

COUNTRY NEWSPAPERS.

NO doubt all my brethren of the country press, in common with myself, have been reading Mr. W. D. Howell's sketches in *THE CANADIAN PRINTER AND PUBLISHER* with more than passing interest. They recall the trials and vicissitudes of rural pressmen in the days when the old Streetsville Review was a power in the land, and when it denounced wickedness in high places, jumped on the Globe with both feet and alluded to Toronto as "Muddy Little York" with perfect freedom. In those early days an antiquated hand press, a few fonts of job and news type, an old table or marble slab, and a keg of black ink constituted the "plant" of the average country newspaper office. At that time the columns of the country newspaper were chiefly devoted to foreign news with an occasional editorial, relating to some matter of local or general interest, thrown in by way of variety. Short, breezy, newsy local items, such as characterize every country newspaper, worthy of the name now a days, were then practically unknown. In short, the country newspaper of forty or fifty years ago was edited somewhat after the fashion of the magazine with a mild suggestion of the first page of the daily journal of to-day. Admirably as they suited the public taste half a century ago, such journals could not be successfully conducted in this last decade of the nineteenth century. They would die of dry rot or some other disease inside of twelve months—perhaps less.

Many of our neatest and most ably edited country newspapers at the present time are printed on Washington hand-presses—quite different affairs, of course, to the ancient type-crushers already alluded to. Perhaps I would be safe in saying that the majority of rural journals are printed on hand-presses. It is slow work, but when the pressman possesses good taste and several ounces of brains, the general appearance of the sheet is equal to that produced by the average country power press. Among the many excellent newspapers printed on hand-presses, I might mention the following: Parry Sound Star, Oakville Star, Milton Reformer, Erin Advocate, Flesherton Advance, Bolton Enterprise, Shelburne Economist, Weston Times, Orangeville Post, Dundalk Herald, Chatsworth News, Durham Chronicle, Grey Review and Hanover Post. Of course there are many others, but these are sufficient for my purpose now. With the exception of the Dufferin Post and Grey Review, all the papers mentioned use "patent" sheets, and the average circulation would probably be in the neighborhood of 700. This estimate is based on personal observation and without reference to the wild ratings in the Canadian Newspaper Directory. The Dufferin Post, I think, leads in circulation with the Erin Advocate a close second. Be this as it may, these papers are all printed on hand-presses, and the remarkably handsome typographical appearance of some of them might lead the uninitiated to imagine that high class power presses did the work instead of the much despised (in some quarters) hand-presses. All this goes to show that the usefulness of the old hand-press is not gone nor is it likely to go for many years to come—not, indeed, until a power press has been manufactured which can be set up in a man's office at a cost not exceeding five hundred dollars. Even then the old hand press can be made to do duty in taking proofs, "small runs" of posters, etc.

My ideal of a country newspaper is a seven-column folio, all printed at home. But I am sorry to say it is not the general

public's ideal, and for that reason I very often find myself halting between half a dozen opinions. To live up to my ideal, I should now be publishing a seven-column folio; but, as a matter of fact, the paper issued under my direction is an eight-column folio. Yea, verily, and I am even now seriously contemplating an enlargement to the popular eight-page, six-column size! This looks dreadfully inconsistent, but it is not my fault. My dearly beloved brethren of the rural press and the general public aforesaid are to blame. The former will persist in "enlarging their borders" and the latter taunt us if we do not keep up with the procession. So what are we to do?

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The practice of "dropping an issue" once a year—ostensibly to give the tired printers a holiday but really to give them a chance to rush the voters' lists through within the time prescribed by law—is a mistake. It is time that such backwoods' customs were discontinued. Put on an extra hand, if need be, and get the voters' lists out on time, but for goodness' sake don't drop an issue! Do not give the city scribe a chance to fling some old chestnut at you about "a rush of horse bills" or "voters' lists" necessitating a week's holiday (!) in such and such an office! A particular old friend of mine once assigned as his reason for not issuing his paper on a certain occasion the startling fiction, that "the bulwarks of the press are out of order and it will take a week to repair them!" This might go with the average reader but just imagine how it would look in the eyes of the city newspaper men. Phew!

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With the kind permission of the publishers of *PRINTER AND PUBLISHER*, I shall endeavor to present other aspects of the country newspaper business at an early date. My next will be "The Country Editor and the Advertising Agent."

A. R. FAWCETT.

Streetsville, July 15th, 1893.

CORBITT'S GALLEY PROOF PRESS.

A NOTEWORTHY time-saver in the newspaper composing room is the recently introduced Corbitt Proof Press, manufactured by the Corbitt Press Co., of Racine, Wis. This press is in daily use at the World's Fair in connection with the Mergenthaler Typesetting Machine in getting out the Daily Columbian.

The press is composed of two side frames, parallel with each other and from five to twelve inches apart, to suit different sizes of galleys. Between these frames are arranged the impression and ink rollers, also the spool for holding web of paper. An endless belt, running over a stationary bed and drawn by a crank pulley, comprises the bed of press. On this bed or carrier is placed the galley of type, which is carried first under the ink rollers, then under the impression cylinder and delivered with the proof on the opposite end. The paper is an endless roll, fed between the impression cylinder and a small guide pulley, keeping it in position ready for use on the next galley. A device for taking the "dupe" on colored narrow paper, at one operation, is also arranged so as to be conveniently attached and used at will. The press being reversible, any number of proofs can be obtained with but one handling of the galley. The impression cylinder is covered with hard rubber, and is adjustable for taking a light or heavy impression, by means of right and left impression screws at either end. This insures