

The Local News Feature.

IT is regrettable that a large proportion of the country press neglects, or discharges very ineffectively, the main function of the local newspaper, which is to print the local news. A very considerable majority, probably, of the country press do not live up to their possibilities in this respect, while many are too sluggish to make even a decent attempt to do so. Country editors are known who leave the writing up of their local matter until a day or two before publication, when they scurry through it in a perfunctory way as if the thing were a bore and they would like it dispensed with altogether that they may not leave their precious "job work." Such an editor now and again seeks to apologize for the extra shabbiness or Saharan barrenness of his sheet with the explanation of a rush of job work, which required the services of all hands so that for the time being the paper had to be let go. He is a shortsighted publisher who fails to perceive that the newspaper is the mainstay of his business and the local news is the mainstay of the paper. Neglect of the local news feature cannot but seriously damage a paper's earning power. An editor should dread to plead the excuse of job work to his readers for neglect to make his paper locally interesting, lest he be deluged immediately with vehement orders from irate subscribers to "stop my paper." The newspaper should come first always, its interests should never be slighted. We endeavor to recognize constantly that principle in the conduct of *The Herald*, which a few years ago was one of the most remiss of the country press. Without boasting, it may be questioned if any newspaper in a similar field in the province now excels it as a news gatherer. The weekly is more particularly referred to, since this article will be perused mainly by publishers of weeklies. Every week it contains as a rule, about or nearly twenty-five twenty-three-and-a-half inch columns of solid local matter, aside from Talmage sermon, story, foreign and general news, etc. Pages one, three, four and five are almost entirely devoted to city and county news, with frequent overflows on pages two and eight—sometimes on every page. What is possible with us in the local news line is possible with every other newspaper, perhaps not to the same number of columns, but to the same degree considering the field operated. Any business that is worth engaging in at all should be prosecuted with diligence and vigor. Enterprise in the local news department pays, imparting a healthy stimulus even to the job work department, which will be found

to develop as the constituency of the newspaper is enlarged and consolidated. A smart canvasser may perhaps coax or cajole people into taking a paper, but they won't stay with it unless it has merit, and the crowning merit of a local paper is the local news, carefully edited and attractively presented. Let the editor begin as soon as one issue is out, on local news for the next, filling a couple of his "inside" pages with well written local matter. At least four pages of every eight page local newspaper ought, as a rule, to be half to three-fourths filled with local news; in the term being included county or district news, which if properly farmed will be often double the quantity of town news. Finally, let the publisher keep his eye about him; learn from successful local papers; note the manner in which they are conducted, and imitate what is worthy. An editor should possess powers of keen observation and discrimination; such a man, even if lacking in early thorough journalistic training, will find a way to keep himself from lagging in the rear with those whose greatest feats in the line of local newsgathering may be comprised within three or four columns well leaded and quaded. *THE IMPRINT*, one of the neatest and most handsomely prepared of type-founders' journals, contains many hints of value, and its beauty should inspire every reader of it with the desire to beautify and embellish his own paper typographically. Three other publications every Canadian editor should have are *The Printer and Publisher*, of Toronto, *Newspaperdom*, of New York, and *The Inland Printer*, of Chicago, all rich in ideas and suggestions such as every wide-awake publisher is on the lookout for.

W. S. DINGMAN,

Stratford Herald.

Save the Stereo Blocks.

MANY an office, especially newspaper and job offices have a quantity of disused electrotypes. Those on wood base may be turned to good account. Strip the metal off and remove the nails. The blocks will be found of great use in justifying wood letter lines, in spacing out curved lines in posters, and in locking up small chases inside of larger press chases. Fill a drawer with blocks and try how often you can use them.

F. H. DOBBIN.

[Not so fast, Brother Dobbin, think of the time wasted by the man in rooting amongst a lot of odd sized blocks for those to fit the lock-up, etc. This can all be saved by a few dollars expended for wooden furniture which is made in accurate sizes. The proper use for stereo mounts is to make firewood of them.—ED. IMPRINT.]