

coupled with two or three leading provincial papers, and, perhaps, an agricultural paper, should be beneficial to all, especially as the country paper cannot possibly give the world's news or the agricultural matter, and the city or agricultural paper, in like manner, cannot give the local news, which is the main stock-in-trade of the local sheet. Still, I have seen some excellent arguments against all this.

While writing, I would like to ask why we cannot have more inter-communion—if that is not a doublet—through the columns of *PRINTER AND PUBLISHER* on this and many other subjects of practical, every-day interest to practical, every-day—rather every-week—publishers; a sort of love feast, as it were. For instance, what is the opinion of yourself, Mr. Editor, or of any reader, of the auxiliary editorial? Or, why can we not have a system of transient exchange organized? I would like to see a copy of every paper published in Canada, but do not want to regularly exchange with but very few, and but very few want my paper regularly. If I have ten or twenty papers left some week, and send them to ten or twenty strangers, and they return me each one copy, that being the end of the transaction, I would see samples of their issues, and each one would see mine. Another week, another set would be met. In the course of a year or so, each one of us would see every other paper published in the Dominion, without any overloaded exchange lists. Could you not give us a sign manual, by which this transient exchange could be marked, recognized, and responded to, that could be used commonly by all, and start it going? This was one of the things I had hoped might flow from the country publisher's section, which "died a barnin'" at Ottawa. But what about the auxiliary editorial?

#### LAST YEAR'S CAMPAIGN AGAINST CLUBBING.

By H. J. Peetypiece, M.P.P.

Last year I sent to all the country publishers, in Ontario, a circular, a copy of which is enclosed. It was generally approved of, but nothing was done. I am still of the opinion that country publishers should not club with any cut-rate papers. I think they are doing less of it than formerly. The following is the circular referred to:

"The centralization of business, by wealthy corporations, is already affecting the trade of the towns and villages, and even the smaller cities, of Ontario, which must, sooner or later, seriously injure the business of the newspapers in those places, both in advertising and job work.

"But the newspaper publishers in Ontario, outside of a few of the largest cities, are threatened with a still more serious loss which, happily, it is in their power to prevent, if they will act with firmness and promptness. The threatened loss is the withdrawal of outside advertising, such as that of patent medicine firms, etc., or the holding of it at such rates and on such conditions that it will be unremunerative. A country publisher was told a short time ago, when holding out for a fair price for a patent medicine ad., that the price and conditions offered must be accepted or no contract would be made, the dealer frankly adding that he was growing more independent of the country press every day, because the big city papers were covering the Province better each succeeding year, and that he could soon reach the reading public of the Province through a few of these big papers. This is too true, and this state of affairs is being brought about chiefly by the country publishers clubbing the big papers with their own, at rates that are ridiculous. There are

country publishers, all over Ontario, who are giving one or more of the few big city weeklies with their own papers for the price of one, with the inevitable result that every subscriber to these local papers receives a city weekly free. This enables the big city publisher to say to the advertiser: 'You need not spend your money advertising in such and such papers, as every one of their subscribers receives my paper also; give me your advertising and you will reach the same readers and save money.' Such an offer was made, by a representative of a big city weekly, to a large advertiser only a few days ago.

"More than that, cheap dailies and weeklies going into local fields carry the immense and attractive advertisements of the departmental stores that aim to squeeze the life out of the trade of the Province by turning all the spot cash into their mail order business.

"Perhaps you have not swallowed the clubbing bait, as too many of us have (and therefore feel that you are not interested), but even if you have not, your wisdom will not save you. If half the local papers in the Province are doing it the result will be practically the same. Have you seen it in this light before now?"

#### BECOMING MORE UNPOPULAR.

By Jas. McLeod, *Almonte Gazette*.

The subject is one to which we have given very little attention. We do not believe in the principle and, therefore, have not encouraged the system. We cannot speak, with authority, for other publishers in this section, but, so far as we have an opportunity to learn, we believe that the clubbing system is becoming more and more unpopular every year. The sooner that publishers realize that the best and surest way to get and keep subscribers is to make their publications so attractive that they will win on their merits, and not depend on the attractions offered by other papers, the better for themselves and the general public.

#### LAWYERS AND LIBEL SUITS.

H. Whorlow, secretary of the Newspaper Society, writes to *The London Times*, directing attention to an important announcement just made by the Incorporated Law Society. This relates to the fees of lawyers who take suits against newspapers. A case was investigated, wherein it was proved, to the satisfaction of the committee of the Law Society, that the solicitor, whose conduct was impugned, had entered into a written agreement with his client by which he was to receive, in satisfaction of his solicitor and client costs, one-third of any damages which might be recovered. The following is the text of the agreement in question:

"We are willing to act as your solicitors in recovering for you damages against the various newspapers, and, as payment for our full solicitor and client costs, we are, out of the damages recovered, to have one-third, and to pay you the balance in full."

After a full and exhaustive enquiry, the committee of the Incorporated Law Society found, with reference to this agreement, that, "although made bona fide, it was champertous and illegal, and ought not to have been entered into by the respondent."

It would be well for the standing sub-committee of the Canadian Press Association on libel to consider this question, and, if the conduct of any lawyer in connection with suits appears worthy of enquiry, to bring it before the Law Society.