

THE WEEKLY PRESS.

THE LOW SUBSCRIPTION RATE.

By an oversight, the opinion of Mr. Fawcett, of *The Leader and Recorder*, was omitted from the "symposium" on the subject of a 50c. weekly, which lately appeared in these columns. Mr. Fawcett says: "I notice in a recent issue of your excellent journal some kindly references to *The Leader and Recorder* by Mr. Albert Dennis, of New Glasgow, N.S., one of the most enterprising publishers in the Maritime Provinces. Mr. Dennis says he does not agree with you that '50c. per year is too dangerously near the profit-margin point.' It may look presumptuous on my part, but I am bound to say that I do not agree with either of you. Circumstances alter cases. For instance, the best move I have made since locating in the county of York was when I decided to reduce the subscription rate of *The Leader and Recorder* from \$1 to 50c., but I would never dream of publishing *The Streetsville Review* at less than \$1 per year. This sounds funny, when one realizes that the former is just twice the size of the latter, and contains many times more original home matter. But so it is. *The Leader and Recorder* has a very large field, and must secure a certain amount of advertising at good rates to make it pay; consequently, it is absolutely necessary to have a large circulation. To secure a large circulation, it is necessary to issue a paper at almost the actual cost of production, and, with fast presses, electric power, paper at very close prices and type set by machines, it is possible to issue a newspaper of large circulation at 50c. per year, cash in advance, without loss. Moreover, the subscription price is 50c. per year, when paid in advance and not at the end of the year. Subscribers who do not pay in advance must remit \$1, that being the credit price. This means that the great bulk of subscriptions are paid in advance, thus lessening bookkeeping expenses and bad debts, very important items, as my brethren of the press will admit.

"But the same rule would not apply in the case of *The Streetsville Review*, where the field is necessarily limited. (I am now speaking of my own experience when publisher of *The Review* a few years ago.) In this case the circulation being limited and the advertising rates low, the subscriptions proved a very important part of the revenue, and it would have been folly to have charged less than \$1 per year. Supposing I had reduced the subscription price to 50c. it would not have added 50 to my list and it would have seriously reduced my revenue. But in the case of *The Leader and Recorder* the reduction to 50c. was a move in the right direction, for reasons already stated."

APPEALS FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS.

The writer clipped the following from a weekly newspaper published within 50 miles of Toronto: "One reason why editors seldom go to church, says an exchange, is that the presence of so many delinquent subscribers, from whom they are unable to collect a cent, puts them in anything but a religious frame of mind. Of course, there are exceptions to this rule." It is a fair sample of the trash which is altogether too frequently seen in the columns of our country weeklies. Some-

times the appeal has a little humor in it; sometimes it is sarcastic, but generally it has the sound of bitterness that is so evident in this piece. If editors or proprietors of newspapers gave the matter a little thought before publishing such items, they would be more rarely seen. What good can result from their publication? A paltry subscription or two may be paid in as a result, but I have grave doubts on that score. The fact should always be remembered that the world rarely offers to help the man who is down. It gives its hand rather to the man who is up, and boosts him farther up. Therefore, instead of endeavoring to create the impression that the newspaperman is "the poorest paid man on earth" in the hope of attracting sympathy, there is more to be gained by creating the impression that the newspaper business is a paying and honorable one and that subscriptions must be paid, just as a man pays for anything else of value he gets in this world. The proprietor who cannot collect his subscriptions, and is forced to appeal to the pity or the good graces of his subscribers is — well, the least said is soonest mended.

MAKING A FEATURE OF NEWS.

Although the publisher of *The Clinton New Era* is now an active politician and M.P. he has not been tempted to alter the distinguishing characteristic of his paper—news. *The New Era* is an example of the success with which the weekly can work up the news of its district, keeping an eye continually to condensation and the omission of wordy nonsense. There is a rather catchy little original rhyme which the editor uses to impress on his readers the fact that news forms the staple and purpose of his publication:

You'll find the news in compact space—
You'll find it in a handy place;
You'll find it fresh, and bright, and clean;
You'll find near all—but nothing mean.

It has been demonstrated that a country weekly pays. But to do so it must cover the news of the locality and thus secure a hold upon the people which the outside paper—daily or weekly—cannot shake off. This does not mean that a country publisher's personality should not also be a factor in working up the value of the property. If, for instance, his editorial utterances are looked for with interest in the neighborhood, as well as those of *The Globe* or *Mail*, so much the better. But the local publisher cannot be a universal genius—newsgatherer, editor, capable manager, writer and art printer. Some of these things he will do better than others, and the news department, next to the printing, is a vital factor.

HASTY MAKE UP.

It is not only the display headings of Canadian dailies that show signs of hasty make-up. On the contrary, there is no criticism to which the Canadian press is more open than this fault—haste in make-up. There are few, if any, of our dailies in which one does not frequently see full lines which the linotype operator has pied left in position, or a line out of place, or the sense of an article spoiled by a line or two of entirely irrelevant matter. To lay the blame for this on the proper person would necessitate pretty ingenious reasoning. Whether the fault lies with the city editor, who may not send copy up in good