

MAKING AN ENCYCLOPEDIA

FAST APPROXIMATE DETAIL IN THE COMPLETED WORK.

All Last Year to Complete and One at the Present Time to be Published.

Since the late Mr. Wang, the Chinese sage, brought the annals of all that had happened under the sun down into the compass of 360 books in the dim long ago...

With the mass of cards roughly segregated under general heads, the editor and the chief among his assistants have the second step in their labors to make.

Which of the subjects indicated in the sketch were to be taken up in the encyclopedia and which shall be allowed to form a paragraph or an individual article under a broad general caption?

First, they must consider the weight of interest which will make this or that topic sought for by readers.

Second, they must consider the weight of interest which will make this or that topic sought for by readers.

When one seeking light on this point went to the office of one of the editors of an encyclopedia yesterday afternoon...

"You want to know all about the making of an encyclopedia in an hour? I must admit that though there are some very condensed encyclopedias in existence today...

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FEW BOOKS OF VERSE PAY

MONTHLY THEY ARE PUBLISHED AT THE PUBLISHER'S EXPENSE.

Only Half a Dozen or So Men Writing Poetry Nowadays Who Are Sure of a Substantial Sale.

The man who receives calls from aspiring poets at one of the big publishing houses could be discerned through the half open door by the young man who waited in the anteroom as an office boy handed in a card on which was scribbled, "Do you publish books of verse?"

"Please the man who receives calls was not pleased. He tore a leaf from the rag end of an unraveled cigar and rustled his feet among the papers around his waste basket—rejected manuscripts, doubtless. Then he mumbled something to the office boy, who came out a little paler than when he went in, and who said, "Step inside" in a voice that clearly indicated that he wouldn't be in the young man's shoes for a good deal.

The young man walked to the door, pushed it open deliberately and stood with his hand on the knob. The man at the desk looked up over his glasses and disclosed a thunderbolt brow.

"I'm very sorry, my dear sir," said the man at the desk, "but unfortunately our house doesn't care to assume the responsibility of putting out any more poetry at the present time. We have all that we can handle just now."

The young man took a step forward and started to say something. He was interrupted by the man at the desk, who said, "Now, there really isn't any use. I know what you are going to say; that it's a lousy fair to turn down your poems without reading them, and that yours are different from the rest. Well, it doesn't matter. We aren't publishing any more verse than we can help. It doesn't pay."

"That's just what I wanted to know," replied the young man.

"What's that?" shouted the man at the desk.

"Whether it pays or not, I'm not poet. I never wrote a poem in my life. I came in to ask how poetry sells these days. Does it warrant its publication?"

Every time this little scene was gone over the answer was the same. And when the men who receive calls from aspiring poets learned that there really wasn't any catch in the thing they were willing to tell what they thought of the commercial value of contemporary poetry.

In a nutshell, this was their reply: "I never wrote a poem in my life. I came in to ask how poetry sells these days. Does it warrant its publication?"

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FOREIGN LITERARY NOTES.

The London publishing season this year is paralyzed, according to the Daily Mail. The spring books, which should have been put upon the market weeks ago, have not appeared.

In literature the possession of a famous name is a serious detriment. James Thomson of "The City of Dreadful Night," for instance, suffered greatly from being confused with the better known author of "The Seasons."

Mr. Robert Herrick escapes the penalty in some degree by appealing to an audience which the poet is comparatively unknown. Sir Walter Scott, Bart., who died the other day at the age of 94 years, though he never wrote a word, so far as we know, and his chief activity was confined to the book world, is a name notable in the book world of the end of the nineteenth century.

He was a self-made man, beginning life as a working mason and gradually becoming a great contractor. He put up public buildings, constructed bridges, built one of the London underground railroads, made money in shipping, in steel and tube works, in all kinds of engineering concerns.

For some reason he entered the publishing business also in the early '50s and was one of the pioneers in the manufacture of attractive book covers and covers of paper.

His books were published in a remarkably well edited and contained a great deal of original matter put together in a practical and workmanlike manner.

In the pretty set of "Canterbury Poets" were included several original anthologies, like Mr. Gleason White's "Ballades and Rondeaux," a most useful summary of early French verse forms, which is excluded from the United States on account of too liberal borrowing from American poets.

The biographies in the "Great Writers" were compact, judicious and provided with helpful bibliographies. Much good literature which it was not easy to find in any shape was included in the "Camelot Classics" and much original and even pioneer work was contained in the "Contemporary Science" books.

His firm published other series later; it introduced Ibsen and Tolstoy to English readers, but the service rendered in providing a mass of good literature in attractive shilling volumes with bindings that hold after a quarter of a century's use, before the Dents and other publishers applied art to cheap books, gave the name of Walter Scott a new distinction among book-lovers.

If he was not responsible himself for the selection and method of his publication, he was for the choice of the men who saw that the work was well done.

All interested in the English language will be glad to learn that Prof. W. Skeet is about to issue an enlarged and revised edition of his famous "Etymological Dictionary," the mainstay of all students of English philology.

It is announced that "alterations have been made, more or less, in almost every article, except such as are of the simplest character."

Andreas Achenbach, the German landscape and marine artist, died April 1 at Düsseldorf at the age of 84 years. He painted an amazing number of pictures, about to issue an enlarged and revised edition of his famous "Etymological Dictionary," the mainstay of all students of English philology.

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FEWER BOOKS GIVEN AWAY.

The Free List of the Publishers Week Reduced in Recent Years.

The free list is one of the most guarded secrets of a publishing house. This is so because there are many persons who would say: "If you send a copy to him, why not to me too?"

By the use of infinite tact, tremendous patience and considerable bold brutality the list that was a formidable one twenty years ago has been brought down to the lowest possible figure.

If you say to the man who has charge of this branch of the business for any big publishing house: "How many books do you give away free in order to push the sale of a book?" he will reply: "That depends entirely on the nature of the book."

Every house has a classified list of perhaps 700 destinations for free copies. When a book comes out some one goes over that list and checks off the ones who will be interested in a book of that type.

For example the sort of a book that will be reviewed by a newspaper will not always appeal to the book department of a religious weekly. To send the same book to both reviewers would be useless waste.

About a hundred, usually less, are selected from the list. Then the man in charge of this department watches the columns of the publications which have been favored. One or perhaps two books will be sent even if no review appears.

After that the publisher gets busy. First he writes to the periodical and asks whether the book didn't interest its reviewer. Sometimes he gets an apology and the reviewing end of the publication is stimulated.

If he hears nothing the next time the free books are passed around the name of the silent publication is crossed off. It is a system that can't fail.

Reviews are of course the best means of getting a book before the public, but there is another way that has come into use. It is the issuing of pamphlets containing opinions of certain prominent men on the book. To obtain these opinions a number of copies must be given away.

It will do the most good, suppose for instance, that a book is sent to a college professor who is an authority on that subject.

Proceeding the book to the study table of the authority comes a note from the publishers. It says that they take pleasure in presenting the book to a resident of the college which they feel sure will be of interest to him.

After reading the book for a few days he will be asked to write a few lines upon it. If the publishers will appreciate it if he will send them from him. An added paragraph assures the personage that the acceptance of the book lays no obligation upon him to issue a special edition dealing with an economical question.

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READERS HAVE LONGED FOR YEARS FOR JUST SUCH A STORY FOR

Mr. Winston Churchill as A Modern Chronicle

THE NEW NOVEL

By the Author of "Richard Carvel"

"The Crisis"

"Coniston"

etc., etc.

The critics are saying that "to call it completely absorbing is to describe it mildly."

Each one of Mr. Churchill's books has immensely enriched American fiction—this, perhaps, most of all.

Cloth, illustrated, \$1.50

"THE GIRL IS THE BOOK"

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

For sale by all bookstores.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

Mr. Thomas E. Fuller, who for many years a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Cape Colony and subsequently Agent-General for the Cape, is publishing a book on Cecil Rhodes this season.

It is a narrative of Mr. Rhodes's life and work as they were associated with the author's during an intimacy of many years.

A biography of Thomas, seventh Earl of Elgin, is being prepared for publication from papers in the possession of the present Earl at Broomhall as well as those in the public records. Lord Elgin's name is ordinarily connected with the collection of marbles from the Parthenon and elsewhere now in the British Museum.

The diplomatic career of the seventh Earl of Elgin covered the period 1780-1805, during which he was successively resident in the Emperor's court at Vienna, Brussels, Berlin and Constantinople, and it ended with his arrest and detention in France as a prisoner of war by Napoleon's orders.

His correspondence has hitherto been unpublished and the original documents relating to the acquisition, removal and transfer of the Elgin marbles will be of particular interest to art lovers.

A C. Fox-Davies, the English barrister, whose story of "The Duplicate Death" is to be published this month, has led an active literary life. Although still well under 40 Mr. Fox-Davies has been responsible as editor and author for more than sixty volumes. Much of his work has concerned itself with heraldry and much of it has been devoted to the history of the British Empire.

His practical experience in the Central Criminal Court of London has given him much material for the kind of fiction he writes.

Maxim Gorky has now married Mme. Andrieva, who caused his former visit here to end in a disastrous manner. Mrs. Andrieva was a noted actress before she married Gorky, and it is reported that Gorky has renounced socialism, has been expelled from that party as a renegade and that he is coming here to star his wife in several of the plays he has written. Since renouncing socialism it is said that he no longer deserves his pseudonym Gorky, which signifies "the bitter," as he has become optimistic and cheerful.

Oscar Browning, senior fellow of King's College, Cambridge, whose "Memories of Sixty Years at Eton, Cambridge and Elsewhere" is published this month, has had a long and interesting life. He was one of the most famous intellectual people of his time, among them Tennant, George Eliot, Robert Browning and others. Among the many anecdotes he relates is the story of John Stuart Mill, who wished to review Robert Browning's "Pauline" for a literary journal edited by a well known patron of letters named Fox. Mill wrote to Fox in regard to the matter and was told that the poem had already been reviewed to this subject. Mill found at the end of half a column the two words "Pauline—halderdash." The explanation was that a single line of the explanation was that a single line of the editor, taking up the first book he saw and thinking it insignificant and pretentious, described it as I have stated above. Browning declared that by this accident his public recognition had been delayed for twenty years.

"To the Children Who Love the Clowns" Isaac F. Marcsonson dedicates his "Autobiography of a Clown." Jules Turner is the clown whose life story is told in the book. He was born in a circus wagon somewhere in Spain, apprenticed to an acrobatic "family" when he was a young boy, and is still an active performer in the circus. "Laughing Clowns" is the title of the book. It is the main article of his belief, and at the conclusion of his story he says: "I know at least that I have caused many people to forget their troubles, and I have made countless children clap their little hands with glee. It is glad to be a clown."

A new volume of the "Memoirs of the Duchesse de Dino" will be brought out this spring. The first volume of her story covered the years from 1821 to 1835. The new book of these fascinating reminiscences of the niece of Talleyrand tells of men and affairs in France during the years from 1835 to 1850, and then of Mme. de Dino's observations and experiences during a long trip to Prussia in 1850. Her account of the last years of Talleyrand, of Thiers, Guizot, and the dramatic circumstances of the return of the body of Napoleon from St. Helena, and her shrewd observations on Prussia, end interest and value to these memoirs.

The late John Blackwood, who edited "Blackwood's Magazine" in the forty of George Eliot and brought out "Ancient Classics for Modern Readers," as well as many other important volumes, said in discussing a literary matter with George Eliot: "This forms another instance of many I have seen of how impossible it is, even with the best means of judging, to predict with certainty what the public will do about a book. The only principle is to publish, according to the best of one's judgment, nothing but good books, and if the public is sometimes a stupid beast, I am happy to say I have found him a most excellent beast in the main."

"Our literature is plainly not what it was when Hawthorne and Emerson and Lowell and Holmes and Longfellow and Thackeray and George Eliot and Dickens and Tennyson and Browning were all writing at the same time," said Mr. Henry Holt, the author and publisher in a recent lecture. "About fifty years ago the whelp literature of the world was generally in happy expectation of new books from these authors. Now there is not an author whose whole cultivated world awaits."

"Do I think the American man makes a better hero for a novel than the English? Not at all. To depict a big true life, a man who has done something in the greatest thing an author can do, I believe in men."

Why Do Typewriter Makers insist on a Substitute That Looks Like "S"? To the Editor of The Sun:—I will not say one tell us why typewriter makers now seem to be furnished, and seem always to have been furnished, with a substitute for "S" which looks like "S" instead of with the round top "S" usual in ordinary printing?

I have had my private writing machine equipped with a round top "S," which form "S" is rapidly becoming a standard type for all business correspondence, and I have found it to be a most useful and convenient device.

As a proofreader I have had occasion to take the "S" and the straight top "S," and probably other correctors for the press have had similar experience. I have found that the round top "S" is a most useful and convenient device.

How far may writing machine manufacturers go with whimsical variations? A simplified variant spelling under the dispensation of which printers would have to master two orthographical systems is threatened, namely, to further confusion of the already confounded, two forms of typewriter figures be added to recognized characters.

SAVE ROUND TOP "S". To the Editor of The Sun:—I will not say one tell us why typewriter makers now seem to be furnished, and seem always to have been furnished, with a substitute for "S" which looks like "S" instead of with the round top "S" usual in ordinary printing?