society is the central organization representing the proprietors of provincial morning and evening newspapers and provincial and London surburban weekly newspapers. All such daily newspapers are in fact members as well as the vast majority of well-established weekly newspapers in England and Wales. Its principal objects are:

(1) to act as a central organization and to encourage the formation and maintenance within the United Kingdom of local organizations and with their help to promote co-operation in all matters affecting the common interests of members

(2) to promote and safeguard newspaper interests in Parliament and in the administration of Government Departments and of municipal and local affairs

(3) to take all possible action to safeguard members in matters relating to libel and copyright and to provide a central machinery by which members may enter into combination for defending proceedings for libel

(4) to collect information upon all topics having a practical interest for newspaper proprietors

(5) to promote the recognition by advertisers and advertising agents of members' newspapers as advertising media and to undertake on behalf of its members the collection of advertising agents' and other accounts and to supply confidential information with respect to the financial status of agents and advertisers

(6) to accept as an affiliated organization an organization of editors and to constitute a conference in London of metropolitan representatives of provincial newspapers to meet periodically for the promotion of their particular interests and the interests of the Press in general

(7) to consider labour questions affecting newspapers and to undertake, by arbitration or otherwise, the settlement of trade or other disputes

(8) to initiate, participate in and, where appropriate, give financial support to schemes for the education and training of juniors and apprentices in any branch of the industry.

The affairs of the Society are directed by a Council which includes a Daily Newspaper Panel and a Weekly Newspaper Panel. Nineteen local associations are affiliated to the Society and every member automatically belongs to one of the panels. Standing committees include a General Purposes Committee, a Labour Committee, and an Advertising Committee. A joint committee with the Guild of British Newspaper Editors deals with editorial questions and a similar link-up with the Newspaper Proprietors Association deals with telecommunications and various aspects of advertising. In individual dealings with members many thousands of queries are dealt with every year.

THE INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISTS

The Institute of Journalists can claim to be the oldest professional organization of journalists in the world. The National Association of Journalists was founded in 1883. It was converted into the Institute in 1889 and a year later the Institute was incorporated by Royal Charter. In addition to being a corporate professional society it is a certificated trade union which enables it to engage under the Trade Union Acts as a fully recognized body in negotiations on wages and working conditions, and it holds agreements with all the principal proprietorial organizations in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland. There are two professional classes of membership, Fellows and

Members, and a class of junior members. Fellowships are conferred upon journalists of recognized professional standing or of special experience or distinction. There are also two small non-professional classes consisting of Associates and Honorary Members. The Institute has no political alliances, believing that journalists in their professional activities should keep themselves free from all political partiality. Only when the professional interests of its members are affected does it take action in political or legislative matters. It has three representatives on the General Council of the Press and three on the National Council for the Training of Journalists. The governing body is the Council, which is elected by geographical districts on the basis of one representative for each fifty duly qualified members, and the Council elects an executive committee to carry on the detailed work of administration. It has an employment register and provides free legal advice to members in matters relating to their professional activities. It gives unemployment benefit as a matter of right and it has a number of benevolent activities. The Orphan Fund has a capital of more than £50,000; the Benevolent Fund helps in a wide range of personal misfortunes; there is a Fund to provide pensions for some of its members who, through age or incapacity, are no longer able to follow their profession; a Widows' Fund is designed to provide immediate help after the death of the husband, and there is a Convalescent Fund which offers to all journalists, whether members of the Institute or not, convalescent grants and grants for medical treatment.

THE NATIONAL UNION OF JOURNALISTS

The National Union of Journalists was founded in 1907 with a membership of 773, and at the end of 1955 it had 13,365 members in the United Kingdom, the Irish Republic and oversea. It is the fifth largest trade union in the British newspaper and printing industries and is the largest union in the world consisting exclusively of journalists. The Union has 162 branches. About a thousand of its members are engaged on the periodical and trade press; there are 800 freelances and 350 of

its members are employed by the British Broadcasting Corporation. Full membership is open to journalists, press photographers and artists provided that they have had three years' experience and are not persons able to exercise the powers of an employer in the engagement or discharge of staff. The principle of equal pay for men and women has been recognized for more than thirty years, the Union having been one of the first organizations in Britain to secure its acceptance. It was the first organization to obtain agreements for journalists in the United Kingdom and Ireland, and its agreements cover all but a handful of the thirteen hundred newspapers published in Great Britain. It also negotiates journalistic wages and conditions with many other bodies, and is the only 'outside' union formally recognized by the B.B.C.

The prime motive of the Union in its early days was to raise the status of journalists by improving their pay and working conditions, but in recent years protection of the material interests of the newspaperman has been only a part of the Union's functions. It has its own Code of Conduct and is active in maintaining and extending press facilities and freedom of information in general. It is a member of the International Federation of Journalists and is affiliated to the Federation of Professional Workers, the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, and the Trades Union Congress, but not to any political party. It provides unemployment, dispute, and death benefits for members as well as legal aid and a vacancy register. Its Widows' and Orphans' Fund now disburses about £11,000 a year and has a capital of about £155,000. The total of benefits paid by the Union since its foundation is about £350,000 and its total assets are in the neighbourhood of £360,000. A superannuation fund is run for members and in addition the Union supports the Newspaper and Printing Industries Pension Fund which is described elsewhere in this book.

THE GUILD OF BRITISH NEWSPAPER EDITORS

The Guild of British Newspaper Editors, which has a membership of more than three hundred, was formed in 1946

after the Second World War had convinced editors of provincial newspapers that it was greatly to their advantage to consider problems collectively. Its objects are:

(1) to sustain the dignity of editorship
(2) to raise and safeguard the professional status of editors
(3) to protect the rights and freedom of the Press
(4) to co-operate with other organizations working to these ends
(5) to provide facilities for information and discussion on practical problems of editorship
(6) to promote the mutual and common interest of its members
(7) to improve the education and training of junior journalists.

Full membership is open to all editors, editors-in-chief and managing editors of morning, evening, weekly, and Sunday newspapers which are members of the Newspaper Society, the Scottish Daily Newspaper Society or the Scottish Newspaper Proprietors Association. Editors of newspapers which do not belong to any of these organizations may become associated members, enjoying the full benefit of membership except that they have no vote and cannot be elected to the Council. The Guild is affiliated to the Newspaper Society and there are ten Regional Guilds and the Scottish Guild which was formed in 1952. The Guild supported the passing of the Defamation Act, 1952, has two members on the General Council of the Press and, having four places on the National Council for the Training of Journalists, has taken an important part in the development of the scheme and in planning the periodical proficiency tests which are held throughout the country.

THE NEWSPAPER PRESS FUND

The Newspaper Press Fund is a benevolent organization which was established in 1864 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1890 in order to help its members and their depen-

dants in time of misfortune or adversity. A limited amount of help can also be given to non-members. Membership is open to the whole paid class of literary contributors to the newspaper Press of the United Kingdom, including artists and photographers, and also to the correspondents of foreign newspapers residing in the United Kingdom. All applicants for membership must have been engaged in the profession for at least two years. Money grants are made to members and pensions are also awarded to members or to needy widows who have reached the age of 60. This age limit may be waived in cases of permanent incapacity to earn a livelihood. The possession of a small amount of capital does not prevent a member from receiving assistance, though the income derived from it may be taken into consideration, and even members in full employment may receive financial aid to meet a special emergency. The holding of a State pension does not preclude a member from receiving additional help. It is the fixed rule of the Fund not to make loans. All grants are made unconditionally and all applications for help are treated in the strictest confidence. The Fund is administered by a Council of eighteen journalists and a small staff at head office. On the completion of twenty years' payment of the annual subscription of two guineas, life membership is obtained with no further liability. A single payment of £31 10s or seven consecutive annual subscriptions of five guineas also confer life membership. Young members may pay an annual subscription of one guinea until the age of 24. Provided that they continue to pay their subscriptions, journalists who leave the profession may retain their membership of the Fund and Life Members are always eligible for the benefits of the Fund whatever their occupation. In order to join the Fund an applicant must be under the age of 50. From the institution of the Fund in 1864 to the end of 1955 the sum of £906,013 had been paid out in grants and pensions. In 1955 alone the expenditure on grants and pensions amounted to £30,318. The membership of the Fund at the end of 1955 was 4,034, which is probably less than one half of the newspaper journalists who are eligible to join.

THE ADVERTISING ASSOCIATION

The Advertising Association, which was formally incorporated in 1926, represents the various aspects of the advertising business and its members include advertising agents, publishers and others providing advertising services, films, direct mail, engraving and market research. Most of the other organizations connected with advertising are affiliated to the Association as well as some thirty-six publicity clubs or associations. It has four main tasks. It acts as a natural focus for the otherwise widely divergent and sometimes conflicting interests of a very diverse industry, and as an official channel in discussions with the Government and national bodies. Its Advertising Investigation Department works in close co-operation with similar bodies and keeps watch over the whole field of advertising so that it may check abuses and formulate a code of standards on which alone a healthy national advertising service can develop. It endeavours to provide all who enter advertising with a first-class grounding in the principles of the profession. It has encouraged organized tuition at local centres throughout the country based on a common curriculum and leading to a professional examination on which the Diploma of the Association is awarded. Through its public relations service the Association sets out to explain to the public what advertising is and how it can be best performed in the common interest. It is felt that this work is specially necessary in the case of advertising which, by its very nature, is always in the public eye and is thus an easy target for prejudiced or ill-informed criticism.

XXIV

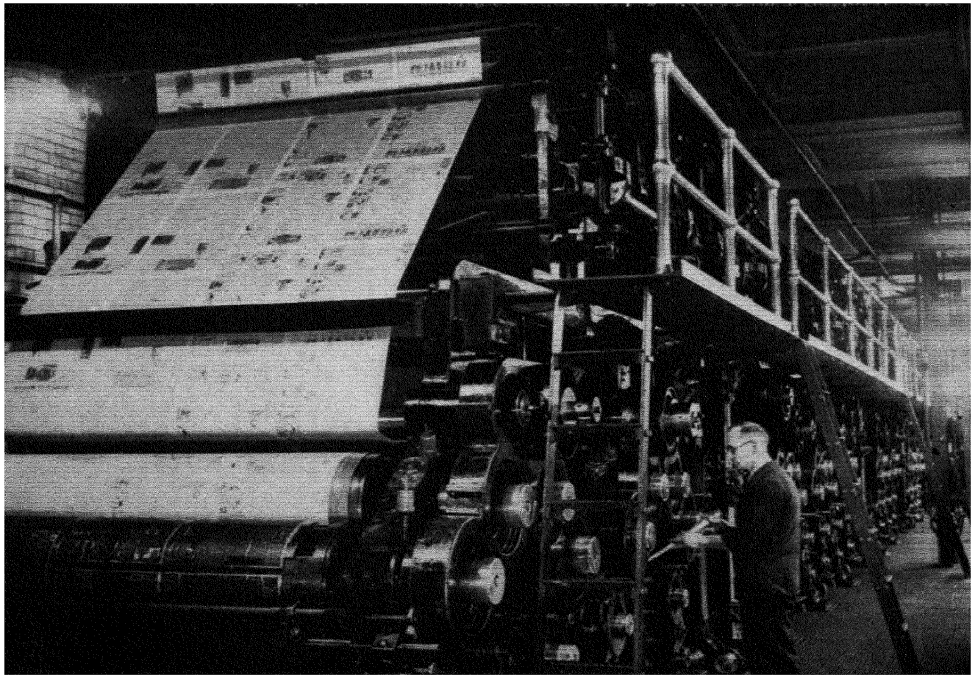
TRAINING FOR JOURNALISM

EVERY JOURNALIST IS asked many times in his career to advise keen young men and women as to the best way of entering the profession, and it must be admitted that there is no more difficult question to answer. It is probably the only profession which has no accepted method of entrance. The ambitious boy will try to start as soon as he leaves school, and few are prepared to wait until they have the added asset of a university training. The Royal Commission on the Press, in its report published in 1949, urged that the journalist ought to have a good general education but that he also needs a fuller knowledge of history and English than his schooling will have given him; a knowledge of the processes of central and local government and of the courts, and at least a grounding in economics. The commission felt that the present haphazard methods of recruitment and training do not ensure that entrants into the profession have these qualifications or that they will acquire them.

The problem is one that has baffled the profession for generations. Until the beginning of the present century a young man drifted into journalism in a completely haphazard fashion. He may have had newspaper friends or relatives who put him forward. His schoolmaster may have introduced him to the Editor of a local newspaper because he had been impressed by an article written by the boy in the school magazine; or he may have just strayed into journalism for want of anything better. The salaries were terribly low, the hours were long, promotion was slow, and nobody seemed to have the least interest in the boy's future unless he showed outstanding promise. It is to the credit of the Institute of Journalists and the National Union of Journalists that they took matters in hand, but it was only quite recently that the profession was able, with goodwill on all sides, to evolve a scheme of training which carries high hopes for the future. The writer was fortunate enough to be a member of what he believes to have been the first real school of journalism in this

country. In 1902 it was announced that an anonymous benefactor had decided to finance a scheme for the establishment of classes in journalism as an adjunct to the work of the City of London School, and to award a travelling scholarship annually to the most promising student. It was designed as a memorial to a great war correspondent, George Stevens, who had died while serving the *Daily Mail* in the South Africa War. The director of the course was a practical journalist, Mr William Hill, then on the staff of the *Westminster Gazette* and afterwards Editor of the short-lived *Tribune*. Many eminent journalists addressed the boys and gave them the benefit of their practical knowledge. The boys attended classes after the normal day's work was over, and went out on reporting engagements. They learned the rudiments of sub-editing and interviewing and the day came when, from a real newspaper office, they produced their own newspaper, the *Stevens Gazette*. Many of the boys who joined the classes afterwards adopted journalism as their career and there is no doubt whatever that they profited enormously from the preliminary training which they had undergone.

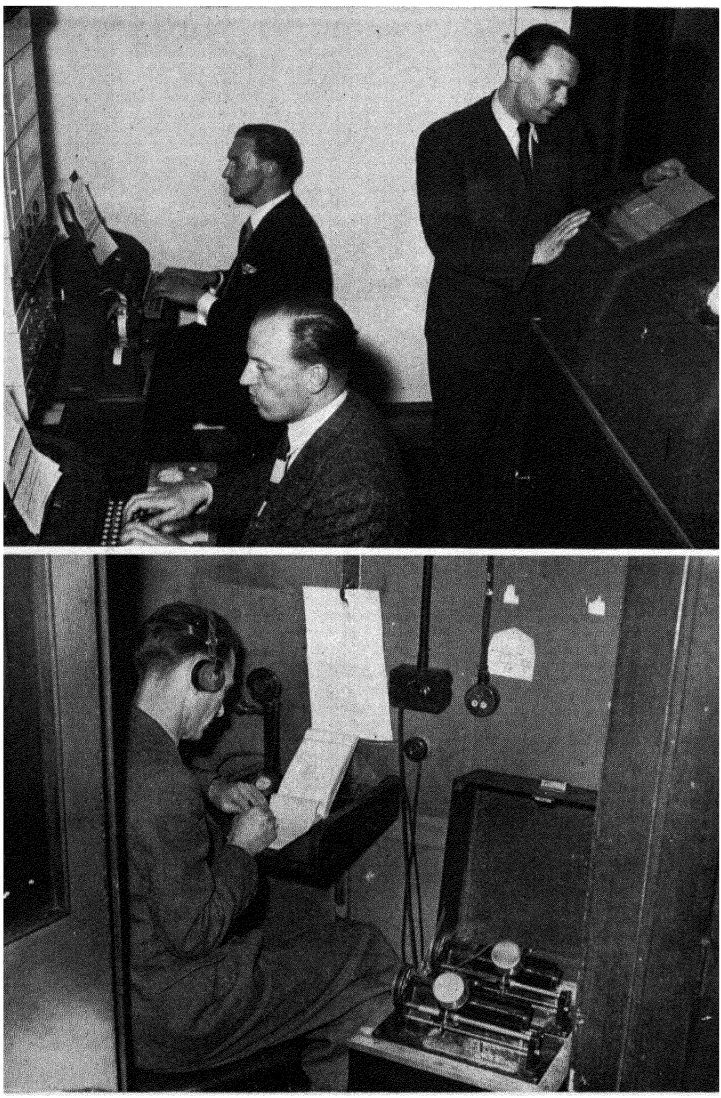
It was a matter of real regret when the experiment came to an end after a few years. The boys who took part in it were convinced that the anonymous benefactor was Lord Northcliffe, and in later years when the author tackled him on the subject he did not deny the suggestion. It was possibly from this modest beginning that there later emerged the more ambitious Diploma Course in Journalism at King's College, London. It was a two-year course in which general education was combined with instruction in practical journalism, and it flourished under the energetic direction of Mr Tom Clarke, who had been one of Lord Northcliffe's young men on the *Daily Mail*. He gathered around him an imposing army of lecturers, and there is a memorial to the Diploma Course in a volume containing summaries of many of the interesting lectures which were delivered to the students. Unhappily the Course was closed down during the Second World War and the University of London has never found it possible to re-establish it. Thus Britain enjoys the unenviable distinction of being about the only civilized country



A section of the battery of presses necessary to print the large circulation of the *News of the World*.

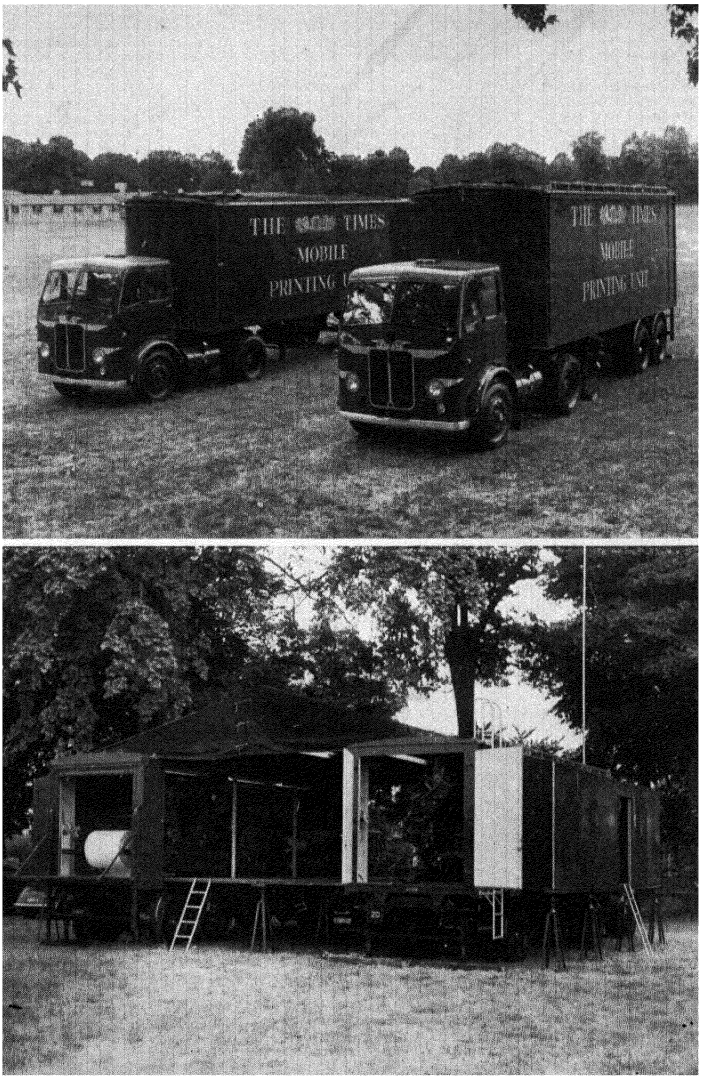
PLATE 21

PLATE 22



Top: The teletype room of *The Times* at the House of Commons. From it the teletype-setting machine sends the report direct to the composing room at Printing House Square, where it is put into type automatically.

Bottom: A message from a foreign capital is received by a shorthand writer in the office of *The Times* and is simultaneously recorded by dictaphone.



The Times owns a mobile printing unit which in an emergency, if Printing House Square were put out of action, could produce a complete newspaper

Top: The unit ready to take to the road.

Bottom: The unit opened up and prepared for action. The composing machines are on the right and the printing press on the left of the picture.

PLATE 24

The Queen Victoria Street frontage of the offices of *The Times*. Behind the telephone kiosk is the narrow entrance to Printing House Square. The white section on the first floor of the building shows where it was struck by an enemy bomb during the second World War.

which does not provide a department of journalism at a single university. It fell to the journalistic profession itself to try to remove the stigma and to provide the next best thing.

It was Joseph Pulitzer, the great American newspaperman, who once said that nobody in a newspaper office has the time or the inclination to teach a raw reporter the things he ought to know before taking up even the humblest work of the journalist. And yet it is in the newspaper office that the business must be finally learned, however good a general education at school or university the beginner may have had. In November 1951 the National Council for the Training of Journalists was established jointly by the Guild of British Newspaper Editors, the Institute of Journalists, the National Union of Journalists and the Newspaper Society, and at a later stage the Newspaper Proprietors Association also agreed to give financial support to the training scheme which was drawn up. The National Council laid down the following general principles as the basis of a Training Scheme:

(1) the desirability of providing adequate facilities for training so that the requirements of the industry and the individual potentialities of all junior journalists may be fully realized;

(2) the need of achieving maximum flexibility in any basic scheme to permit of its voluntary application to the requirements of the smallest newspaper office;

(3) the desirability of securing, as far as possible, recognized standards of vocational training;

(4) the desirability of providing facilities for further education in addition to the facilities for vocational training.

It may be of interest to readers to have the scheme briefly summarized. It requires, as a minimum educational qualification, a General Certificate of Education at Ordinary Level in the English Language and two other subjects, one of which should be English literature, unless the Editor of the paper on which the trainee is serving approves an alternative. The scheme includes

photographers, and for them the requirement is a General Certificate of Education at Ordinary Level in the English language. The full training scheme covers a period of five years which is divided into a probationary period of six months, a three-year period of basic training, and the national diploma course of eighteen months. It is required that, on the satisfactory completion of the probationary period, junior journalists shall be formally articled to one company, the period of such articles to run for three years, exclusive of any period spent on National Service and exclusive of the probationary period. The articles bind the young journalist to follow the prescribed training and education and place an obligation on the employer to provide such training in accordance with the standards recommended by the National Council. At the end of the three-year period the junior journalist is able to take the General Proficiency Test and the Council will then issue a certificate of training, subject to a favourable report from the Editor of the paper to which the youngster is attached. This will record his achievements during the three years period and the result of the proficiency test. Having surmounted the first hurdle the young journalist can now go forward for the national diploma which is also open under certain conditions to senior journalists already in the profession. To obtain the diploma, candidates will have to submit examples of their work over the eighteen months period, pass an examination, and submit a thesis.

It should be emphasized that the training scheme does not apply to a boy the moment he leaves school. The candidate must already be a member of the staff of a newspaper and the purpose of the scheme is to help juniors to become effective and well-equipped working journalists. The first entrance into the profession must still be of a somewhat haphazard nature, but parents who take the trouble to find a position for their sons and daughters on their local newspaper may be assured that the Editor will keep an eye on their future welfare. The first six months, the probationary period, will obviously be vital, for during that period the proprietor or the Editor of a newspaper will make it his business to assess the merits of the newcomer

and to decide whether he is promising enough to be articled for a period of not less than three years. While it is up to the junior himself to decide whether he wishes deferment from National Service, the Advisory Committee feels that it is essential for the satisfactory completion of the scheme that there should be deferment, and the Ministry of Labour and National Service is prepared to grant this. Exceptional cases will call for special consideration, but juniors should be engaged so that they may complete their probationary period and be formally accepted as junior journalists before the age at which they are liable for National Service.

This chapter does not, of course, profess to describe the new scheme in great detail, but anybody who is considering journalism as a career either for himself or a member of his family is advised to get into touch with Mr H. C. Strick, the National Council's Executive Officer, at 85 Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. He will be found to be most co-operative.

It may help those who are thinking of going in for journalistic training to set out the papers which were actually set for the national diploma course in December 1954. The examination was divided into four sessions of three hours each. Two of the sessions were devoted to questions on practical journalism, one to the structure of the newspaper industry, and one to the history of journalism. In each section the candidate had to answer the first two questions and one of the remaining questions.

Practical Journalism

Part One

(1) What do you consider to be the essential responsibilities of a local weekly newspaper towards the community it serves?

(2) It is sometimes said that a young journalist should not learn shorthand because, if it is known that he is proficient in note-taking, he is apt to be given only a certain limited range of assignments. Do you agree with this point of view?

(3) Discuss the law of libel as it affects the Press.

(4) What are the principal types of Local Authority in England? Describe the constitution and functions of any two of them.

(5) Indicate the general principles to be observed in making up a news page, with special reference to lay-out and the typography of the headlines.

Part Two

(1) Give an account, not exceeding 500 words, of the event that you have witnessed which made the deepest impression upon you.

(2) Write a 300-word comment on two of the following—

(*a*) How do you feel Press and Police relationship can be improved?

(*b*) If you were an Editor and had to choose two new features from the following list which would you select and why?

Illustrated women's article
Children's corner
Crossword puzzle
Pools and racing guide.

(*c*) Do you think American style newspapers would appeal in this country? Give reasons for your opinions.

(*d*) Describe the respective merits of men and women in journalism.

(3) Your News Editor arranges in advance for you to interview an important local personage. How would you set about the task and carry it through until the interview appears in your newspaper?

(4) Discuss any matter of current controversy in the realm of Sport.

(5) What do you understand by the 'Responsibility of the Press'?

Structure of the Newspaper Industry

(1) Describe, as if for the information of a young junior under training on a provincial or London suburban newspaper, the outlines of the newspaper industry in this country, including as much factual information as you can about the numbers of the various kinds of newspapers and their circulation.

(2) In some newspaper offices the executives are trained journalists but also have managerial status. State what advantages or disadvantages attach to this system.

(3) The Press Council has recently issued its first annual report. What are its main features?

(4) Discuss the activities of Public Relations Officers and publicity firms in relation to newspapers.

(5) In what ways can co-operation between the editorial, managerial and advertising staffs be improved?

History of Journalism

(1) What do you regard as the most progressive development in the past fifty years?

(2) Give an account of newspapers and journalism before 1750.

(3) Name four editors of *The Times* and comment on the influence of any two of them.

(4) Describe the part played in the history of journalism by two of the following: William Cobbett; W. T. Stead; Henri de Blowitz.

(5) What was Lord Northcliffe's attitude towards (*a*) his fellow proprietors and (*b*) the journalists in his employment?

A paper framed on these broad lines should certainly tax the skill and the ingenuity of the candidate, but it must be remembered that when the scheme is in full swing he will have been preparing for the ordeal for five years and he will have been advised as to the books on journalism which he should study

before he sits for his final examination. If the candidate can obtain 80 per cent of the total number of marks awarded he can face the future of his life in journalism with complete confidence.

When the examination for the general certificate was held in October 1954 it was announced that a hundred and twenty-two reporters and seven photographers had taken the whole test and eighty-seven reporters and five photographers had passed. Those who failed in any section of it were entitled to sit again later on. When the first diploma examination was held towards the end of 1954 five candidates sat. They were senior journalists who had already had considerable experience of the profession. It was impossible for juniors to take part at that stage because the necessary preliminary period of three years and six months had not elapsed since the inauguration of the scheme. Two candidates passed both the written test and the thesis. One other candidate passed the written examination only and two candidates failed both the written examination and the thesis, which suggests that the examiners have decided from the outset to require a high standard of efficiency. By February 1956 five diplomas and two hundred and eighty certificates of training had been awarded.

Mention should also be made of the course in journalism conducted by the London Polytechnic, although this does not carry quite the same weight as the training scheme. The one important difference is that the Polytechnic course is open to anybody on payment of the necessary fees and is not limited to those who have already entered the profession as juniors. In its early days it attracted a number of its students from the Commonwealth oversea, and when they returned to their native shores they carried with them an impressive certificate testifying that they had taken the course. The diploma course in journalism is of one year's duration and the main condition of entry is that the student should have a General Certificate of Education with English as a subject, or have reached an equivalent standard. The subjects of the course include practical journalism, English, British life and institutions, French (with German or Spanish as alternative languages) and shorthand and type-

writing. The classes are held in the day-time from Monday to Friday from 9.30 to 12.30 and 1.30 to 4.30 and, in addition to the lectures, there are practical work and visits to newspaper offices. The fee is twenty-eight pounds for the year or ten pounds for each of the three terms into which the course is divided, but in the case of those students whose parents or guardians come under the Administrative Council of London and those whose attendance has been authorized by other local education authorities the fees are remitted entirely up to the end of the academic year in which they reach the age of eighteen.

Apart from the diploma course there is an evening department with a two-year course which is designed to help those already engaged in newspaper work and also to serve as an introduction for those intending to enter the profession. The first year is divided into two parallel courses in journalism and English which are self-contained and must be taken as a whole. One course is held on Wednesday and Friday evenings and the other on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 7.30 to 9. In the second year there is one course only in which the study of journalism is continued on Tuesdays and of British Life and Institutions on Fridays. Examinations are held at the end of each session and students successfully completing the two-year course are given certificates. When it is realized that in both the day and the evening courses the study of practical journalism includes the origin and development of the newspaper, the beginnings of reporting, the British Press to-day, newspaper organization, editorial organization, the Editor, leader writer, News Editor, Foreign News Editor, news gathering and transmission, work of the reporter and the sub-editor, the specialist, the Foreign Correspondent, the news agencies, writing for the Press, the daily news conference and compilation of the paper, newspaper illustrations, law relating to the Press, periodicals, free lance writing, sport, and modern printing methods, it will be seen that the student has plenty to occupy his mind.

XXV

JOURNALISM AS A CAREER

THE QUESTION WHICH the newspaperman is asked most frequently is, 'What are the prospects of journalism as a career?' and it merits serious consideration. It is not a question to which a complete answer can be given without knowing something of the background of the young candidate who is anxious to embark upon it. But one can, at any rate, start on the basis that the prospects are infinitely better than they were fifty years ago. Journalism, in the author's opinion, can never be a closed profession. The mere possession of a union ticket will not guarantee that the holder has a flair for collecting news or the knack of presenting it to the reader in an attractive form, which must be part of the stock-in-trade of every journalist. At the same time it must be admitted that it is almost entirely due to the efforts of the two organizations which represent the working newspaperman that there has been the steady improvement in hours and wages which has been such an outstanding feature of the newspaper world since the 1914–18 war. It was not until 1917 that the first really successful negotiations with the Newspaper Proprietors Association were undertaken by the National Union of Journalists. As a result the N.P.A. recommended that no qualified sub-editor should be paid less than six guineas and no qualified reporter in general reporting work less than five guineas a week —but there were all sorts of exceptions, reservations and extras. A wage census of Union members throughout the country as a whole at that time showed that over 40 per cent of those making returns received wages of between thirty shillings and forty-five shillings weekly and that the great majority were receiving less than three pounds a week. The first firm agreement with the N.P.A. was made in 1919 and it provided for a minimum of eight guineas a week. In 1921 this was increased to nine guineas, a rate which lasted throughout the inter-war period. During the Second World War the minimum rate was raised from time to time, and when the exhaustive overhaul of all

salaries in the newspaper industry began in 1955 the minimum wage for fully trained reporters and sub-editors on the national newspapers was £14 12s weekly with an additional sum based on the cost of living figures.

In 1917 the Union made its first agreement with the Northern Federation, a group of morning and weekly paper proprietors in the Northern and Midland counties of England, and this led to an agreement in 1919 with the Newspaper Society providing varying rates in the provincial range from three pounds a week to four guineas. As a result of arbitration in 1920 these rates were increased to from £4 for weeklies to £5 4s for the larger provincial dailies, and a year later these rates were raised again to a figure of £4 7s 6d for weeklies and £5 15s for the larger dailies.

In the days before there were any agreements the salaries were terribly low throughout the whole range and the worker had no option but to accept them if he was really determined to enter the profession. A reporter who was on the five pound mark felt himself to be a prince among men. To my certain knowledge the Political Correspondent of a national newspaper which he served with great efficiency and tremendous zeal was paid less than five hundred pounds a year, while there were cases in which Editors were paid less than a thousand pounds a year. Money, of course, went much farther in the days when a golden sovereign was really worth twenty shillings, but even allowing for the difference in its value the lot of the journalist has been improved very considerably, thanks not only to the efforts of the Union and the Institute but to the vision of men like Lord Northcliffe and Lord Beaverbrook who realized that the labourer was worthy of his hire and that the journalist did much better work for his paper if there was not always the financial nightmare hovering in the background.

It is often argued against the system of a minimum wage that the minimum tends also to become the maximum, but that has not been the experience in journalism. The competition between rival newspapers and particularly between the rival chains is so acute that once the journalist has established himself and his

name becomes known to newspaper readers there is a battle to secure his services which sometimes goes to fantastic lengths. This refers particularly to specialists like the gossip writers and the authorities on sporting subjects, but a News Editor also watches very carefully the work of the reporters and the sub-editors on rival newspapers in case there is any bright young man or woman whom it is his duty, he thinks, to snap up. In some cases a staff journalist may also be able to earn something on the side provided that his contract is not drawn too tightly. Most of the Sunday newspapers offer Saturday night work to sub-editors employed on the daily newspapers and liberal terms are given. A good deal of money can also be earned by broadcast talks. But sooner or later these sources of additional revenue may be lopped off and the journalist may be asked to sign a contract restricting his work to his own newspaper. The employer may quite fairly argue that he has given his staff a five-day or five-night week on the ground that a man needs two days' rest every week in view of the arduous nature of the work, and the purpose of the concession is defeated if one of the two free days or evenings is spent in another newspaper office.

To the young man who is deciding on his career, journalism must nowadays seem very attractive for there is not the long period of waiting and earning very little money which he must expect if he adopts some of the other professions such as law, medicine or chartered accountancy. If the scheme of training comes to be firmly established—and there is little doubt that it will—the young man must look forward to a five-year training period. But all through those five years he is gaining valuable practical experience and at the end of it he is in a position to expect the minimum salary of £17 17s. 0d. if he works on a daily paper in London and (at the age of 24) from £12 5s. to £14 7s. 6d. according to the size of the population if he works on a daily paper in a provincial centre. In London he gets eight days off in every four-week working period, and in the provinces seven days. He is entitled to four weeks holiday in London and three weeks in the provinces plus two days holiday at Christmas and one at Easter. The working week in London consists of forty

hours for the day worker and thirty-five hours for the night worker, including meal times, and in the provinces forty hours for the morning paper worker and forty-two for the evening paper man, both exclusive of meal times. Emergencies may arise when these hours have to be exceeded. There is no payment for overtime but the excessive hours must be compensated for by equivalent time off at a later date. To those who used to work in the old days generally six and sometimes seven days a week at any hour of the day or night, these conditions of employment sound remarkably easy, but it must be conceded that the pace of the work has speeded up very considerably and it may be that the modern reporter and sub-editor get through as much work in six or seven hours as their fathers used to do in eight or ten.

In the old days the journalist, if wise and provident, had to prepare for the coming of old age, but nowadays pension schemes have been established in many newspaper offices. Most of them are of a contributory character and provide for retirement at sixty-five and some, but not all, look after the widow as well.

The Royal Commission went exhaustively into the idea that a comprehensive contributory superannuation scheme for journalists, as advocated by both the Institute and the National Union, should be established. Such a scheme would enable a journalist who moved from one employer to another to take his pension rights with him. It was argued before the Commission that at present a journalist employed in an office which has its own pension scheme is virtually tied to that office by the fact that if he leaves it he loses his pension rights. While the Commission found that a number of employers were agreeable to the proposal in principle, there were others, and particularly provincial proprietors with schemes of their own, who pointed out that a good pension scheme helped a provincial paper to keep men who might otherwise gravitate to London. The Commission recognized that there are practical difficulties in the way of introducing a comprehensive scheme where house schemes are already in being, but it did not feel that the difficulties need be insuperable. Comprehensive schemes have been introduced

elsewhere, where similar circumstances prevail, for example in the universities, and have proved invaluable. The report recommended that the General Council of the Press should consider the practicability of introducing such a scheme for journalists but when the Council was eventually set up, this proposal was not specifically included in its list of objects.

One step at any rate has been taken on the long road towards the establishment of a comprehensive pension scheme by the creation of the Newspaper and Printing Industries Pension Fund which the Newspaper Society has commended to all its members. If the proprietor of any provincial or London suburban newspaper belongs to the Newspaper Society, he can offer his editorial staff pension rights which the member of the staff knows he can take with him to any other newspaper which is a member of the Society and has adopted the scheme. The contribution tables of the Fund are based on a unit of a pension of one pound a week at 65 years of age. The lowest entry age is 16 and the highest in normal circumstances is 55. The employer and the journalist share equally the cost of the weekly premium. Any number of units may be subscribed for and they can be added to as the journalist improves his position and salary. To take an example, the following table shows how the journalist can obtain a pension of four pounds weekly at 65:

Entry Age next birthday	Weekly Premium *Journalist's* s. d.	*Employer's* s. d.	*Total* £ s. d.
21	3 8	3 8	7 4
25	4 8	4 8	9 4
30	6 2	6 2	12 4
35	8 0	8 0	16 0
40	10 10	10 10	1 1 8
45	15 2	15 2	1 10 4

This may be the start of the comprehensive scheme which the Royal Commission visualized, but it must be recognized that the initial cost of extending it, even to the journalists on national daily papers, would be astronomical and that newspaper proprietors might be averse to joining a scheme which gave pension rights to only one section of the staff, however important.

The qualifications which go to the making of a capable reporter or sub-editor have been discussed in an earlier chapter. If a young man or woman feels that he possesses them he might well have a shot at entering the profession. But he must not expect quick or spectacular success. The road is a long and often painful one, and at the outset there will be a good deal of drudgery and routine work which an ambitious youngster may not consider to be worth doing. Whenever the author has written or spoken on this subject he has always emphasized one point. There is no half-way house in journalism. You will either like it immensely or you will hate it. If in the early days you do not fall under the spell of the newspaper office with its occasional successes and its constant heartbreaks, then face the facts: for goodness' sake get out of it as soon as possible and look round for another profession which may be better suited to your temperament. On the other hand, if the life with all its excitements and unexpected happenings appeals to you, you will never regret the day on which you first made up your mind to 'write for the papers'.

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