

and another. An article has appeared in several Ontario weeklies, in almost identical terms, defending the new postage bill and seeking to show that hostility comes from the big dailies. The article has appeared in *The Waterford Star*, *The Arthur Enterprise*, *The Haldimand Advocate*, *The Bradford Witness*, and possibly other journals, although *PRINTER AND PUBLISHER* has not seen it elsewhere. It reads with a few variations, according to the locality, as follows:

"The Postmaster-General's plan for the reimposition of postage on newspapers has evoked a good deal of comment from the big city papers. That part of the plan that exempts from postage papers circulating within a radius of ten miles from the office of publication has especially excited the opposition of the city weeklies and the city dailies, from the columns of which these city weeklies are cheaply made up. All sorts of nasty, unkind things have been said about the small country newspapers and odious comparisons made between them and these weekly cheap reprints. Before Mr. Mulock had revealed his scheme, nearly all the city papers exhibited extreme satisfaction at the idea of postage being reimposed. They could see no good reason why a newspaper should be carried free any more than a letter or a storekeeper's parcel. The secret of that delightful state of mind and eagerness to increase the revenue of the post office on the part of our city contemporaries became apparent when Mr. Mulock's plan with regard to the country papers was published. The idea was, that the postage would kill off a large number of these papers, and leave the field entirely to the city weeklies, which could be supplied at a mere trifling cost and yield a respectable revenue to their publishers. It is a fine exhibition of piggish selfishness. We are quite willing to admit that many of the smaller papers published in the country districts are not models either of literary style, nor much in the way of purveyors of news, but the majority of the better class of country newspapers will compare favorably in selection of matter, in literary ability, in accuracy of language, and in independence of opinion with the average city daily and its weekly rehash of its daily matter. We notice, too, that the opinions on public questions expressed by these country papers are often pointers for city editorials, and it is not fair or just to speak of the country press in the contemptuous language used by *The Hamilton Spectator* and some other city sheets, and whose names figure in the Auditor-General's report in connection with fat advertisements on Government paper. These city papers every little while send circulars to the country newspapers about some enterprise they have undertaken with a taffyized request to publish it and a promise to reciprocate the favor. We know of one paper that gave freely of its space for advertising, and, when a similar request was made by that country journal, just one out of seven city papers had the courtesy to take any notice of it. It is said, if postage is reimposed, it will tend very greatly to abbreviate the country paper's exchange list. This, we take it, would not be an unmixed calamity, for the amount of advertising done by the country papers for many of these city exchanges amounts to three or four times the subscription price, which is much more than they are worth to the country publisher. The services rendered by country papers to their city contemporaries will keep up the exchange list quite as high as it is necessary. Our own opinion is that newspapers should not be carried free, but the cost to the Post Office Department in carrying the country newspaper to its readers is a mere bagatelle to the tons it carries long distances for city dailies, and the partial exemption of the country weekly from postal charges is not worth the fuss made about it. The Postmaster-General recognizes the fact that the country paper is of great value to the locality in which it circulates, and that the outside paper could not do the work it does within the sphere of its influence. This consideration, no doubt, suggested the idea of such partial

exemption. We hope Mr. Mulock will not be turned from his purpose by the grumblings of the city press, but that he will bring about the changes contemplated, before the end of the present session of Parliament."

Whoever wrote or inspired this article has ignored some arguments which are entitled to consideration. To go into the whole subject again is hardly worth while, but it may be said briefly that the zone idea does not meet equally the conditions of all Canadian weeklies and to that extent is imperfect and unsatisfactory. Furthermore, no demand for the discrimination was made by weekly publishers as a body. A special exemption of this kind, being class legislation, cannot last long. Those who now defend the exemption will regret it later on. Publishers generally favor postage on newspapers as sound in principle, and likely to be good in practice if it squeezes out fake publications. But the exemption to weeklies is not advocated by the most prominent weekly publishers that *PRINTER AND PUBLISHER* has heard from. Postage should go on all or none, and if complications, contradictions and injustice do not arise out of the present proposal we shall be surprised. It is quite probable that the deficit in the Post Office Department is due more to the high charges made by the two railways for carrying mail matter than to any other cause. But Cabinet Ministers are not anxious to fight big corporations; they prefer to tackle the press, an institution which in politics has long been conducted on a benevolent basis.

#### TWENTY-SIX YEARS OF PROGRESS.

On November 9, 1872, Messrs. Kenny & Luxton issued the prospectus number of *The Manitoba Free Press*, stating that it was to be given away for advertising purposes, and that the first regular number would appear on November 30. Apologies were offered for defects in printing, owing to difficulty experienced in getting the new machinery adjusted. On November 30, as promised, the paper appeared, volume one, number one of a five-column, eight-page weekly; and a very good paper it was, too, although printed on a Washington hand-press. The intervening twenty-six years have witnessed many changes in the city and many in the paper, which has grown from a weekly to a great daily of two editions, with a semi-weekly and weekly edition as well, controlling all the telegraphic franchises. To keep up with the times and the extension of the paper, a new Cox Perfecting Press has just been added. This is the first Cox press in Canada, west of Toronto, and was built by the Duplex Co., of Battle Creek, Michigan, being sold to *The Free Press Publishing Co.* by the Toronto Type Foundry, general agents for Canada for Duplex presses. The installation of the press was superintended by Mr. R. W. Rogers, press expert, of New York, and is now complete. The capacity the press is 5,000 per hour of four, six or eight pages, six or seven columns, the paper space being 70 inches wide. When I called, the evening edition of six pages was being run out. It was delightful to watch the perfect gearing which starts the great roll of paper moving, and, in a flash, drops into the drawer above that roll, a neatly folded paper ready to read. This is the fastest machine printing from type, and will prove an immense saving of both time and labor.

It is rumored that Mr. Magurn, correspondent, at Ottawa, of *The Toronto Globe*, will shortly be appointed editor of *The Free Press*.

Winnipeg, May 15.

E.C.H.