

down-until-it can hardly be seen with a-microscope, when he begins to figure out the actual cost of that transaction. There is the time taken in writing the order, the letter paper, the stamp, and every other fraction of general store expense which is chargeable to that particular transaction, to be deducted from the margin of 27 cents. So that in the light of actual mercantile value of that book transaction, the rate of express is certainly excessive.

These facts should be taken into consideration by the express companies and the post-office authorities alike.

With regard to the second question, considerable difficulty might be met with, if the matter were brought to the attention of the Railway Commission, in getting together a sufficient number of concrete examples of the injustice of these book rates. The companies could defend the rate on the ground that they are as low as book postage rates, and lower than the rate charged by them for any other class of goods in quantities up to three pounds. It would have to be shown that the booksellers are making too little, or no profit at all, and the companies making too much profit on all these little book transactions. But by organization and businesslike energy the work certainly could be accomplished.

Then in reference to the third question: What would be the effect on the bookselling trade were a reduction to take place? The first effect would be the increased profit on all small book transactions into which enters the cost of express. It would have considerable effect upon the number of such transactions, as increased profit would be an incentive for the booksellers to solicit more of such business. This would help considerably to build up the business of a store as a whole.

A general lowering of express rates would leave country merchants more than ever exposed to mail order competition, which would have to be met by every merchant concerned with increased attention to his own particular field.

The executive of the booksellers' association expect to hold a meeting shortly, when the matter will be taken up and fully discussed. In the meantime it would be advisable for all having views upon this matter to send particulars of them to the secretary of the association, at the Toronto office of Bookseller and Stationer.

Miss Hattie Tweedie, the Moncton, N.B., bookseller, writes: "re express charges: This morning I received 5 books from Toronto, the express on which was 75 cents. These books weigh one and a half pounds each, a total of seven and a half pounds. The express rate is supposed to be 8 cents per pound. In your recent issue of Bookseller you asked for some facts, so I thought this might be of interest. It assuredly interests me."

T. C. Allen & Co., of Halifax, write as follows: "We are exceptionally pleased to see that your paper is taking up the excessive charges now being made by express companies on book packages. We would like to cite our own position.

"As you are aware, our geographical position makes it a matter of from ten days to three weeks for freight shipments to reach us from Toronto, so we are forced to have our supplies of new publications come by express, or else reach us when the demand is practically over. As an instance: A few days ago we had 25 copies of a recent publication by express from Toronto, and the charges amounted to \$1.50, or 6 cents per copy, which is altogether too high. We feel that a reduction of book rates to 1 cent per pound, would not be a loss to express companies, but would in most cases result in their getting more goods for transportation. As now is the news companies include books with their periodicals and still get the low rates."

AMERICAN BOOKSELLERS' CONVENTION.

The work of the convention was crystallized in the report of the committee on resolutions, which reads as follows, and was unanimously adopted by the meeting:

Mr. President: Your committee on resolutions beg leave to submit the following report:

Whereas, The members of the American Booksellers' Association assembled together at their seventh annual convention, recognizing the necessity for improving the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in the retail book business of the United States, now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That we urge the publishers of new copyrighted books to issue all such volumes in the future at a net price based upon the salable value of the books, with an additional charge for postage when mailed.

Resolved, That we request a minimum discount from the advertised price sufficient to cover the cost of transacting business, with a margin of profit in accordance with custom in other branches of mercantile business.

Resolved, That it is desirable to have the net price permanent, except that works of fiction and juvenile books may, if not successful, be sold as remainders one year after publication, and books may be utilized for the "Rebind" trade after two years at a net price to be maintained for at least one year additional.

Resolved, That we recommend that the sliding scale of discount be materially revised, in order to reduce the wide discrepancy in purchasing price between the buyer of small quantities in all classes of literature and the large buyer of a few titles in a special class.

Resolved, That we suggest that the extra discount to the jobber on all books be discontinued except on condition that he shall not use the special reduction in competing with the retail dealer, for whose benefit he has been specially favored.

Resolved, That we think it desirable to still allow to public libraries only the ten per cent. discount upon net books, as at present.

Resolved, That we consider that the established discount allowed to dealers be conditional upon such dealers carrying a stock of books of reasonable size and that a book is understood to be a printed volume bound in covers more substantial than paper.

Resolved, That we deprecate the breaking of the subscription price of periodicals and recommend the abolition of the "Combination" system and commend those publishers who have firmly maintained their publication price.

Resolved, That this association recommend that the booksellers of the United States make an unusual effort on their part to push the sale of such volumes of salable fiction as may be published at a net price with a proper discount.

Resolved, That we recognize, with grateful appreciation, the cordial spirit of co-operation with which so many department store proprietors and their managers have responded to the efforts now being made to prevent the extinction of the new book business, and that all such department store proprietors and managers are cordially invited to ally themselves with the American Booksellers' Association.

Resolved, That these resolutions be sent to the publishers of the United States, and that the president and secretary be directed to explain to them the reasons for the resolutions and to convey to each publisher our grateful appreciation of their efforts in our behalf.

Resolved, That the president and the Postmaster-General be, and are, hereby requested to offer the extension of our domestic letter rate to all the world.