

new outfit of display type, and by having the reading matter set by type casting machinery. These are signs of a progressive spirit which should animate more of Canada's publishers. It has always animated The Herald office, however, and to-day that daily holds a foremost position among the smaller city dailies of Ontario. Its news and editorial columns are bright, strong and clean, while the advertising columns are fully up-to-date.

It is exceedingly lamentable that the projected trip through the Maritime Provinces should fall through on account of lack of support from members of the Press Association. At the annual meeting in January a large number of persons voted to have the excursion. After all arrangements were made, these persons refused to accept what they themselves had ordered. This action shows a lack of sincerity which cannot be admired. Perhaps the lateness in announcing the arrangements may have had something to do with the small number of acceptances that were received, but all members must have been aware that these arrangements were under way. Knowing this, they would have kept faith with the officers of the Association by refraining from making other arrangements for their holidays until the matter of an excursion was finally disposed of.

In a recent case, in which The Brantford Expositor was a defendant, Chief Justice Meredith of Ontario, in speaking of newspaper comments on pending law cases, declared that he did not approve of such comments as would prejudice a fair trial or the course of justice. That sort of thing was very objectionable; but he thought the courts should not encourage applications for attachments against newspaper publishers for immaterial or unimportant remarks in their newspapers concerning proceedings in courts of justice. Motions for comments of that character should be discontinued. The motion against Mr. Preston, who published only a general history of the case in question, was dismissed with costs.

The Ontario newspaper men struck a snap a week or two ago. The Great Northern Transit Co. had built a new boat, the *Majestic*, and her first trip from Collingwood was for invited guests only. Among these were the leading Northern Ontario journalists. On his return The Stratford Herald proprietor remarked: "There were so many newspaper men on board that the trip had somewhat of a press excursion aspect, the only difference being that there was more to eat and more to drink than is customary on press jaunts. P. E. W. Moyer, of Berlin, and J. J. Crabbe, of Toronto, both noted C. P. A. men of past times, who were aboard, can vouch for this."

Illinois has secured an amended libel law. It provides that in any action for libel in a newspaper the plaintiff shall only recover the actual amount of damage if it is shown that the publication was false, and that its falsity was due to a mistake or misapprehension of the actual facts, and that a retraction is made in the next two regular issues of the paper after the error is brought to the knowledge of the publishers. No exemplary or punitive damages shall be recovered unless the plaintiff, before taking action at law, shall notify the publisher in writing to publish a retraction, and reasonable time shall be allowed him to do so.

## STUDY BUSINESS DETAILS.

**B**USINESS management is too often the weakest part of a newspaper office. The advertisement and subscription accounts are kept fairly well, but little, if any, attention is devoted to the details of the cost of every department of work. The publisher is apt to be blissfully in the dark as to what his space is worth, how the cost of each issue of the paper compares with its selling price, and exactly what margin there is between cost and profit on the various revenue-producing departments. When this is the condition of things, every change in financial policy is a plunge in the dark. A reduction in advertising rates, or a cut in the selling price of the paper, or a clubbing rate fixed at a figure which leaves no profit to the publisher, are all, under this system, desperate measures. They bear no sort of relation to the future business chances of the paper, being undertaken in absolute disregard of the commercial consequences. If the publisher knew the details of all the departments of his office there would be the less cutting in rates, for cutting is nearly always a wild move. One of the advantages of the introduction of type-setting machines has been the necessity they have entailed of closer figuring regarding the cost of composition. This was done to find out how far the machines effected a saving. It is doubtful if many newspapers knew the outlay of the composing room as much in detail as it has had to be known since machines came into use. Several papers have recently had their office management organized by a competent accountant, who can lay out the whole programme, by which track is kept of the details of cost in all directions. Such a policy pays for all the time and labor involved. Without it the publisher is virtually beating the air. He cannot have anything but a vague idea of where he stands financially.

## A LIBEL SOLICITOR.

A sample of the benefit of the solicitor of the Canadian Press Association in libel matters was demonstrated the other day. Mr. Preston, of Brantford, was a defendant at Osgoode Hall, Toronto, on an application for an order to commit him for contempt of court in publishing certain comments on a case pending in the courts. Mr. John King, Q.C., the association solicitor, appeared for Mr. Preston, and succeeded in having the application dismissed. Mr. Preston's financial saving was more than double his year's subscription to the association formed to retain Mr. King.

Nothing but good can come of this movement and the Executive of the Press Association are to be congratulated upon their carrying this matter to a successful issue and in having secured sufficient support to warrant them in nominating a permanent solicitor and counsel.

Up to the time of writing the publishers of the following newspapers have executed the agreement with the solicitor: *Globe*, *Mail and Empire*, and *World*, Toronto; *Advertiser*, London; *Whig*, Kingston; *Expositor*, Brantford; *Sentinel Review*, Woodstock; *Journal*, St. Thomas; *Monetary Times*, Toronto; *Era*, Newmarket.

The agreement has been sent to a large number of other newspaper publishers throughout the province, and it is hoped that the publishers generally will support the hands of the Executive in this matter.