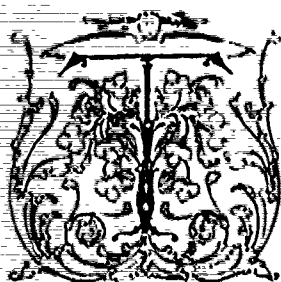


CO-OPERATION AMONG LOCAL PUBLISHERS.

BY P. D. ROSS, JOURNAL, OTTAWA.



HERE are three English daily papers in Ottawa, The Evening Journal, The Free Press, also evening, and the morning Citizen. Until within a year ago, the publishers practically did not speak as they passed by.

About that time an Ottawa business man had occasion to do some special advertising. He asked The Journal its figure for a page, one issue. The price was \$45, made by a rate of two cents a line, as he was a regular advertiser and had a contract which gave him the right to extra space at that rate.

The enquirer thought the figure high, but The Journal stood to its guns, declining to come lower. He went to The Citizen, intimated that The Journal had offered him a page for \$30, and said that if The Citizen would do the same, he would give it the ad. too. This gentleman was a professing Christian and an office holder in an Ottawa church, but for some reason The Citizen smelt a rat. Temporarily putting him off, The Citizen people telephoned The Journal, contrary to their previous rules of war, and learned that The Journal had declined to give the page for less than \$45. The Journal reciprocated by suggesting that if The Citizen also refused a cut, it should notify the third paper, The Free Press, of what had occurred.

The Citizen declined to cut, and, when the would-be advertiser went out, telephoned The Free Press. The message was hardly taken before the church official appeared in The Free Press office, and in the course of a few minutes informed it that he was getting a page for \$30 in The Citizen, and would give it to The Free Press at the same figure if that would be satisfactory. He did not get the rate. And a day or two later, the page advertisement appeared in all the papers at \$45 each.

This occurrence was not exactly a sample of others, for the business men of Ottawa are in nine cases out of ten straightforward and honorable, but it was an illustration of the troubles to which newspapers are liable when on too cool terms. For, although few business men would use falsehood, many are keen enough to realize how to utilize one paper's prices to beat down another's. So the Ottawa publishers put on their thinking caps, and in a short time they had mapped out a new plan of operations. They united in a determination to maintain advertising rates. There was not, nor has there been, any increase in the rates, although Ottawa newspaper advertising is the cheapest in Canada in comparison with circulation. The publishers did not increase rates; they followed the old cards; but they decided to stick to them as far as reasonable.

They have done so. Weekly meetings of the publishers are held, at which all matters of difference or doubt are adjusted. All contracts made for the first time must be made at card rates. As to renewals of old contracts, circumstances govern. If a well-to-do advertiser has a first-class position at a second-class rate, he is hoisted to the regular thing. Of old he would have dropped out of the paper, and stayed with one of the others at his old rates. Sometimes he drops out now, but he can't stay with one of the others at the old rates. He can not stay in any paper save at the same rate as other business men pay. Further, dead-head notices are stopped. There are

no more free notices for money-making entertainments. Advance notices of church concerts and boxing matches equally have to pay their ten cents a line. Again, dead-head subscribers are stopped. Jones' free Journal is not stopped and his free Citizen kept on, making him a special enemy of the Journal. He loses both and gets no sympathy from The Free Press either. Then, notes are compared regarding the business dealings and accounts of shaky advertisers. And repeatedly already the mutual understanding has enabled satisfactory handling of matters in other respects which can be conjectured by publishers. One result, by the way, was the imposition of card rates on brother McKim, of Montreal, who had been doing a flourishing business in Ottawa at very low figures to himself by bucking the publishers against each other. In one case it was discovered that Mr. McKim was offering advertising to one paper at about one-third the rate he was proposing to his principal. In addition, out of the newspaper's third he would have got his usual 25 per cent. commission.

Generally the move has satisfied the publishers excellently. It has killed off some advertising, of course. Some advertisers who maintained space in an aimless way, chiefly because the figure was away down, have dropped out. So have a few who have been offended by proposed hoists. But in many cases better rates are secured, all new contracts made are firmer, and, of course, the battle is at the first, and when the public generally understands thoroughly, as it now begins to do, that newspaper space is not a perpetually slaughtered bankrupt stock, the results grow more and more satisfactory. It should be mentioned that the Ottawa papers have a big advantage in the basis of co-operation, the advertising rates of the three papers being the same. The two evening papers have about the same circulation: the morning paper, while its circulation is less, has a monopoly of its field, and is able to maintain the same rates as the others.

MEN TO BE SNUBBED.

Some men should be snubbed. Here is a letter from one who deserves it:

NASHVILLE, TENN., Jan. 25, 1895.

EDITOR CANADIAN HARDWARE MERCHANT, Toronto, Canada.

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Otis Everett Davidson, of this city, has invented a very clever cider mill and press, which he has named the "Little Giant." It is, indeed, a meritorious invention, as evidenced by the applications which we have received from the trade journals of the United States for cuts and description of it. We write you as the editor of a leading trade journal in Canada, to offer you the use of an electrotype and description for publication in your paper, if you so desire, as it will without doubt be interesting reading.

Very truly yours,

A. TILMAN JONES, Secretary.

PELLAND VS. MONTREAL STAR.

The case of J. O. Pelland vs. The Montreal Daily Star came before the Court of Review in Montreal, March 26. Pelland sues The Star for \$5,000 damages for publishing on January 26, 1892, a report of a speech made by Hon. J. A. Ouimet in Laval County. The case was first tried before Mr. Justice Pagnuelo and a jury, who found that the article was a faithful report of Mr. Ouimet's speech, that it was published without malice and in the public interest, but as it contained reflections on Pelland made