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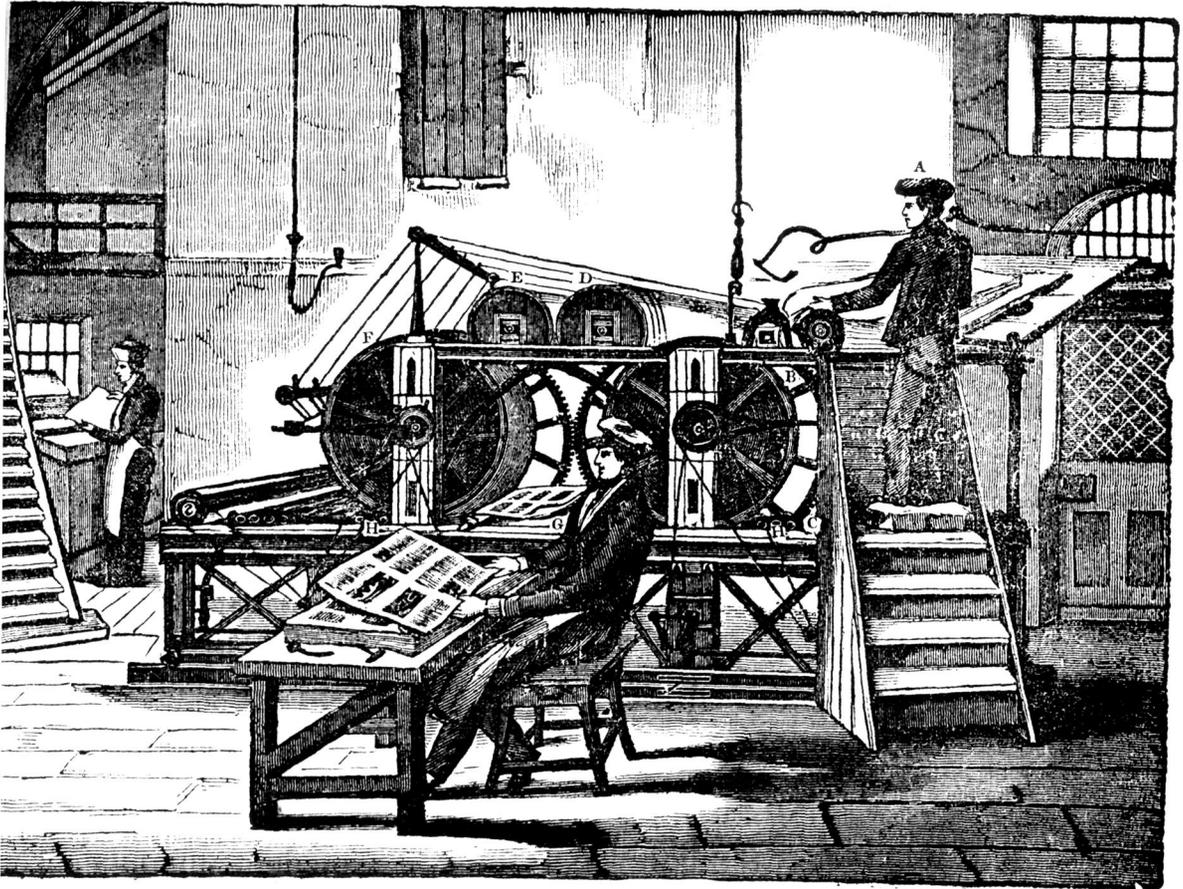
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PRINTING MACHINE.

A FAMILIAR DESCRIPTION OF PRINTING
IN ALL ITS BRANCHES.

Although in some recent numbers of a contemporary Journal, an elaborate description of the process of printing has been given to the public, still, as numbers of our readers never see that publication, and as our *Printing Machine* is rather a novelty, being the only one of the kind in Ireland, we have determined to devote our present number to a familiar description of printing in all its branches. To go into any thing like a regular history of the invention or progress of the art, would lead us far beyond our limits. Many are the discussions which have taken place among the learned in such matters, as to whom the honor of the original invention belongs. It is generally agreed that the first idea of taking impressions from wooden blocks was conceived by Laurence John Coster, of Haarlem; and that to John Faust, John Gutenberg, and one or two other individuals in Mentz, the greater improvement of the art is to be ascribed. However, the honour of completing the discovery is generally considered to be due to Peter Schoeffer: indeed, both Faust and Schoeffer seem to have been indefatigable improvers of the art of printing, both as to materials for the mechanical operation, and taste in the production of their works; they printed many books with cut metal types, and several eminent writers assert, that

the first entire and complete book, "*Tully's Offices*," in quarto, was printed by them, of which there are copies in the Bodleian Library, and Corpus Christi College, Oxford, of the date of 1465. Peter Schoeffer, the partner and son-in-law of Faust, is allowed the invention of casting the types: he privately cut matrices, (the hollow beds, or moulds into which melted metals being poured, they receive the form of the matrices) for the whole alphabet; and having succeeded to his expectation, he exhibited his work of ingenuity to his partner, which pleased him highly, and after finding out the method of hardening these castings, they found a great advantage in the use of them: the first work printed with these types was "*Durandi Rationale*," in 1459—but only the small letter type; as it appears the capitals were still of cut type.

In 1462, Faust is said to have carried a considerable number of Bibles to Paris, which he and Schoeffer had printed to imitate those which were commonly sold in manuscript; the art of printing being then unknown at Paris. At first he sold them as high as six hundred crowns per copy, being the same as was usually charged by the scribes, but afterwards gradually lowering his price, till he came to sixty, and even as low as thirty crowns; this, with the exact uniformity of the copies, which appeared to be all done by the same hand, astonished the people beyond measure; hence the Parisians declared it

impossible that it could be any other than the work of a magician; they, therefore, "are said to have searched his lodgings, and finding a great number of Bibles ornamented with red ink, they concluded it was blood, and that Beelzebub must be his coadjutor; impelled by those superstitious notions, they seized on Faust, and cast him into prison; and as they intended to accuse him of necromancy, and to put him to death as a wizard, he was obliged, as the ransom of his life, to divulge the secret and publicly make known the mysterious 'ART OF PRINTING.' This event gave rise to the tradition of the '*Devil and Doctor Faustus*,' handed down to the present time." It is supposed that he died of the plague which raged at Paris, in 1466.

The secret of printing becoming known, patronised by kings, and esteemed a divine blessing to mankind, it spread far over divers nations, appearing almost instantaneously at Rome, Venice, London, and Paris; and, in a short time, reached to the other quarters of the globe. The art of printing passed from Haarlem to Rome in 1467; in 1468 it was carried to Venice and Paris, and in 1471 to London.

In what uncertainty the history of the first use of printing in England is, may be seen by the following short and imperfect detail. Some of our almanack-makers tell us that printing was first used in England, A. D. 1443; others say, not till after 1459. The workmen of the printing press, at the theatre in Oxford, in a paper printed by them, August 23, A. D. 1729, affirm, that the noble art and mystery of printing was first invented in the year 1430, and brought into England in the year 1447; a mistake, perhaps, for 1474, or rather 1471. The learned Mr. Collier assures us that the mystery of printing appeared ten years sooner at the University of Oxford, than at any other place in Europe, Haarlem and Mentz excepted, which fixes the introduction of it there as early as 1457; since, it is certain, that it appeared at Rome, and elsewhere in Europe, in 1467; though, by the date put in the margin, he seems willing to have had it thought, that it did not appear at Oxford before 1464.—Some writers suppose, that this art was first brought into England in 1460; and Mr. Bailey implicitly follows Atkyn's romance of the introduction of it in the reign of King Henry the Sixth, or before 1460.

According to the opinions of our best historians, the "art of printing," was introduced and first practised in England, by William Caxton, a mercer and citizen of London, who, during his travels abroad, and a residence of many years in *Holland, Flanders, and Germany*, in the affairs of trade, had obtained a knowledge of this art, and returned to his native country, about 1471-2. His press was set up, and worked for a considerable time at Westminster Abbey, under the immediate patronage of the then abbot. His quiet enjoyment of the process, for five or six years, without a cotemporary rival, sufficiently proves that no one besides himself, in England, knew any thing of the use of the *press*, or *printing*, and that any pretensions to priority, however strenuously asserted by some, in favour of any other, must be altogether fallacious and unfounded.

INTRODUCTION OF PRINTING INTO IRELAND.

Printing, according to the best information we have been able to obtain, is rather of modern introduction into this kingdom; no books having been discovered as printed here prior to 1551. It also appears, that before this time the works of Irish authors were generally printed at Antwerp, Lovaine, or Cologne; that the practice was continued for upwards of a century after the above date, and that so late as the beginning of the 17th century, very few works were printed in Ireland. The progress of printing was probably retarded for many years by the unfortunate state of the country, and the tyranny of the *Star Chamber*, the arbitrary decrees of which compelled those who were opposed to the established order of things, to have recourse to the printing of their works in a foreign land.

In 1633, we find Secretary Windebank, in a letter to the Lord Deputy Strafford, ordering a book which had been imported into Ireland from Lovaine, to be sup-

pressed, and to call the author, Peter Lombard, titular primate of Armagh, to account for the same, who it appears was dead at that period.*

About 1646, Rinuccini, the Pope's Nuncio, established printing presses in Kilkenny and Waterford, for the purpose of giving publicity to his orders, and those of the Supreme Council of the Confederate Roman Catholics, then met in the former city. In the above year an almanac was printed at Waterford, and one in London, each containing an epitome of Irish affairs: the latter was entitled "*The Bloody Irish Almanac*."†

From this period works written by Protestants regarding Ireland, were usually printed in Dublin, London, or Oxford; but those by Roman Catholic writers, being generally hostile to the state; or legends concerning saints, continued to be printed on the Continent, at Rome, Paris, Prague, Antwerp, Lovaine, and Venice.‡

In 1688, Lord Clarendon, then Lord Lieutenant, when writing to England, says, "that on board of two vessels arrived at Dublin from France, there had been discovered a number of books, amongst which was one entitled, '*The Bleeding Imphigenia*,' another called '*Gospel and Liberty*,' and a third named, '*A Ponderation upon Certain Branches and Parts of the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion passed 1660*.'"§ It is probable that those works were decidedly hostile to the Irish government. The first was written by Nicholas French, titular Bishop of Ferns, and printed in 1674; it contained a justification of the rebellion of 1641-2, and the breaches of the peace of 1646 and 1648.|| However, latterly, it is well known that several works announced as printed on the Continent, were really printed in this kingdom. In 1762, there was published by Dr. Thomas Burke, "*Hibernica Dominicana*," declared to have been impressed at Cologne, but it is now ascertained to have been executed in Kilkenny, by Edward Finn, under the author's inspection.¶ We now proceed to notice those works which are supposed to have been the earliest productions of the Irish press.

In 1551, "*The Boke of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church*," was printed in Dublin, in alternate lines of black and red ink, by Humphrey Powell.—This is believed to have been the first work printed in Ireland; a copy is preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin.** Four years after, two books are noticed in their title pages as printed at Waterford, but as there is no evidence of printing having been so early executed in that city, they are alleged to have been printed in London.††

In 1566, an Irish Liturgy is said to have been printed for the use of the Highlanders of Scotland; but where it was executed, or in what character, are now equally unknown. In this year John Dale, a Dublin bookseller, imported from London a number of small bibles, which met with such a rapid sale that seven thousand were sold by him in about two years.‡‡ About 1577, a catechism, translated into Irish by John Kerney, and printed with Irish types, was executed in Dublin; it was entitled, "*Alphabetium et ratio legendi Hebernicum et Catechismus in eadem lingua*." This is said to have been the first book printed in that character, or at least the first of which we have record.§§ So late as 1744, Walter Harris informs us that "there are no Irish types in this kingdom;" the first Irish types that found their way to Munster, were sent thither by James Hardiman, Esq., in 1819.||||

* Strafford's Letters; this book was entitled, "*De Regno Hiberniæ, Sanctorum Insula*," &c. &c., and was printed at Lovaine in 1632.

† O'Connor's Historical Address.

‡ Ware's Writers of Ireland, Harris's edition.

§ Clarendon's State Letters.

|| Ware's Writers of Ireland, Harris's edition.

¶ Anthologia Hibernica, v. 1. p. 95.

** Whitlaw's and Walshe's History of Dublin.

†† Anthologia Hibernica.

‡‡ Ware's Annals.

§§ Ware's Irish Writers, Harris's edition.

|||| Hardiman's Irish Ministers.