

THE CANADIAN COURIER

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EXTENSIONS

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CANADIAN COURIER

TORONTO

ONTARIO

PERIODICAL PERSONALITY.

GO over the list of papers that come into your home and see if you can't pretty nearly describe the personality of each, almost as if it were a human being. When you come to find out what makes the personality you are not so sure. Punch, for instance, trots out just the same kind of paper every week. Page by page this week is the same general get-up as last or this time next year. An im-promptu page in Punch would be as bad as a bagpiper at a church wedding. Some people like that. But everybody would object if Punch were not in every page one of the most genial week-enders in the world.

Most papers, of course, work to a certain type of makeup. You become used to the headings without knowing by what names the printers call them; to the ads featured on certain pages; to the stories here and there; to the regular style of article or illustration that you somehow feel couldn't appear quite so well in any other paper; and above all you look for certain names of contributors to whose stuff you have become accustomed. If you didn't find one or more of these "steadies," as some people are called who come around regularly with the best of intentions, you would be disappointed.

That's about as far as you could get in analyzing the personality of a paper. Most of the rest is indefinable. It grows. Week by week there is an accumulation of humanizing interest that comes along with the stealth of a good garden. Week after week in both the garden and the paper you note certain critical improvements. You are glad to find them. Because you have taken the paper and had the garden long enough to feel a personal interest in it. And that brings you to a clear conviction regarding the personality of a paper.

It gradually comes to represent your own personality. Some people say it is the editors—or the editor. Yes—and no. The editors as individuals—Never. Unless the paper is a personal house organ of Mr. Jonathan Jones, concerned merely in exploiting his views for the good of the community.

But the editors also are interested in paper-personality. How? The commonly accepted idea is that an editor picks up an article either by a regular or a casual contributor and says: "Bully! Just the sort of thing I like. In it goes." That's not the way at all. It's much more like this—at least in Canadian Courier: "Let me see now—I wonder how this shipping story from down in Halifax Harbour would interest an average reader up in the Saskatchewan valley?" On general principles, it might not. Smith, Jones and Robinson from the Maritime might write three good local interest articles to each of which an editor might say: "Not the kind our readers want. Too local. Those men were thinking only of Smith, Jones and Robinson. They should have been thinking about Brown out in Vancouver."

That's what the Courier exists for—To be the clearing house for ideas and opinions and human impressions that are born in one part of the country but belong to all of Canada. After all it's pretty well summed up in what the Monocle Man says on page 18 this week about "The Fiction Market in Canada." There's a heap of homely and attractive common sense about that article.

Next week on this page we'll tell you a little more about some of the impressions we get of Canada in getting out an all-Canadian paper once a week. One of these days we shall start telling you about some of the personalities that co-operate to make the "Personality of This Paper."

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