

Interesting Facts About Coin-Operated Devices and Vending Machines

SEVENTY-FIVE HUNDRED TONS OF MONEY.

Approximately six hundred and forty million nickels or three billion two hundred million pennies are deposited every year in the slots of the five million or so vending and other coin operated devices throughout the United States.

Statistics show that during the year of our last panic, 1907, chewing gum machines took in twenty million dollars; chocolate machines, seven million; and penny weighing machines, five million; making a total of thirty-two million dollars—all in nickels and pennies. The capital invested in these machines that year was forty-seven millions, so the receipts for that year alone amount to 63 per cent. of the investment.

MACHINES IN NEW YORK CITY.

It is said that over one million coins on an average are put into slot machines every day in New York City; that those in the Subway alone produce a net profit of one hundred and ten thousand dollars annually; that the chocolate and gum machines operated by one big concern bring in a daily average of two thousand dollars in New York City alone.

ORIGIN OF THE VENDING MACHINE.

The first application of the vending machine dates back to the time of Ctesibius, about two centuries before the Christian Era, when measured amounts of holy water were dispensed at the doors of the Egyptian temples. Like many other inventions of the ancient Egyptians, the idea seems to have been buried until the latter part of the past century, when gum and chocolate machines, coin operated phonographs and weighing machines put in their appearance.

MANUFACTURERS AND OPERATORS.

There are now in the United States about two hundred and fifty manufacturers of coin-operated devices which dispense almost every commodity from a postage stamp to a bottle of soda water. Patent Office reports describe new inventions in this field nearly every week.

bags, lung testers, fortune tellers, pictures, souvenir post cards, and many others. The manager of one of these Arcades in a park claimed that his machines, one hundred and ten in all, had taken in one hundred and eighty dollars in pennies during a Sunday afternoon and night.

THE PREDICTION OF THE "WIZARD."

Edison recently predicted that we would soon have automatic department stores and would buy the luxuries and necessities of life in packages without the assistance of clerks.

PAST AND FUTURE.

We have already been dealing, to some extent, with these "silent salesmen" for twenty or thirty years. There is no telling what variety of things they will be selling twenty years from now.

WAITERLESS RESTAURANTS.

Automatic restaurants in Philadelphia and New York dispense a variety of pies, sandwiches and other prepared dishes. Tea, coffee and milk are also sold in the same manner. The idea originated in Germany.

POSTAGE STAMP MACHINES.

Devices which sell postage stamps are now in operation in hotels, cigar stands and other public places. In London there is a machine which releases a stamp, moistens it and attaches it to the envelope when a coin is inserted. A New York concern is putting on the market a combination stamp vending machine and letter-box.

In the Madison Square postoffice in New York last year a nickel-in-the-slot machine sold over a million Red Cross Christmas seals during the holidays.

AUTOMATIC NEWSBOYS.

Newspapers are now sold on street cars through a device which delivers a paper automatically. If a nickel is deposited and the price of the paper is only two cents, the three cents in change is automatically returned to the customer.

TYPEWRITERS.

In a good many hotels throughout the country, typewriters may be rented for half an hour by dropping a dime in the slot. At the end of the half hour a bell taps and the machine will automatically lock itself unless another dime is deposited.

GAS METERS.

Coin-operated gas meters are an advantage in some

IN A FOREIGN VILLAGE.

Over in Jocketa, Saxony, the lights which illuminate the streets are turned off at ten o'clock every night. To the men who has tarried too long at the tavern and who does not like to go home in the dark, the coin-operated lighting device is a blessing. One penny dropped in the slot will light half the village while two will turn on lights over the whole place.

AT THE THEATERS.

On the backs of the seats in a great many theaters and moving picture shows there are little boxes which contain candy, chocolate or salted almonds; the proper coin unlocks the boxes. Opera glasses may be rented in the same way.

PRESCRIPTIONS.

The "Automatic Physician" is the invention of a genius (evidently a druggist) in Amsterdam, Holland. The machine represents a man and in the region of each organ is a slot designed to receive a coin. The suffering patient drops a coin into the slot connected with the organ in trouble and receives the proper prescription which he can have filled at a drug store.

REGISTERED LETTERS.

In France there is a device which automatically registers letters. A perforated slip is filled out and deposited with the proper coin; the mechanism stamps the slip and returns it to the person, who tears off the gummed part and attaches it to the letter which he drops in the mail box, the coupon being retained as a receipt.

ICE WATER.

A great convenience to the public, during hot weather especially, is the device which dispenses ice water in sanitary paper cups. When a penny is inserted and a lever turned, a new cup falls into place and is instantly filled with water.

POOL TABLE.

A coin controlled pool table is one of the latest inventions. The balls go into a pocket in the usual way but these pockets are locked and the balls cannot be taken out until a coin is inserted in the slot.

SHOE POLISHING.

An automatic boot blacking machine is in operation in a number of the larger cities. A patron inserts one foot into an opening in the base, deposits a nickel in the coin slot and the brushes are at once set in motion; they rotate back and forth, one set cleans the shoe, another applies the blacking and a third does the polishing. When the first shoe is finished, a light indicates

WEIGHING MACHINES.

In practically every depot in the country and in many other public places there are thousands of weighing machines which naturally produce a very large percentage of profit as they do not have to be constantly stocked with merchandise. One type automatically returns a nickel if the customer guesses his weight correctly and indicates it by means of a dial. Another kind has a phonographic attachment and actually speaks the weight. An innovation in this line is a machine which not only shows one's weight but at the same time automatically delivers an accident insurance policy of \$1,000, stamped and dated and in force for 24 hours. The mechanism is operated by the weight of a person standing on the base.

POPCORN.

A popcorn vending machine is now being put on the market. When a nickel is deposited, a measured amount of popcorn slides down into the popper; the heat is turned on and in a moment or two the hot popcorn is ready to be eaten.

PHOTOGRAPHS.

The automatic photographer is another new one. To have a picture taken, one sits in a chair facing the automatic camera. When the desired pose has been reached the coin is placed in a slot in the chair. By this connection this turns on a bright light, operates the camera, develops the picture and delivers it.

BREAD.

We find that the American public, according to an estimate by authorities, spent in 1912 about four billion, two hundred million (4,200,000,000) nickels for loaves of bakers' bread. At a recent convention of the National Association of Master Bakers it was stated that the output of bakers' goods in the United States was, approximately, four hundred million dollars (\$400,000,000) in value, and that approximately 70% of this was bread. It is estimated that 75% of this latter amount was for 5c loaves.

One of the greatest industries native to the United States is that of manufacturing

CHEWING GUM.

It has been stated by statisticians that the chewers of gum have literally masticated in a single year approximately eight hundred million (800,000,000) nickels, for this is the value of the output of chewing gum manufacturers in a single year. If the pieces of gum, in the form they are sold, could have been laid down beside each other in a straight line they would have formed a girde clear around the earth at the

One of the great infant industries in point of age, is the exhibiting of

MOVING PICTURES.

The estimates of the vast returns of this business vary. Some statisticians have stated that during 1912 more than six billion nickels (6,380,000,00 to be exact) were paid in by the American public. One authority stated, however, during these investigations that "we know of no way in which you can secure accurate figures except by undertaking a very expensive campaign of statistical compilation on the subject, and we are inclined to believe that any figures that you may see published from time to time are mostly guesswork. It is said that there are somewhere around seven hundred (700) moving pictures in Chicago, and the estimate of moving pictures in the United States runs all the way from twelve thousand (12,000) or fourteen thousand (14,000) to twenty thousand (20,000) or over. Even these figures are largely guesses."

Another method by which the American public spends its nickels is in

INDUSTRIAL INSURANCE.

Twenty-five million (25,000,000) Americans held Industrial Insurance policies in 1912, and the amount of money they literally poured into the insurance coffers as premiums is estimated at two billion five hundred million (2,500,000,000) nickels. It is interesting to compare in comparison that this sum was in excess of the total value of merchandise imported from France during the year 1911.

Americans are noted as prodigal spenders, especially in the matter of

TRANSPORTATION.

In the City of New York alone, during the year ending June 30, 1912, the conductors and ticket sellers on the Rapid Transit and surface car lines gathered in a tremendous horde of nickels, estimated at over one and two-thirds billions (1,673,695,980 to be exact). This sum exceeds the sum New York and Massachusetts paid in expenditures for public schools in 1910.

There is an industry which has become an almost necessary adjunct to modern American civilization and is unobtrusively reaping a fortune. It is the

BOOTBLACK.

One authority in this phase of industry has stated that approximately four hundred million nickels are donated by Americans each year to have their shoes polished, or that about 1% of the whole United States

in one year to shine nearly five million (5,000,000) shoes. Another authority states: "As the trade in the boot-blacks manufacture their own liquids and pastes, it is impossible to judge how much is spent for 5c 'shoe shines' in the United States."

MUSIC.

Music is one of the most important and most widely used products in the world. More than twice as much money is spent in the United States for music than the combined cost of the Navy, Army and Pension list. Chicago alone spends over thirty million a year for the rendition of music.

AUTOMATIC PIANOS

Orchestrations and the like take in thousands of nickels in cafes and other public places. The development of the player piano has greatly increased the earnings of the pianos, but not until the National Automatic Music Company's piano was placed upon the market. MUSIC did not always follow the "dropping of a nickel" in coin pianos, as many of the instruments were crude, often out of repair, nearly always out of tune, and when in condition to play at all, the loud mechanical noise produced resembled the drumming sound of a tin pan more than real music.

Of all the devices operated with this little worker, none, perhaps, has taken the study, time and money, nor reached the perfection of the National Automatic Piano, owned and controlled by the National Automatic Music Company of Grand Rapids.

In studying the subject our experts found that of all the coin-controlled devices offered to the public the piano was the only one that continued in favor after the novelty wore off, which was due largely to the fact that other devices did not possess the lasting qualities to make them continuous profit earners.

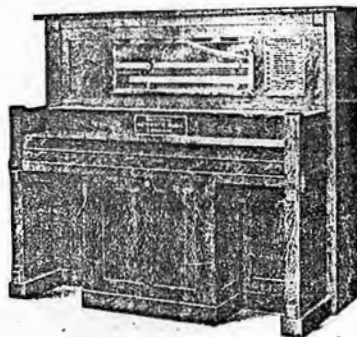
The Britanica Encyclopedia says:

"The Piano may be styled the voice of the musician, the only means whereby unaided he can give complete utterance to his thoughts, the only vehicle for the communication of musical ideas in their entirety."

The National Automatic Music Company has placed upon the market something entirely new in the way of A. COIN-OPERATED PIANO, which is universally acknowledged to be the MARVEL OF THE AGE—a triumph in mechanism, construction and quality which the Company is willing to stand back of and guarantee in every way, thus placing within the reach of every lover of good music, without a dollar of cost to them an instrument always to be depended upon, beautiful in design and style, rich in tone, capable of producing the widest possible range of music from ragtime to

Every objection commonly urged against coin-operated instruments has been met and overcome; no more large outlay of money from \$500 to \$5000 purchase price—not one dollar for repairs, music or cost of operation, and with a new and complete change of program each week comprising 32 to 40 of the latest and most popular selections every month.

It is not our purpose to enter upon a detailed description of the National Automatic piano in this little folder, as our catalogue gives a fully illustrated and very clear exposition of its many points of superiority over all other coin-operated instruments.



We will, however, call attention to the selective device, the operation of which requires no practice or skill but is so simple that any person, even a child, may select the number upon the program wanted and know absolutely that that particular piece desired will be rendered for them, and, in a masterly manner.

There are eight music rolls to each program—each roll operates entirely independent of the others. When you want to hear ragtime you do not have to listen to some classical selection and when you want a waltz or two-step a march will not answer your purpose.

While a complete change of program is furnished every week without cost, upon request any of the eight selections which have been particularly popular can be retained on the roll or drum and the remaining pieces changed without in any way interfering with its operation. This is the only coin-operated piano in the world where this result can be accomplished.

If you have not as yet read our catalog, SEND NOW, it will interest you.

National Automatic Music Company

The NIMBLE NICKEL

The Coin That Makes Our
Millionaires