

## ORIGIN OF THE CABLE SERVICE.

Compiled for THE PRINTER AND PUBLISHER.

**B**ARON PAUL DE REUTER, who died last month in France, aged 83, was the founder of the international telegraphic news agency which bears his name. A German by birth, he became a naturalized British subject. When the first telegraph line on the continent of Europe, that between Berlin and Aix-la-Chapelle, was opened, in 1849, Reuter, who had started life as a merchant's clerk, began to furnish commercial reports by telegraph. To improve the facilities between points not connected by wire, he employed fast horses, carrier pigeons, swift couriers and other means to quicken communication.

The service was a good deal hampered by the press censors and other obstacles on the Continent, so, in 1851, when the cable was laid between England and the Continent, Reuter fixed his head office in London, where it has since remained. In those days, the London dailies were at enormous expense in getting news. The Times, for instance, possessed a fast steamer, which kept up quick communication between Calais and Dover. Reuter offered to convey political, as well as commercial, information. But the London papers were slow to take it up. Mistakes were apt to be made, for often the news had to be translated into three or four languages before it reached London, and errors would creep in. His first two efforts to supply the London press were, therefore, unsuccessful.

But, undaunted, Reuter made a third attempt in 1858. He approached The London Advertiser, then edited by James Grant, and offered to supply that journal with foreign telegrams. The Advertiser was then under an expense of £40 a month for its foreign news, but Reuter offered to do it for £30 a month, guaranteeing that the telegrams would be fuller and better at that price. As a test, he offered to send the news for a few weeks free of charge. The experiment was a success, and all the newspapers in London, except The Times, made contracts with Reuter for his service. The Times at first believed that Reuter could not give them a foreign service as good as their own, but presently decided to take his despatches.

The first great "scoop" was a report of the interview between Napoleon III. and the Austrian ambassador which foreshadowed the war. The despatch created a great sensation. From this time on the papers were eagerly read for Reuter's telegrams. The agency gained the confidence of the press by its accuracy and impartiality. Information was always kept for the press and never allowed to leak out first to the stock exchange or private individuals.

In those days there was no cable between England and America. The agency did everything it could to facilitate communication. The latest news was telegraphed to Boston or New York, from all points in America, just before the mail packet left. Fast sailing yachts met the steamers off the Irish coast and received on board the despatches, packed in hermetically-sealed boxes, which were immediately conveyed to Crookhaven, the nearest point on the Irish coast. Thence the news was telegraphed, by way of Cork, over some sixty miles of wire, laid down by Reuter himself in order to obtain the most rapid trans-

mission to London. When President Lincoln was assassinated by Booth the mail had already left New York, but Reuter's correspondent chartered a swift steamer, overtook the mail boat, and got the news on board.

The seizure of Mason and Slidell on the Trent was first conveyed to London by Reuter, and, on the strength of the despatch, Lord Palmerston summoned his cabinet. It was a Reuter telegram which first gave England the tidings of the disaster at Isandhlana in the Zulu War, and the defeat at Majuba Hill by the Boers.

Reuter, who was, on account of his public services, created a baron, in 1871, by the Duke of Saxe-Cobourg and Gotha, also busied himself in laying cables. Through his efforts was due the submarine cable connecting England and Germany, which enabled a through telegraphic communication to be made between London and the principal towns of his native country. He also acquired from the French Government the right to construct and lay a cable between France and the United States. This was laid in 1865, and was worked in conjunction with the Anglo-American Telegraph Company.

Having formed his agency into a limited liability company with himself as managing-director, Baron de Reuter, in 1878, retired from his position, though he still continued as an ordinary member of the board. He was succeeded in the post of managing-director of the company by his son, Mr. Herbert de Reuter, another son, Baron George de Reuter, having also a seat on the board.

### PRINTER AND PUBLISHER WANT COLUMN.

**WANTED**—An experienced feeder for Cylinder and Gordon presses; girl preferred; steady employment. Apply to Shareholder Office, 206 McGill Street, Montreal.

**WANTED**—For newspaper office, young man with some knowledge of advertising work; one speaking French desired. Apply, giving age, experience and references, to L. 1426 Star Office, Montreal.

**WANTED**—A strong young man to work in a printing office, one having some knowledge of presswork preferred. Apply at Montreal Witness Office.

**WANTED**—A first and a second assistant stereotyper for a daily paper. Address, P.O. Box 586, Montreal.

**TO PRINTERS AND EDITORS**—Wanted, to manage a weekly Conservative paper and book and job office in the Northwest Territories, a live man. Address N, Box 55 House of Commons, Ottawa.

**NEWSPAPER**—The plant and business of The Morrisburg Courier, valued at \$2,500; \$1,200 cash buy everything. Plant is one of the best in eastern Ontario. Address, Chas. A. Styles, Morrisburg, Ont.

**WEEKLY NEWSPAPER**—Country village, good business. Box 551, Toronto Globe.

**NEWSPAPER PLANT**—Independent—and bookstore for sale; plant, \$2,300; no opposition. Address Box 450, Toronto Mail and Empire.

**NEWSPAPER WANTED**—Two young men desire to purchase a Liberal or independent weekly in good town. Box 319, Toronto Globe.

**APPRENTICES WANTED**—Two or three good smart boys to learn job printing. Apply Montreal Herald Job Department.

**WANTED**—A gentleman thoroughly experienced in newspaper work, to take the position of city editor of a morning paper in St. John, N.B. Apply, stating experience and salary "M.D." care of Daily Telegraph Office, St. John, N.B.

**PRINTING BUSINESS FOR SALE**—Situated in a live business town of about 9,000 inhabitants, the centre of a Red and County, publication daily and weekly, with a good circulation; good reasons for selling. Apply to Box 438, Toronto Globe.

**NEWSPAPER MEN**—Owner of profitable Liberal daily and weekly wants accurate and experienced partner for business management, reasonable terms and good opening for right man. Apply Box 534, Toronto Globe.

**JOB PRINTING PLANT**—At a bargain, well established; good run of work. Address Box 370, Toronto Globe.

**WANTED**—A first-class lithograph pressman. Apply The Mortimer Co., Ottawa.