

the annual dinner of the association, owing to the House being in session; and extending a cordial invitation, on behalf of Mrs. Edgar and himself, to the members of the association to call and take a cup of tea with her, in the Speaker's chambers, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon. The invitation was unanimously accepted.

An invitation, from Mr. F. H. St. Jacques, for the members to take a trip to Aylmer, by electric railway, and lunch with him at the Victoria hotel, Aylmer, was received. Also an invitation from Mr. W. H. Rowley, on behalf of the E. B. Eddy Co., for the members to visit the works of the company, at Hull. Mr. Soper, of the Ottawa Railway Co., also wrote placing special cars at the disposal of the members, to enable them to reach Government House, and also for a trip around the city. In connection with the above communication, the president explained that he had, on behalf of the association, accepted an invitation from His Excellency to attend a reception at Government House, from 9 to 11 p.m. on Friday night. This action of the president was unanimously endorsed and the offer of Mr. Soper was received with thanks.

The following gentlemen were appointed by the president a committee on resolutions: Messrs. H. P. Moore, P. D. Ross, W. S. Dingman, J. S. Willison and S. Russell.

The President's Address.

The president, on rising to read his annual address, was received with applause. He said: "Before reading my address I desire to draw attention to the fact that a number of gentlemen are present who have been nominated as members of the association and whose names have passed the executive committee. Among them are Mr. Brennan, of Summerside, P.E.I.; also, I understand, the proprietor of The Courier, of Digby, although I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting him. For the first time, I think, we have the pleasure of seeing the proprietor of one of the old French-Canadian dailies, I refer to Mr. L. J. Tarte, who is, I know, going to make an enthusiastic member. We have also Mr. Lance, a former president of the Eastern Townships Press Association, and this afternoon we will have present President Smith, of The St. Johns News, and also, I understand, 15 or 20 other members of the association." (Applause). The president then read his annual address as follows:

GENTLEMEN,—It gives me great pleasure to welcome the members of the Canadian Press Association assembled for the fortieth annual meeting.

Unfortunately, I must preface my remarks by expressing the very deep regret which I feel at the inadequate amount of work performed by me during my term of office, owing to my absence abroad. The very important changes in the fiscal policy of Canada were of such great interest to newspaper publishers that I went to England very shortly after those changes were announced and was away for over six months. This visit, I am glad to say, gave me the opportunity of performing, in some measure, the duties which I owed to my journalistic confreres and the united press of Canada.

Generally speaking the year just closed has been a satisfactory one for the newspapers of Canada. Increased exports and mining developments during the last few years have materially improved the condition of all classes, and no interest is so quickly affected by varying trade conditions as the publishing industry. The result of this is especially seen in the weekly papers all over Canada which have been able to make a very marked advance in mechanical facilities, improved typographical appearance and a better news service.

From 7 x 9 offices, up dirty lanes, on back streets, with a newspaper as a necessary and perhaps evil adjunct to a job printing establishment, the mouthpiece of the local politicians with personal ends to serve, they have developed in the last few years into important and profitable business enterprises, edited by men of ability, independence and public spirit, untrammelled by party and wielding an influence for good, and, in the majority of cases, occupying palatial offices in the choicest quarter of the town. The editors, in most cases, instead of being subservient to the politicians are now consulted by them in every detail of political policy, by some of them even before they accept a title, before themselves taking any personal action. In fact, many leading politicians of the present day owe their discovery and political success to the hard working journalist who is scarcely known on the street.

The fear that the low-priced city weekly would seriously injure the local weeklies has passed away, and experience proves that the public are willing to pay a good price for a good newspaper. It is worthy of note that the large dailies have now practically dropped regular news from the country districts. The smaller dailies are taking this up extensively, in a brief paragraph style that reflects credit upon them, but the local field still remains to be worked by the local weekly. I think this association has played an important part in bringing about the improvement in the papers and greater independence in their tone. It is at any rate a remarkable coincidence that the best papers, especially in Ontario, are controlled by the members of the Press Association.

LIBEL LEGISLATION.

In considering the matter of libel legislation, I was given to understand that the amendments asked for by the association to the Ontario Civil Law of Libel would be introduced in the legislature, but for some occult reason no action was taken. Several of the members of this association have suffered severely and unjustly under the Criminal Act, and I may mention that John King, Q.C., with his usual kindness, has prepared some amendments which, if adopted, will afford relief in future.

NEWSPAPER POSTAGE.

With regard to newspaper postage, I gave the Postmaster-General a copy of the resolution adopted at the annual meeting requesting him to take no action during the last session of Parliament, in order to give the publishers an opportunity of thoroughly considering the matter. This he kindly consented to do. The resolution was sent to every publisher in Canada, and all the numerous comments are favorable to it. I believe the Postmaster-General intends this year asking Parliament to impose postage. It is for you to decide at this meeting whether any further action should be taken.

IMPROVED CABLE SERVICE.

There has been no meeting of the committee to consider an improved cable service. In England I secured all the information possible.

I had a number of interviews with the manager of the Associated Press, and found him willing and anxious to do everything in his power to assist in this matter. He complains of the difficulty in getting more special Canadian news, and denies that there is anything biased or unfriendly to British interests in anything they send out. If the service is sometimes unjust to British interests, as many claim, and I confess facts seem to prove it, it is the result of padding in the United States. I am given to understand that our Government, recognizing this fact and believing it to be in the interests of Canada to have a good, direct service, they are prepared to consider a liberal grant of money to enable the association to put such a scheme on a proper and paying basis. The Australian press have a system to which all papers contribute. It costs them about \$100,000 annually. Canada could establish an independent system