

Printer AND Publisher

VOL. IX—No. 4.

TORONTO, APRIL, 1900.

\$2.00 PER YEAR

Increasing Profits Under Heavier Expenses.

A SYMPOSIUM OF VIEWS BY LIVE PUBLISHERS.

THE STRATFORD HERALD issued at the end of last month a well-worded and business-like circular addressed to its advertising patrons. The circular outlined the present situation as to cost of publication, etc., which newspapers have to face, and intimated that with the first of April a new schedule of charges for advertising space would come into force. A copy of this circular reached PRINTER AND PUBLISHER, and seemed to be so well adapted to the present situation, as it affects all publishers, both daily and weekly, that an inquiry was made of several others, whose views will be found below. Mr. W. S. Dingman, on being informed that his stand on advertising rates was that of other enterprising publishers, wrote to PRINTER AND PUBLISHER as follows:

MR. W. S. DINGMAN'S VIEWS.

"I will be very glad if the incidental forwarding to you of our circular and new advertising schedule has the effect of producing some discussion and a stiffening of rates where they are now too low. By way of explanation, I may state that before preparing our new rates, etc., I wrote to some dozen or more publishers in cities of similar size to Stratford, and found that our rates had been under the average, thus furnishing an additional justification for an increase. My contemporary, The Beacon, studied up the question with us, and in consequence has issued a new rate card, the terms of which are identical with ours. We are both starting de novo, as it were, with our advertisers, the only exceptions being cases of unexpired written contracts.

"For the encouragement of other publishers, I may say the response has been very satisfactory. A few firms have slightly curtailed their spaces, but in the majority of such cases the yearly account will be increased under the new rates, even for slightly reduced spaces. We expect to lose no advertising permanently worth speaking of, though one firm has gone out temporarily, no doubt hoping to see us

cave, but in which we are not likely to oblige them. The largest advertisers are the most reasonable, and their treatment of us has increased our esteem towards them. The only regret we have is that we didn't do it before. We believe the papers are winning more respect from the advertisers, from their display of self-confidence in the values they are giving. Within reasonable limits, the man who gives a good article and is not afraid to charge a proper price for it, and insists on getting it, is not likely to suffer; but the fellow who lacks confidence in his goods, apologetically pleads for business, and gets instantly nervous when rates are mentioned, is the one whose charges will be crooked as a snake fence, and who will be rated down by his customers. I cheerfully admit my backbone is stiffer than it was before, on account of the stimulating experience just gained. Perhaps others would be the better of a similar tonic.

"Another subject I would like to see ventilated in PRINTER AND PUBLISHER, and which I tried to get on the programme at the recent Press Association meeting, is that of the cost of space. It is very apropos in this connection. I do not claim to have clear ideas on the subject, which is one reason I would like to hear from others. There are, not improbably, publishers who are doing advertising under cost without knowing it. Of course, they ought to know it; if they did, they would stop it. What, then, is the proper formula to reveal in each case the real cost of space? How would this do:

"Add together the annual cost in wages and salaries, including allowance for proprietor, but excluding job department and its share of cost of office staff, based approximately on proportion of job to other business; also general expense account, including cost of white news, press-room maintenance, machinery and type depreciation, wear and tear, paper's share of rent, taxes, etc.—in short, all it costs to