THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI BULLETIN

VOLUME 30, NUMBER 46

Journalism Series, No. 57

T. C. MORELOCK, *Editor*

News, Its Scope and Limitations

Addresses Delivered at the Twentieth Annual Journalism Week at the University of Missouri, May 5-11, 1929

ISSUED FOUR TIMES MONTHLY; ENTERED AS SECOND-CLASS MATTER AT THE POSTOFFICE AT COLUMBIA, MISSOURI—6,000

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The annual Journalism Week is held in May. All persons interested in journalism are invited to attend. The Missouri Writers Guild and the Missouri Press Association hold semiannual meetings in connection with Journalism Week each year.

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Reporting a Continent

BY WILLIAM WILLS DAVIES
American Correspondent, La Nacion, Buenos Aires, Argentina

The news tastes of civilized people the world over are very much alike. This is the basic fact that enables news associations to summarize events of the day and send them to such far-flung countries as Japan, Australia, Argentina and to Europe. Of course, a special correspondent will know the individual wants of the country he is representing, but what is known in the profession as "flat news" goes briefly to every country of the world in the same form. The extent to which the story is amplified or developed depends upon a number of factors, such as the cost of cable tolls and the special tastes of the community served, but the bare announcement of the important event, such as the death of a world famous statesman, is flashed in bulletin form to every newspaper in the world. In dealing with the work of a foreign correspondent in this address today, I have tried to be as helpful as I can to the students of this School of Journalism who are preparing themselves for a profession. It would be easier, and perhaps somewhat more entertaining, to confine my talk to some of the experiences I have had in reporting world events for newspapers in Australia and South America, but I am conscious of the fact that I am addressing an audience of students who want to learn something from my experiences.

Let me first give some idea of how news originating in the United States reaches its foreign consumers. The news agencies are generally the first to tell what has happened. They do it briefly or at length, according to the event and according to the purse strings of the paper they are serving. In nearly every country, however, there are large papers which are not content to have the news served to them by press associations alone, and consequently they send their own correspondents to big centers like New York to amplify or interpret the news according to the tastes to the individual newspaper. There are more than fifty of such correspondents in New York City, and of that number nearly half keep up a regular cable correspondence with their dailies. It is left largely to these correspondents to mold public opinion regarding the country whose news they interpret. They cater to the special needs of their own particular readers, not by collecting the news, but by selecting it. They interpret the news because they realize that there are gaps to be filled in to make an event thoroughly understandable to the reader abroad. The bare announcement that a secretary of state has resigned is, of course, interesting, but its real significance would lie in the explanation by the correspondent as to why he resigned. This explanation might be authentic or it might be merely based on the correspondent's opinion, formed as a result of his close contact with American affairs. In either case it would be eagerly read.

But I want first to return to my opening statement that the taste for news in the main is universal. The assassination of a leading statesman will be read with equal interest in Panama, Buenos Aires, London or in the wireless notice posted in the smoking room of an Atlantic liner. A decision to limit the world's armaments would also be equally interesting anywhere. The foreign correspondent would know that such an event had been sent all over the world by the press associations. He would know that his role was to amplify the news by filling in the detail of the picture, in the case of the assassination by explaining how the deed was committed and by describing the appearance of the assassin. In other words, he would endeavor to satisfy the curiosity which the flat news announcement of the press association had aroused in the minds of his readers.

Personally, I think that the first thing a student of journalism should endeavor to find out is what is news. In the newspaper world there is that expression "a news sense" which epitomizes in a brief phrase what is perhaps the paramount qualification of a newspaper writer. It is a phrase difficult to define further. It is a singular thing that this news sense does not depend on the curiosity of the reporter, not even on the extent to which he is interested in the events in the world around him. It frequently reaches its ideal development in a reporter or writer who has cultivated a detachment from most fields of activity and whose interest is professional rather than personal. The good reporter intuitively knows a good news story. Subconsciously he sifts the essential from the mass of non-essential detail—the truth from the tangle of rumor and surmise.

Some people are born with a news sense; others develop it. There is no doubt that the man who possesses this quality when he begins his journalistic work starts off with a great advantage. It means that he subconsciously senses what the public wants to know and almost automatically leaves out of his story the parts that are not essential to a newspaper narrative. There is no doubt that a news sense can be cultivated, and this is unquestionably one of the great functions your School of Journalism is performing. Even the young reporter who commences work with a good news sense as part of his mental equipment will find that he has much to learn and that the road to journalistic success does not always run smoothly. The real test comes when a big story breaks. The keen reporter will rush to his task not only with eagerness but also with unbounded enthusiasm. But in these moments of crisis when he is working at the highest pressure, his news sense will stand by with the cool detachment of a spectator and dictate what he shall write.

After all, a newspaper simply provides food for the reader. It is remarkable how far this parallel can be followed. He needs solid food—the political, financial and economic events. He needs the dessert, which is perhaps supplied by tragedies and crime. He needs the cocktails, which take the form of readable divorce cases and such news as may result from a wild party in Hollywood. Frequently the reader's diet is not very well balanced, and the tremendous circulation of certain types of newspapers shows that many people think they can live on literary cocktails.

A general classification would put news under three broad divisions—international, national and local. It the first duty of a correspondent to watch the international news because of its very direct bearing on the problems of his own country. The national news may be interesting if it reflects in any way a situation similar to that in the country he is serving. Local news can generally be ignored, unless it possesses some strikingly unusual characteristic which will give the foreign reader a thrill. Exactly what constitutes that unusual characteristic it is almost impossible to say. That is why the newspaper writer or correspondent has to depend on his news sense. A tragedy is interesting, not according to the number of people affected, but according to the circumstances of the tragedy. The death of 300 people in a cyclone in Japan might easily have less interest for foreign readers than a highly sensational tragedy in New York involving the fate of only two people. A peculiar element which invests an event with news interest is the factor of unsolved mystery. One of the first things a student of journalism should bear constantly in mind is that the most successful piece of news will stimulate interest rather than satiate it. The unexplained disappearance of a prominent person, particularly if there are elements of tragedy in that disappearance, is more interesting than his death. If a man is murdered and the newspaper can tell who murdered him and why, it is a good story, but it is all told. There is little to say the next day. The reader passes on to something else. If he is murdered and there is only a hint as to the identity of the murderer

and the motive, the story sets the reader thinking and he will follow the case with intense interest day by day. It seems that at heart most of us are amateur detectives and imagine that we can unravel mysteries. The essence of news is the unusual. A foreign diplomat was once addressing a meeting of foreign correspondents in New York and he took occasion to criticise the type of news sent abroad, claiming that less attention should be paid to sensational events and more to recording the orderly developments of the country. While this may be all right from the diplomats' point of view, from the journalists' it is obviously absurd. One of the later speakers on this subject was the late Mr. Melville E. Stone, the founder of the Associated Press, who came to the defense of the foreign correspondents with a whimsical illustration. "If a perfectly able clergyman delivers fifty-one perfectly good sermons to a highly respectable congregation it may all be very well, but it is not news," he said. "But if on the fifty-second Sunday he makes a speech in which he openly advocates domestic infidelity it immediately becomes a striking news story."

When we have mastered the rather difficult problem of what is news, we immediately face another still more important. I refer to the question of speed. One of the great New York editors once laid it down that news is 80 per cent speed and 20 per cent news. It is useless to come along with a story after another paper has printed it. This element of speed is particularly important to the foreign correspondent, who must study not only how to get the news quickly but also how to bring it to his newspaper in time for publication. Many correspondents who are in New York represent countries where the hour of the day is always different. For instance, it is now sometime tomorrow morning in Australia, while it is tonight in London. So the correspondent must use his resourcefulness to get possession of his facts in time to write and file his story and have it in his home office before the paper goes to press. This means that he must have a very good knowledge of communications and be able to figure out how long it takes for a message filed in New York to reach his newspaper. For instance, the average length of time for an ordinary press message to reach Buenos Aires is from two to four hours. A brief urgent message might take about half an hour, while some bulletins we have sent, under very special conditions, have occupied about one minute in traversing the six thousand miles between New York and Argentina.

The selection of the mere machinery to cover an important news story for Argentina (or any other important paper abroad) is of the highest importance. We have all the difficulties of an American paper plus the fact that having got our information we have to send it 6000 miles. In the case of some event occurring in the evening, every minute counts. In reporting the now famous boxing match between Firpo and Dempsey, we resorted to almost every conceivable expedient to get our story there first and to give our readers as complete a narrative as the time would permit. You have all seen pictures of the boxing ring with reporters packed like a New York subway crowd into the first rows immediately adjacent to the ring. Each of these reporters has his own telegraph operator. In our case it was obviously impossible to get a direct leased wire from the ringside to Buenos Aires, but we had something nearly as good. We had two telegraph operators with direct wires from the ringside into the cable office. We had made arrangements for the cable company to allot a special man to take the bulletins off these wires and transfer them to the cable to Buenos Aires. The cable manager arranged that the operator receiving our messages from the ringside would be seated immediately alongside the operator sending to Buenos Aires. At all relay points on the cable between New York and Buenos Aires the offices were waiting to push these messages through in record time. Nor did we rely on only cable companies. The wires going from the ringside to the

cable office passed through my own offices where an operator kept them, and in case of important bulletins sent the same messages by another cable company and by radio. It is amazing what a cable company can do in handling traffic rapidly. On various occasions we have sent from three to seven thousand words after 10:30 o'clock at night, and the message arrived in time for publication in our paper going to press shortly after midnight.

It has frequently happened that important boxing contests were fought in the rain. This was the case with the Dempsey-Tunney match at Philadelphia. It is not that you mind the rain so much, but you know that if a few drops fall on the wrong part of your telegraph operator's instrument there will be a short circuit and your news story will suddenly cease. I dictated the greater part of the description of that particular fight in a pouring rain, drenched to the skin, and holding a newspaper over the operator's keys while he sent the message. In reporting another of the Firpo fights, which naturally had a paramount interest for Argentina, we not only sent a story by cable and wireless—we used the radiophone as well. This meant leasing of a specially constructed telephone wire from New York to Pittsburgh, installing a complicated mass of machinery beneath the ring, engaging two radio experts and a special announcer, re-transmitting his words on short wave lengths from Pittsburgh to Argentina and last and most difficult of all, persuading the late Tex Rickard why La Nacion should have four extra ringside seats.

The correspondent of an Argentine newspaper has one great factor to guide him —he knows that he is catering to what is perhaps the best informed audience so far as foreign news is concerned, in the world. I think it is no exaggeration to say that a newspaper like La Nacion offers its readers as good a selection of foreign news as any other newspaper anywhere. In case it might be thought that I am prejudiced in expressing this opinion, let me give a few facts and reasons. The facts are these. The Associated Press sends from four to five thousand words a day to La Nacion. This news is selected from the most important world events, whether they emanate in the United States, Europe or elsewhere. This news is supplemented by about 2000 words from our special correspondents in European capitals and 1500 or 2000 words daily from my own office in New York. As a matter of fact, the first two pages of the newspaper are almost entirely devoted to foreign news. There are two reasons for this: The first is that the population of Argentina is very largely drawn from Europe, and the steady infiltration of immigrants from Italy and Spain and other European countries demands that the Argentine editor keep abreast of events abroad if he is going to satisfy his readers. Moreover, the native born Argentine, because of this custom on the part of the big newspapers, has cultivated a taste for the news item of international importance. The second potent reason why the Argentine is familiar with foreign events is that the readers have been trained to regard local news as of relatively less importance than international events. It would be a mistake to dogmatize as to which is the better method, but, according to my classification of the newspaper readers' diet, it is healthier to have a relatively larger quantity of foreign news. I have seen many newspapers in the United States and other parts of the world which will frequently devote nearly all the front page to some event of local importance, relegating to less conspicuous positions stories which may have a direct bearing on the conduct of world affairs. You would find that this is seldom done in a newspaper like La Nacion. The local events are adequately handled, but the front page, or, as I like to call it, the show window, is reversed for news of international importance. Personally, I adhere to my opinion that the Argentine newspaper has the better balanced diet.

I would like to say in passing that I frequently noticed Americans returning from South America who complain that South American newspapers devote far too much

space to crimes and sensations in the United States, thus giving a distorted picture of this great country. I shall flatly challenge that statement. Speaking from an experience of about ten years, I would say that there are no papers in the world which devote less space to crime and scandal than the great papers of Buenos Aires. A thrilling murder case which will hold the front page of American newspapers for a week or more will be barely mentioned in the pages of La Nacion. The most sensational divorce case that has occurred in New York in my time was disposed of by this newspaper in about three small items. On the other hand, political and economic news is reported as fully and carefully as possible. Explorations and developments in science are given great attention. The stories of Lindbergh's famous flight to France and Commander Byrd's sensational passage over the same route were told in the pages of La Nacion in each case in the aviator's own words. Two great expeditions some time ago set out for the Antarctic, those of Commander Byrd and Sir George Wilkins. In each case we secured the rights to the discoverer's own narration, and these stories as they came to New York were cabled fully to Buenos Aires. I am saying this to disprove a charge which I have often seen made regarding the type of news printed in South America.

At the same time, it is clear that great catastrophies and tragedies must find their way into a foreign cable service, and there is no use in denying that unless a large amount of serious political information comes from the same quarter the reader is apt to conjure up in his mind an unbalanced picture of the United States. A moment's consideration, however, will show that this is inevitable. The United States with its teeming cities, its great industries, its experiments in aviation, its pioneering tests in speed on land and water, must produce a larger crop of thrilling accidents than a country with less enterprise and sparser population. Personally, I doubt whether the presentation of such news abroad does America any harm. As a matter of fact, if we come to analyze the probable sources of news we will find that it bears a direct relation to civilized population and particularly to the segregation of that population in congested areas. I think this could be better explained by the illustration that an Argentine newspaper would probably print more news from New York City with its six million population than it will from the whole of Australia, with almost as great a population, despite the fact that Australia has an area as great as the United States. In fact, New York City would probably find its way into the pages of an Argentine newspaper more frequently than China, with its four hundred millions of inhabitants. Here the reason is that the Chinese civilization is backward and the country is so remote that even a great catastrophe there means practically nothing to the readers abroad. There is still another element which makes the United States an extremely fruitful ground for news items. I refer to its wealth. A sudden accession to fortune frequently leads to the expression of weird tastes and the staging of queer parties and the development of matrimonial tangles that cannot fail to provide what I have described as the cocktails at the literary meal.

The graduates from this School of Journalism, whatever class of newspaper work they select, will need a knowledge of interviewing. In this type of newspaper work, I should say success depends very largely on a knowledge of the subject and the ability to put the person interviewed into a proper frame of mind. I remember that when the great British author, Zangwill, came to the United States wearing his hair at the professional length some authors still affect, he was met by a ship news reporter who exclaimed, "What are you, a violinist?" Naturally, he did not get very far with his interview. One has to study very carefully the personality of the person interviewed. In spite of very discouraging reports, I visited Marion before the inauguration of President Harding and on the strength of a friendly introduction

talked to him for about an hour on the problems between the United States and Argentina. He seemed very nervous and disinclined to say anything for publication. Several times during his conversation he insisted that he must not be quoted. At the end of our talk, however, I suggested that I should write an interview and submit it to him for his approval, adding that if he disapproved of it the matter would end there. Naturally, he could not very well object to these terms. I had to write the story in such a way that it would contain no statement likely to involve him in controversy. He approved the interview.

One frequently finds that a prominent statesman establishes a definite rule that he will not consent to be interviewed. In fact, they are generally compelled to do this; otherwise they would waste most of their time in giving interviews and reaping the resultant harvest of trouble. I once saw Mr. Elihu Root, who not only declined to be interviewed, but definitely took the aggressive and condemned interviews as almost invariably harmful to the person interviewed. "The very nature of an interview," he said, "means that you want me to say something which I would not voluntarily disclose in a speech. Therefore I long ago decided not to give interviews." "It is not possible," I suggested, "that an interviewer might want news which you were equally anxious to get to the public?" Mr. Root replied very promptly, "In that case I would make a statement." He added, with a smile, "There is nothing I want to get to the public now."

I had better luck with Mr. Balfour when he headed the British delegation to the historic arms conference in Washington. I reached Mr. Balfour through a friend at his modest little apartment, and he immediately began by telling me that he had an invariable rule never to give interviews. I argued that he should make an exception because of the amount of good a statement from him on a certain issue would do in South America. He said that he would like to do it, but his rule was inflexible and that if he once broke it he would be besieged by interviewers. I retorted that the interview would be published in Buenos Aires and that there was not one chance in a hundred of its being cabled back to Washington during the conference. The great English statesman was silent for about a minute and then he said, "Well, I will take that one chance."

Without doubt the most fruitful source of news I ever established was my contact with the Argentine boxer, Firpo. He lunged into my office one afternoon with a brief letter of introduction from a friend in Argentina. There was nothing to indicate that he would be any different from the scores of foreign boxers who invade New York and provide easy victories for the home pugilists. While I knew nothing of his boxing ability, he showed signs of that unique personality which afterward made him one of the greatest drawing cards in the history of boxing. I accompanied him to his training quarters in a fire station in a remote little town in New Jersey, and we became friends. When he started to establish his reputation by a series of knockouts, it was an easy matter to make a contract with him that he should write exclusively for our paper. On the day we reported his famous fight with Dempsey, which, by the way, ran into seven thousand cabled words at fifty cents a word, the circulation of our paper leaped by 60,000.

If I were asked to sum up the qualifications a newspaper writer should have I would put them in the following order:

Knowledge of subject.

A sense of what the public is interested in.

Ability to discriminate between facts and assertions.

Judgment as to the probability of a reported event.

A detached opinion as to whether his own story can stand criticism and analysis.

The ability in doubtful cases to write the story so as to play safe.
A sense of responsibility for what he writes.
Resourcefulness and determination.
And, finally, an insatiable taste for reading the news.

A Reporter at Large

BY PAUL Y. ANDERSON
National Correspondent, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

As a Missourian and a journalist, both by choice, it gives me much pleasure to be here. I hope you will bear with my shortcomings as a platform orator because it is not exactly in my line, and I hope you will forgive me if I say some disagreeable things, because that is exactly in my line.

My subject is "The Reporter's Business." It is a large subject, because the reporter's business is the truth. It is a difficult subject, because truth as an ideal has fallen into a curious disfavor with mankind today, and those who attempt to practice it are even more unpopular than usual. I do not know exactly why this is so. Perhaps it is due partly to the war, which made lying a patriotic duty and gullibility a condition of loyal citizenship. Perhaps it is natural in a period in which a man's success is mainly measured by his willingness and ability to rob his neighbors, and when honor and fame occur together only as a remarkable coincidence.

We live of course in an age where efficiency is god, and virtue is a luxury which few can afford. Now that the great engineer is in the White House, I anticipate even greater advances in that direction. We shall have efficiency departments which, while but half the size of the present ones, will hold twice as much imitation antique furniture. We shall have electric ice boxes that will freeze the cubes in half the time, and they will be twice as cold. Loud speakers will be four times as loud, and the talking movies will be ten times as hideous. Within a few years the United States will be Vibrationless Beyond Belief. I foresee a great future for nearly everything except the truth, which, alas, grows daily less fashionable, while the arguments against it multiply.

There is only one reason for practicing the truth, and that is that it is the truth. There are a thousand excuses for suppressing, distorting, coloring or avoiding it, and the reporter hears them all. He is told that the habit of getting and writing the truth will make enemies for him, that it will make him unpopular, that it will dry up his news sources, and hence diminish his earning power. Sometimes he is told that it conflicts with the editorial policy of the paper that employs him. Of course, an editorial policy which conflicts with the truth is a disgrace to the paper that pursues it; but, unfortunately, there are such newspapers. He is told that the naked truth is not always nice, and that good face requires him to mutilate or suppress it.

All manners of rules and conventions are set up for the purpose of stifling or twisting the truth. Washington abounds with these devices. Most of them are the creation of office-holders and, of course, they are all designed to benefit and protect their creators. If the reporter is timid, or lacks confidence, or is afraid of his job, or is inclined to yield to pressure, if he is ambitious to "play the game as it is played," and be "one of the boys," he will be impressed by this formidable system of rules, conventions and taboos. Most reporters are like most people in other trades; they are afraid of novelty, they shrink from the unusual or the daring. They do not want to be called Bolshevists.

The truth is a hard taskmaster, and the rewards of devotion to it are not always palpable. The reporter who pursues it faithfully will find himself in uncomfortable situations. If he is covering a beat, he is likely to find himself handicapped in getting the news. I recall that more than a dozen years ago, when I was covering East St. Louis for the Post-Dispatch, the mayor issued an order barring me from the City Hall and the police stations. Since those were regarded as the principal sources of news, my usefulness seemed at an end. My offense had consisted of printing a list

of the principal gambling houses in the town, together with the fact showing they could not operate without police protection; and of showing the venal relationships which existed between the city administration and a certain bank. Now obviously, I had not obtained those stories from the City Hall or the police station. Hardly. Also it is obvious that the real stories to be sought under such an administration were those which would expose its corruption. This news was not to be obtained from members or friends of the administration; it was to be obtained from those who wished to overthrow it. So the natural consequence of my being barred was simply this. Everyone who heard of it and who disliked the administration and who knew anything to its discredit came running to tell me about it. For a year I never set foot in those buildings, and during that year I had more good stories out of the town than I had had in the two years preceding. So the disadvantages of official ostracism are not always as advertised. They may prove to be advantages. Now if I were a member in good standing of the universal and affiliated Pollyanna societies and sunshine bands of the world I probably would deduce from that incident the hard and fast rule that honesty always pays, and that the reporter who follows this course will get a raise and live happily ever after. Only I do not believe any such thing. Honesty is the best policy if you do not want too much. For the reporter who aspires to be known as a good fellow, or who yearns to be comfortable always, or to win the favor of wealthy and powerful persons, or to shine in society, or to be offered a fat job with a public utility corporation, a policy of fearlessly seeking and accurately reporting the truth is not only bad—it is wholly fatal. It may even cost him the job he has. Honesty is the best policy only for that type of reporter, who, if he had to make a choice, would rather drive a truck and keep his self-respect than dish up sugared lies and belong to three golf clubs.

And for that type of reporter, I have a rule which I recommend. It was given to me many years ago in the form of personal advice from one of the truly great editors of this generation. He said: "Never willingly allow yourself or your news paper to be used as the means for misinforming or misleading readers who are dependent on you for correct information. To do so is to betray the highest duty of your profession."

The reporter who would live up to that rule must be always vigilant, because many will try to impose on him. He must have courage, because he will incur enmity of persons who can aid or injure him. He must exercise intelligence, because the difference between the false and the true is not always clear, and many there are who labor to confuse them. He must be proof against temptation, because the influences which benefit from deception often have much to offer, while the public has nothing to give except its confidence. He must not be too ambitious, because the man who seeks to use him may be a friend of the man who owns the paper.

If you are an honest reporter, your duty is clear. When any person, no matter how exalted, utters for publication a statement which you know to be untrue, or which would present the facts in a false light, either refuse to print it or print with it the facts which expose its false or misleading character.

Thus, when a president of the United States delivers an utterance for the purpose of showing that his administration has been devoted to rigid economy and the reduction of public expenditures, duty requires that you print what he says. But it also requires that you print, along with what he says, the actual figures which show that government expenditures under his administration have increased every year except one. Otherwise you may allow yourself and your newspaper to be used as the means of misleading the readers who are dependent on you and it for correct information on a very important subject.

Or when a vice-president of the United States, attacking the rules of the Senate, asserts that those rules enables one or two senators to defeat the will of the other ninety-four or ninety-five by indulging in unlimited speech, you should print what he says. But in fairness you should print with it the fact that under the rules cloture can be invoked at any time by a two-thirds vote. Otherwise your reader may get a false picture of the condition.

When a secretary of agriculture issues a statement condemning the debenture plan of farm relief as unsound and unworkable, he is entitled to have it printed. But the reader is entitled to know at the same time that the departmental experts whom he designated to appear before the Senate Committee on Agriculture ten days earlier pronounced the plan sound, and declared it had worked successfully in Germany, Sweden, and Denmark. Not only will this supplement the reader's information, but it may serve to arouse his curiosity about public men and their motives—always a desirable accomplishment.

When a secretary of state embarks upon a policy of sending the marines to intervene in the domestic affairs of a smaller country, and explains it on the ground that he is protecting American life and property, print his explanation. And print with it the fact that no American citizen had been harmed and no American property damaged up to the time he took that action. Your reader, who is also a taxpayer, is entitled to know that; moreover, he is entitled to know that the disturbance in that country originated in the efforts of a New York financial house to obtain possession of the National Bank and the national railway of that country. It is not necessary to use such words as "imperialism"—just give the facts. The reader can determine for himself whether it is imperialism.

Having presented these hypothetical cases, for, of course, they were all purely hypothetical, I purpose to cite some actual examples which will illustrate the type of reporting of which I complain, and reporting as I think it should be done.

Truth cannot breathe except in the air of freedom. Censorship is poison to honest journalism. Nothing should arouse a reporter so quickly as an attempt to tamper with his facts. He should resist it and attack it without mercy and without delay with the most effective weapon at his disposal, publicity.

Soon after the presidential election last year, President-Elect Hoover sailed for South America on a tour of good will. With him on board the battleship Maryland were some twenty reporters, most of them from Washington. From time to time those of us who remained at home remarked that the dispatches seemed curiously tame and lifeless. Eventually a startling rumor reached the Capitol. We heard that our colleagues' copy was being censored. It was said that George Barr Baker, magazine writer and a former war-time censor, had been taken along for that purpose, and that no story should be filed from the ship unless it had been read and o. k.'d by Mr. Baker. Such a report seemed incredible. But we were all sure that if it was true out of the twenty men on the Maryland there would be at least one who would expose it by sending the full story to his paper the first time the ship landed at a port where there was a cable office. Weeks passed, many landings were made, and no such story appeared, so most of us concluded that the rumor was only a rumor. Finally our colleagues returned, and to our amazement informed us that the story was true in every detail. It was a fact that not a line of copy had been sent from the Maryland on the downward trip, or from the Utah on the return boyage, until it had been read and formally o. k.'d by Mr. Baker. Changes had been made, facts had been omitted, entire passages had been deleted. To be sure, it was claimed that Mr. Baker had not made the changes with his own hand, he had merely "suggested" them to the men who wrote these stories. Well, we are not children, there are sug-

gestions and *suggestions*, but when one comes from the individual who has the power of life and death over the story it has better than an even chance of being adopted by a reporter who is under the necessity of getting something to his paper. I talked to any number of these men and I have yet to hear of an instance when such a "suggestion" was ignored.

I have no desire to be hard on the boys for that. They were, as we say, under the gun. They knew they had not been sent on the assignment merely to enjoy the salt sea breezes. They had to get something through, even at some cost to their independence and self-respect. But what puzzled me was the fact that not a single one of them cabled the story of the censorship to his paper when the opportunity arrived. What shocked me was subsequently to hear some of them actually defend the practice. Oh, the specious, sophistical, glib and ingenious excuses that men can devise for manhandling the truth! I heard it argued in connection with this incident that Mr. Hoover occupied the role of host to the newspaper men, and that hence courtesy required them not to write anything which might displease him. I heard it argued that since they were on board by his consent they were really semi-official members of the mission, and hence were under an obligation to do nothing which might impede or defeat the main purpose of the mission. I heard the theory advanced that since they were members of the party of which Mr. Hoover was chief they were responsible to him for their conduct. That is what happens when men begin substituting fancy notions for plain facts, and highfaluting poppycock for common sense.

The plain fact was that the men were not guests of anybody. They were on board a United States battleship, on which their way was being paid by their papers. They were neither official nor semi-official members of any mission; they were reporters assigned to cover an important story. The only duty which they owed was their usual duty to their papers and the readers of their papers. There was no justification for any intrusion or invasion or interference between them and their home officers, and the very fact that an outsider claimed the right to read their copy before it was printed was an impertinence.

My purpose in reciting these facts is not to criticise Mr. Hoover's action in the matter. From what I have seen of his subsequent relations with the press and his attitude toward the press, I believe he realizes that it was a mistake, and I do not think that anything like it will occur again soon. I am dealing here with the actions of the reporters. I cited this as an example of where they failed.

Sycophant is an ugly epithet. One dislikes to apply it inside his own profession. Yet if I were asked to name what, in my opinion, is the most common weakness of the Washington correspondents, my answer would have to be "sycophancy." One of the most melancholy spectacles of the times is to see a man of sound brain and good heart abasing himself before some transient office-holder. It is a pitiful thing to see a capable reporter tying himself in abject knots day after day, stultifying his reputation and his conscience in the effort to defend and glorify every act of some public man or powerful individual, because the man may happen temporarily to occupy a place of influence, or because the reporter desires to ingratiate himself with the owner of his paper by making the news conform to the editorial policy, or because he wishes to fulfill a popular legend about some public figure. He, himself, probably is responsible in part for the growth of that legend. The towering myths which are erected about so many petty and puerile figures of the day are largely the creation of reporters. They take a little lawyer-politician who happens to be taciturn of speech, and on the simple circumstance of his taciturnity—a trait which he shares with

millions of men who can neither read nor write—they rear the image of a mighty and inscrutable Buddha.

War is declared. It becomes instantly necessary to raise billions with which to carry it on. Taxes are increased tremendously. Everyone is made to feel the drain. Then comes peace, and with it a change of administration. Since high taxes are no longer necessary, there is nothing to do but reduce them. An era of great prosperity comes on and very naturally produces a surplus in the treasury. The surplus is applied to the national debt, because the debt must be paid and there is nothing else to do with the surplus. And, lo, around the secretary of the treasury who advocated a reduction that was inevitable, and who disposed of the surplus in the only manner that was available, the reporters proceed to create the legend of a statesman of finance second in stature only to Alexander Hamilton. I ask, Is it fair to the readers of the newspapers?

Let me direct your attention to an example of reporting which is proceeding right under your eyes—the covering of the inquiry which is being conducted by the Senate judiciary committee into the eligibility of Secretary Mellon. There is a federal statute which provides that no man shall be eligible to hold office as secretary who is directly or indirectly concerned or interested in carrying on a business of trade and commerce. Now, for the purposes of this discussion I am not interested in the wisdom of the law, or Mr. Mellon's eligibility under it. I am interested in the manner in which the inquiry is being reported by the newspapers and the press associations. When the inquiry began some members of the committee suggested that Mr. Mellon be called to tell the extent and character of his business connections. Other members objected on the ground that this would be an indignity to Mr. Mellon. Finally, Senator Reed of Pennsylvania, who is closely associated with Secretary Mellon, was requested to obtain the information for the committee. He complied by presenting a letter in which Mr. Mellon reiterated his previous statement that upon entering the Cabinet he had resigned from all corporate offices and directorates. In emphasizing the completeness of his withdrawal from their affairs, he said that the situation since he entered the Cabinet has been "just the same as if I had died." Less than a week later Senator Walsh of Montana produced a deposition given by Mr. Mellon in 1925 in which, describing events which occurred after he entered the Cabinet, he told of participating in a number of conferences which determined the outcome of a very important business deal between the James B. Duke electric power interests and the Aluminum Company of America, of which Mr. Mellon and his family are virtually the sole owners. Officers and attorneys of both companies came to Mr. Mellon's home in Washington to discuss the matter with him. One such conference, he said, began with dinner and ended at 2 o'clock in the morning. Subsequently he accompanied them on the trip to Canada where they inspected the water power site which was the object of the negotiations. I am not interested in whether this activity constituted a violation of the statute. I am interested in the contrast between Mellon's deposition and Mr. Mellon's letter. I contend that this degree of activity on the part of a man who "had died" would be remarkable, so remarkable as to provide material for a first class news story. Yet so far as I can learn not one newspaper in the United States has called attention to the apparent conflict between the deposition to which Mr. Mellon swore in 1925 and the letter which he wrote in 1929.

Those of you who have followed this story have doubtless observed that the writers frequently refer to the statute as "a century old law." The implication is the law is antiquated. True, it is more than a century old. It is nothing like as old as the laws against murder and treason. I should be greatly surprised to pick up a newspaper and find a story beginning like this: "John Smith, 35, a boilermaker's

helper, was arrested last night in the act of driving away in a stranger's automobile. Prosecuting authorities contend that his action constituted a violation of the 10,000-year-old law against larceny. At the time when this law was incorporated into the state codes of this country as a vestige of the old English common law, automobiles had not been invented, and Mr. Jones' attorney indignantly declared that an attempt to stretch it to cover a situation like that in which his client was involved last night is grossly unreasonable, and could only be inspired by a desire to persecute and harass him."

Such a story, however, would be perfectly justified if the age of a law can be advanced as a reason for failing to enforce it. It is an interesting circumstance that, at the very moment the Senate judiciary was deciding that Mr. Mellon's status as a stockholder in numerous corporations directly affected by his official actions had no bearing on his qualifications, the interstate commerce committee of the Senate was requiring Gen. Charles Saltzmann, appointed by President Hoover to the Radio Commission, to divest himself of every share of stock in every enterprise which might be affected by his official action before it could report favorably on his confirmation. Neither Gen. Saltzmann nor anyone else intimated that he was being persecuted or that the statute defining his qualifications had become obsolete in the three years since its enactment.

Now, the very thing which I feared when I ascended this platform has happened. I can see you saying to yourselves: "This fellow is just a common scold. He is against everybody, and nobody can do anything to suit him. I think I will go out and get a breath of fresh air."

But, wait, you are mistaken. I know there have been honest reporters. There has been lots of good reporting—I have done some of it myself. I may even overcome my native modesty sufficiently in a few minutes to describe some of it to you, but first let me speak of some other examples.

Many years ago, when I was a very young and very callow cub, two men were covering the City Hall in St. Louis. One was Grattan Kerans of the Post-Dispatch and the other was the late Archie Webster of the Star. As an individual each ranked among the top-notch reporters that I have known, and, working together, they comprised the most brilliant team it has ever been my good fortune to see in action. Several years prior to the time of which I speak, a wealthy resident of the city had died and in his will provided that a very large portion of his estate should be used to endow a hospital in which patients would be charged according to their ability to pay. Years passed, the estate grew in value and the profits accruing to those administering it increased substantially. But no hospital appeared.

One day Webster and Kerans were looking over the books of the tax assessor. They noted that a very valuable estate was exempt from taxes on the ground that it was used for philanthropic purposes. This led to further inquiry whereby they ascertained the conditions under which the bequest was made, and they found that during all the years it had been exempt from taxation it had been returning a handsome profit for some very prominent citizens. Webster and Kerans asked the assessor how long the execution of such a bequest could be delayed while claiming tax exemption. The assessor replied that it was a matter of law which the city counselor would have to determine. So Webster and Kerans did a very clever thing. They approached the city counselor for a ruling, but not on this case. They didn't mention this case. They felt that the names of the citizens involved might cause the official to be cautious. The case they put before him was a hypothetical case, and the object of the charity was an orphanage. In every other respect, however, it was an identical parallel to the case which they found on the books of the tax assessor. The question

which they asked was, how long could the trustees claim exemption from taxation on charitable grounds while delaying to put the charity into effect? Since it was only a hypothetical case, the city counselor was not loathe to display his legal erudition. They induced him to set a limit, which he did, and the period which he defined as "a reasonable length of time" happened to be considerable shorter than the period which had already elapsed in the case in which they were interested.

Webster and Kerans were so enamored of this legal gem that they besought the counselor to let them publish it. Would he be good enough to put it in writing over his signature? He would, and he did, gladly.

Back to the assessor they went with the ruling. It fit the case on his books like a glove fits the hand. They asked him what he had to say for publication. Of course there was only one thing for him to say, and he said it. He announced that unless steps were immediately taken to carry out the terms of the bequest, he would assess the estate as private property. Webster and Kerans had their story, and they went to it. Of course, both the assessor and the city counselor appeared in the light of vigilant and determined public servants, and, having been made heroes, there was nothing left for them but to live up to their reputation. Work on the hospital was commenced within the year. It stands today as a magnificent monument to the generosity of the donor, and to the devotion and resourcefulness of two reporters who saw in their jobs an opportunity to do something more than merely report what they heard and saw. I have spoken of the reporter's reward. Archie Webster did not die in a comfortable bed in the hospital whose erection he had so expedited. He died alone, in a rented room, without doctor or nurse, a thousand miles from home, and broke. They found his body the following day. But I knew Arch, and I know he had got the rewards which he prized the most.

I have said it is the duty of the reporters to do something more than merely observe and record what comes his way. Genuine devotion to the truth demands far more than that. The truth is not always to be found on the surface; it cannot be picked off like peaches from a tree. There are concealed truths, the existence of which is but faintly indicated on the surface. It is the reporter's business to get at them, nevertheless.

In November, 1926, an ordinary Washington correspondent saw in the morning papers a story which puzzled and interested him. It stated on its own authority, without attributing the accusation to any official source whatever, that the government of Mexico was engaged in disseminating Bolshevistic propaganda throughout Central America, apparently with the aim of establishing a Bolshevistic hegemony between the United States and the Panama Canal. The more this reporter thought of it, the more he was convinced that some very unusual circumstances must be at the bottom of it. So he made it his business to find out. He found out that a high official of the State Department had called the representatives of three press associations to his office and requested that they print such a story. He declined to furnish evidence supporting it, and he emphatically forbade them to attribute the story either to him or the department. One of the reporters acquiesed in this request. The story in question was the result. The reporter who had made it his business to get to the bottom of it published the whole story. The effect upon the conduct of affairs at the State Department was prompt and salutary.

Last year a very ordinary Washington correspondent became interested in the fact that of three million dollars worth of Liberty bonds accumulated by the notorious Continental Trading Company, only $230,000 worth had been traced to their destination, and they had been traced to former Secretary of the Interior Fall. What had become of the remaining $2,770,000 worth was a mystery which nobody

seemed interested in solving. So this reporter decided to interest himself in solving it. Eventually, partly as a result of his efforts, a Senate investigation was ordered and the missing bonds were traced. The consequences were of huge import. Robert W. Stewart, head of the Standard Oil Company of Indiana, was identified as one of the recipients, and was indicted for contempt of the Senate and perjury. He was acquitted in both cases, but was ousted from his position at the head of a billion dollar corporation. Harry M. Blackmer was identified as another recipient and was indicted for falsifying his tax returns. As a further result of this inquiry, more than two million dollars in taxes has been recovered by the government and additional recoveries are expected. The other participants in the jackpot were identified as Harry Sinclair and James O'Neil. Stewart and O'Neil have made restitutions, Blackmer is a fugitive in France, and the delectable Mr. Sinclair lolls grandly in the Washington jail. Another example of where a reporter went out of his way to get the truth. The reporter who gets the truth is always going out of his way.

How then shall we finally characterize the business of a reporter? Does it offer an ideal worthy to be dignified by a genuine sacrifice? Does it require the best gifts which a man or woman can bring to the service of a profession? The ideal which it offers is the unending search for truth. There is no higher. For the fulfillment of its function, it demands courage, intelligence, devotion, incorruptibility, and the divine curiosity which has been behind every ascending movement of the human race since the first Neanderthal man lifted his head to gaze at the stars. For myself I have no greater ambitions than those to which a reporter does and should aspire. If man is ever free, it will be because he knows the truth, and if he knows the truth it will be because there were honest reporters.

When the inevitable day arrives, and this gaunt, limp, form is cut down and carted away from the gallows to its last melancholy resting place in the potter's field, my only wish is that some old subscriber touched by a little feeling of gratitude will stick a clean shingle in the earth to mark the spot inscribing thereon these simple but moving words:

"Forty Years a Reporter—Dead he lies here now, but nobody ever caught him at it while he was alive."

The News We Print and Why

BY A. L. MILLER

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Long ago, even before the banner headline had blossomed into its full flower and fragrance, Dooley said, "Sin is news and news is sin and there ain't nawthin' interestin' in bein' good." For the most part, news is the unusual and if it turns out that a good deal of the unusual is sinful, I should think that disclosure would be rather an eloquent testimonial to the fact that good behavior is so prevalent as to be commonplace and not, therefore, newsy. One of our editors wrote a vigorous reminder upon this point not long ago which struck me as sound reasoning and helpful public advice. A youth had been found in a particularly vicious crime. The newspaper follow-up of those inevitable questions to which the public subjects its news—"What? Where? Who? When? How? and Why?"—had disclosed that the boy was a regular Sunday school attendant. There followed, soon after, an effort on the part of those interested in Sunday schools to vindicate the reputation of Sunday schools from the discredit supposed to have been put upon them by the story. The editor advised the Sunday school people to cease their worry and apply their efforts in directions more needful of attention. If, he said, it were at all the common thing for Sunday school boys to deal in abhorrent crime, there would not be much news in that feature of the story when the crime was committed. A known gangster and a known pervert are expected to run true to form. It is when the criminal champions virtue, truth and decency, and when the Sunday school boy turns criminal, that the natural curiosity over unexpected happenings finds news in the reversal of form. The editor, in his sound exposition of the truth which lies behind some news values, was merely repeating what another editor once said when asked to explain why so much was made of the news of a minister's fall from grace into disgrace. "A spot," said he "shows up bigger and blacker on a white shirt front than in surroundings habitually grimy."

I want here to enter the stipulation, by way of correcting a misunderstanding possible to be drawn from what I have already said, that I am not a party to the belief that scandal is news because it is scandal, or that scandal and crime are the choicest wares in the editor's news exhibit, or that sin is the newsiest news; or, much less, that it is the only news.

It is necessary, however, to recognize the fact that a good deal of the news is sensational; not, primarily, because it is sensational but because the sensational is the unusual. The newspapers are not responsible for this fact. They did not make it a fact. They deal with it—some of them—as they find it; others take it as they find it and enlarge upon it and exploit it. The fact exists in the public. Do not go to the newspaper for an abstraction on what news is; go to the people; see what they are interested in. And, if you want to know the order in which the news story is to be told, listen to John Smith tell it, naturally, to his neighbors and friends. His shadings and inflections, his grammar and diction, his statement of truth may not be scientifically correct, but his cataloging of the elements of value in the story, in their relation to each other, will be about right, if it happens to be his mission to be the first bearer of the news to his audience. And in thus arranging his revelations in their order of importance, he will merely be answering his own natural questions and his hearer's natural questions, as curiosity and interest bring these questions forward.

Other than the complaint that the weather is eccentric and is mostly unsatisfactory, I suppose there is no burden of woe more constantly brought up for discussion than that the press is sensational and that its distinguishing color is yellow.

I shall not attempt to deny the charge, because there is a better way of getting at it than denying it. I shall not attempt to excuse or condone it, to the extent to which the charge may be found to apply. There are sensationalism and yellowness and morbidity and a filthy pandering after patronage in some newspapers. No question about it. The fact is sad and it is serious. It contains a social menace. However, I ask you what the Press, that institution made so broadly inclusive by the capitalized word, is? Is it some newspapers or all of them? Is it only the shrieker and hawker of filth and scandal and crime, that runs its business on the same ethics as does the gent who offers a pornographic peep-show, or is it also those hundreds of sane, decent, thoughtful, earnest journals, great and small, which, being neither prudish nor prurient, render to a human world a newspaper service which reflects the run of humanity's news against a background of decent thoughtfulness for the proprieties and for real standards of value? Are these, also, the Press?

And if they are, are they considered when somebody thunders an indictment against the Press for sins of sensationalism and inaccuracy? And if they are not so considered, if allowance is not made for the vast area of decency and responsibility which contrasts to the areas of indecency and irresponsibility, in making up the high-sounding arraignments of the Press, what influence is it which brings these unfair and unjustified arraignments about?

I submit that most of the fault-finding of the Press is the product of that same appetite for selection and distortion for which the Press is blamed—the picking out of the most sensational, and therefore, the most newsy fact and making it the substance of the whole story. I submit that these broadside criticisms reflect that rule on account of which the critics of the Press most condemn the Press—that sin is news and news is sin and there ain't nawthin' interestin' in bein' good.

I question whether your home paper is very sensational. I know mine is not. I question whether your home paper is not operated, throughout, by people who feel their responsibilities very keenly, who daily turn back a vast volume of inconsequential, but perhaps newsy, sensationalism, which lacking actual importance, might deeply wound personal feelings, might start community strife, might unnecessarily stir up prejudices, might plant heartaches in homes, might incite youth or childhood off toward unhealthy paths. Not so long ago there came to my attention the story of the death of a child by gunshot wound, under circumstances which might have been construed as suicide and, being so construed, might have been made into a highly "interesting" story of the play of certain elemental human passions. Socially, the story lay in rather high places. The coroner, a friend of mine, called me up and gave me my first information on the case. He said he had gone deeply into it; he had recognized the possibilities for construing it as suicide, but he felt sure that the explanation of accident was much more logical because of the extreme unlikelihood that childhood would plan self-destruction—and he feared the influence on child minds in general, especially those of morbid or mentally unstable tendencies, if the most sensational construction were put upon the story. After pondering it for considerable time, he had assumed to call up and he apologized for what he feared might represent presumption. I called the city editor and asked him about the story. He said it was already in type and that the reporter who got it, the desk which handled it, and the city department which conferred upon it all agreed without hesitation that the proper duty to childhood was to put the least sensational, though certainly not the most newsy, construction upon the story. "We all suggested and we all agreed," the city editor said, "that if we reached out after the suicide theory in this story, which in our opinion the facts as applied to so childish a victim did not warrant, we would have planted a poisonous suggestion in minds of many children,

likely to breed terrible results somewhere, through some fit of childish passion." The conference and conclusion had been entirely routine—a minor part of the day's work.

I think this is a fair example, and by no means an extraordinary one, of the processes which go into the routine handling of news on hundreds of papers, large and small—daily processes as automatic as any other of those which produce gentility and decency in society. I reiterate that these things and the product of them in the making of decent journalism should be incorporated into the measure of the character of the Press as an institution. I protest having the press judged for its sensationalism by judges who do exactly what they condemn the Press for doing—seize upon and play up the morbid and the scandalous, and forget the common examples of good behavior. I question whether this thoughtfulness and care of selection are not going on constantly in your home paper. I know they are in mine, and mine claims no halo because of it; claims nothing else than that it is functioning according to the best light of the young people who operate it and in the way best calculated to earn them their own self-respect. I know this to be generally true of the newspapers of my state. There may be exceptions. Unquestionably there are mistakes of judgment, hastily made, and afterward becoming the basis of new lessons of experience. I suspect that your home paper is daily, constantly, building toward a better civic conscience, a more alert sense of citizenship, a livelier feeling of community responsibility. I know it is true of my home paper; I know it is generally true of the papers of my state. I see the same thing reflected in many of the larger journals that I read. Not in all of them, to be sure. I grant you there are panders and perverts in the newspaper business today. I grant you that the doctrine of letting the public have what it wants is being applied in some places, and on some occasions, in the newspaper business with no higher ethics and no more choice motives than those of the pander who lurks in the alley to sell dope or act as a come-on for vice. I grant you that. And I grant you that the wages of this filthy viciousness are loudly proclaimed, in some quarters, as "success", and as "popularity," and as "influence". I merely call attention to the fact that no one newspaper, and no class of newspapers, is that capitalized institution, the Press. And I insist upon incorporating into the argument the fact that the decencies of the Press are quite as much a part of its character as its indecencies—and more so, rather than less so, by reason of the fact that they are common enough to be commonplace, and commonplace enough not to be as newsy in affording comments on the character of journalism, as the sometimes examples of newspaper yellowness.

Our job is to take news as it comes. There is nothing about our business which we tell our clients so regularly and so insistently as this. Ours is not to reason why; ours is but to do or die—in the presentation of news.

The statement is both true and untrue. It sometimes is most untrue where most loudly uttered. Where most insistently used as a confession of faith it sometimes is most flagrantly the disguise of bunk, and sinister intent.

Selection and emphasis are a part of our job of publishing the news. Therefore we do use opinion and therefore we do apply shadings—and therefore we may sometimes become, not the impartial mirror of events which we claim to be, but hawkers of fancy wares, caterers to queer and not always healthy appetites. Sometimes we may become so obsessed of our own opinions, spites, grudges, and isms, as to poison our so-called news selection with propaganda, and daily feed our clientele upon incitements to misunderstanding, prejudice and passion, done through the selection and arrangement we have made of the news and the twists in the application of our own opinions we have given it. I have seen examples of this. I have wondered

what the outcome would be in a country ruled by public opinion and with public opinion molded in part by the printed word. But again I say these examples are not the press as a whole, and the Press as a whole is not to be judged wholly by these examples.

Since we cannot say that we publish all the news and since all that we can truthfully say is that we publish a selected portion of the news arranged in what we believe to be the order of its interest and importance, then our mission as news-tellers becomes rather less automatic than we sometimes say it is, and certainly more invested with social responsibility than is sometimes admitted.

What news shall we select and why? How shall we tell it and why? By and large we shall select what John Smith would consider interesting enough to tell to his neighbors, and we shall tell it about in the order in which he would tell it, but this comparison has its qualifications. John Smith can gossip; he can deal in small scandal; he can relay hearsay and unsupported rumor. We should not do so. What is set down in print and taken into the home as news ought to be true, worth telling and safe to listen to.

How many times have we had the experience of dealing with current rumor, so currently repeated as to pass as fact, and yet so wholly unsupported by reliable evidence, so completely disproved upon scientific investigation, as to be unworthy of credence. How often, under those circumstances, have we heard the newspaper condemned for its lack of enterprise to gather or its lack of courage to print the news. I recall that once during the war days when our community was obsessed by a string of rumors of a most sensational nature and currently repeated by people who should have known better, it became necessary for us to make a compilation of these wild tales and, briefly summarizing each in a box on the first page, to follow each with the statement: "This is a lie. It has been fully investigated. There is no truth nor part of truth in it. When you hear it you are hearing a lie no matter who tells it to you or where or how he says he heard it. When you repeat it you are repeating a lie, no matter where or how you say you got it."

That stopped the "big news."

This is an application of our responsibility as reliable tellers of news and as agents of the social welfare.

The same responsibility demands, of course, that there be no suppression of the news which the public has a right to know and no distortion of the truth in the telling of it.

John Smith can and probably will, be verbose, disconnected, inclined to repeat. Our printed news story must go straight to the point and the point must be the truth.

My own opinion as to what a newspaper should print, and how and why, could not serve as a final judgment for all newspapers. It is, after all, only my own opinion. Newspapers must be kept free from narrow individual opinion. Newspaper publishing is a public trust which no one's whims or aims should control to a point where a broad respect for the opinion of others and particularly of the public's right and needs does not operate.

Personally, as a newspaper reader, I should not want my paper to be too good nor too bad. I would want it to be human, and decently so. I would not want it to set up a despotic guardianship over my consciousness. I would not expect it to eliminate crime news and pretend to me that there is no crime. I would not want it to ask me to join it in the process of self-hypnotism of supposing that there is no crime of interest and consequence capable of making the first page, but that in our Edenic existence all crime had been reduced to the status of the lower, right-hand inside. I respect the right of those who do prefer that kind of elimination and selection and

I greatly admire the high degree of respectability which is expressed in the existing examples of that character of journalism. I merely submit that, to me, that kind of selection and elimination do not quite make a newspaper, not quite produce the news. I should expect my newspaper to come to my home as a genteel friend of the family would come—willing to tell about, and discuss, what's going on, and giving to events their natural order of importance—but not yelling and drooling over vice and crime; presenting the morbid or the sinful story as a duty rather than as a pleasure; as a fact rather than as an entertainment—and always with a gentleman's regard for the fact that there are women and children present. I do not care to have my newspaper friend, or my personal friend, be a prude; neither shall I seek my friends among the dealers in mental garbage.

I think that one of our faulty tendencies as newspaper people is to become too highly professionalized. Too much of the day's news is seen through the office window and too little of it out among people. We know the patter of our craft too well and we do not know people well enough. Too many reporters are being trained on the city hall and the sport beats and not enough through wide contacts with every day, wholesome folks, as they go about their every-day affairs. Too many news stories are taken off the regular news blotters—and too few dug up by reportorial curiosity from the highways and by-ways.

By and large, I think there is too much worship among us, professionally, of big news, and not enough recognition of the value of small news.

A maxim of journalistic training, it seems to me, should be: Be sane, be human, be sympathetic, be accurate, be fair, be decent—and let those who will, be clever!

A fact which pulsates through almost every one of our day's activities is that this is a new world, made over in a decade or so, and still in a dizzy process of remaking. How many profound editorials we have written upon this truth, no figure could compute. It is a truth which influences, molds, possesses our business more than does any other fact. We are functioning to this new world with its new ideas, customs, demands, interests. We are trying to give it the correct picture of itself. We cannot pretend it is the old world. We cannot profitably spend much time lamenting that changes have come. We can deal with things as they are. Providence will have to help, because only Providence can help, the man who thinks things are as they were.

In this changing world, however, with its changed demands for news topics, news features, entertainment features and the treatment of the news—its new standards and its new interest—certain fundamentals do not change. Truth, decency, righteousness, a man's duty to government and society as proportioned to his influence—these things do not change. And these things shall, if we are worthy of our calling, guide us as we go about our function as reporters and interpreters of this wonderland of a modern world.

And this new world is pressing upon us exceptions to a rule that the sensational and sinful is news of the first order. I think we find that there is a very large and keen interest in knowledge for the sake of knowledge. New facts in science, old facts in history, new truths about social adjustments, new possibilities for human welfare and happiness can be told as news and can on occasion earn, on their news value a first page position.

There is, I believe, an increasing need in journalism for journalists who are college trained and who bring to this profession not only a professional equipment in cultural education, but a professional sense of a journalist's responsibilities to society.

I can point the students of journalism to a great news story and a great editorial theme, available today: Your own home community fifty years ago and now. The pioneers and the scope of their privilege, and what they could see and do and enjoy and have in a day. From the simplest detail of clothes and of household convenience to the broadest aspect of their life. And then, your own daily privilege, measured in any or all of those details in which the capacities and liberties of this day's life are expressed. This is the news story. Lay the measure of comparison upon your day and father's day, and grandfather's day and so back to the beginning of things. This is the news story—not in big words and generalities and the common platitudes which we use so freely—but in the definitio n of the intimate, every-day privileges of life.

Big news stories suggest editorial comment. This one does. What are we doing to preserve, defend, to carry on; to be worthy the privilege; to be promoters of progress and insurers of its continuance, rather than dead-head passengers whose weight and disregard may break down or wear out the machinery?

I sat recently in the newspaper gathering addressed by the president of the United States and with entire approval heard him solemnly say:

"I have accepted this occasion for a frank statement of what I consider the dominant issue before the American people. Its solution is more vital to the preservation of our institutions than any other question before us. That is the enforcement and obedience to the laws of the United States, both federal and state."

With equal approval I heard him emphasize this point of our peculiar responsibility as perveyors of information and as clarifiers, if not leaders, of thought, to help build and sustain a respect for law. Touching on our duty and opportunity toward government he said:

"There is another and vastly wider field than the nature of laws and the methods of their enforcement. This is the basic question of the understanding, the ideals, the relationship of the individual citizen to the law itself. It is in this field that the press plays a dominant part. It is almost final in its potency to arouse the interest and consciousness of our people. It can destroy their finer sensibilities or it can invigorate them."

We are living in, and as newspaper publishers, we are interpreting, a civilization so marvelously advanced in privilege that it has become a stale platitude though none the less the truth, to describe it as the greatest the world has ever known, or as greater than any of which the world has dreamed.

Somebody sacrificed, to build a government; somebody said a difficult "no" when an easy "yes" was indicated. Somebody sacrificed to plant the wilderness. Somebody saw a vision and held true to it—at a high cost. Out of this has come our present possession. We cannot have, without giving.

What we have now was prepared for us fifty years ago. What somebody else will have fifty years hence we are preparing now. We are not fortune's favorites, alone, but the future's trustees as well.

Mechanics, money, science do not make a civilization; character does.

Herein is an outline of our peculiar and particular responsibility as disseminators of news upon which public intelligence feeds and through which public opinion is formed and public action directed.

Write the news about our world, today, and its contrast to grandfather's day, and see then if the news does not write itself into an editorial reminder about the responsibilities of trusteeship.

The news that we print must be the faithful reflection of the significant, or entertaining, or the unique, in human affairs, presented with a decent regard for the proprieties.

"And why"—because it is required in our contract with our public that we print it.

———————

*The Relations of the Press and the Courts**

BY ANDREW R. SHERRIFF

Chairman, Committee on Co-operation of the Bar and the Press, American Bar Association, Chicago

Until recently the subject of the relation of the bar and the press has not been publicly discussed. In the last few years, however, it has been brought to the front and has spread over the country and over the world. We are now making some progress in solving the evils in the relations of the newspapers to our courts, which are the most defenseless institution in this country. I feel it will be the aim of modern journalism to bring the law into touch and into the respect of the American public.

Each generation has to learn for itself the weaving and improving of its social fabric. Being born into it, as children we take it all for granted, a permanent order of things, but advancing years and knowledge reveal it to be as weak and ephemeral as a structure of dry sand, were it not held together by the common sentiment and intelligence of loyal and enlightened members.

The greatest social boon to collective mankind today is, in my opinion, the honored institution known as the United States of America. It is a boon because the political principles of its government, and its traditional conduct are derived from the highest ethical and altruistic motives that have ever been known in the history of governments.

And let me call your attention to the expressed purpose which I think is the most exalted and most comprehensive of all. It is found in the preamble of the Constitution, where among the six purposes declared, the second is, "to establish justice."

Very little has ever been written about this particular phrase. Some thought it concerned the establishment of a system of courts, but it means much more than that. I feel it means that there should be some means of disseminating justice through all the functions of government. The administration of justice is the most important purpose of all purposes of government, and that is centered in our system of courts.

It has lately been intimated by our new president, in his inaugural address, that our judicial establishment is far less in its degree of efficiency than it should be.

And only two weeks ago, in an address on the subject before the annual meeting of the Associated Press in New York, Mr. Hoover said:

"Every student of our law enforcement mechanism knows full well that it is in need of vigorous reorganization."

In order to impress upon you the high importance of the relations of the press to the courts at this time, it is necessary for me to review briefly and with due reserve, the inadequate development of the judicial systems of our country, so you will see their present need for all the help and support they can get from the journalists.

Our federal courts system, in which we have about 130 judges, has grown up in a haphazard fashion. Each judge is vested with individual power, which he exercises as an individual. The system lacks strength and coherence of an organized judiciary.

The same is true of our state systems. We have never had a scientific system of organized courts. There are probably 3000 judges all over the country and each is an individual functionary. There is no organization, no centralization, no coherence.

In our large cities, the judges have not been selected for their judicial attainments. The selection is influenced by their political strength and affiliations more than by

*From notes taken in the course of an informal address.

their qualifications. A judge should be a lawyer of the highest legal atainments, but all too often he is not. In relatively few instances, either federal or state, has judicial quality been the controlling consideration in the selection of judges.

Until lately no attempt to establish administrative organization of courts has been made. Each judge is entirely independent of all others and there is little or no coherence among them. Many of them are naturally prone to personal and political inclinations, to the detriment of judicial efficiency. And with merely individual status, each judge is rather weak and defenseless against abuses practiced by the newspapers.

The time has come when these things are attracting public attention and discussion. There is the occasion for the knowledge of the press and understanding of all journalists of just what this situation is.

Of the three departments of government, our executive establishment is well organized and powerful.

Our legislatures have taken to themselves far greater powers of law-making than seem to have been originally intended, and have overwhelmed the people with a mountainous accumulation of statutory laws.

But our judicial department has developed only in a haphazard fashion, mainly by increasing the number of judges without organization; so that under the enormous accumulation of new laws, and new business created by the expanding demands of the commercial and property interests, and criminal activities, the courts have grown relatively weaker, and now in frequent instances they fail entirely to function.

The situation thus is critical, and calls for necessary remedies from all responsible sources among the citizenry of the country.

No one could ever accuse the journalists of the United States, as a class, of any lack of patriotism. Of course, as in every class, there is an irresponsible or ignorant minority. But journalists, like all the rest of us, are citizens and patriots at heart, and therein lies the security of the nation.

We are said to be a self-governing country. This phrase had its origin in the popular interpretation of government by elected representatives. But in these days it is assuming a much more personal significance. The more multiplied and complex that social relations grow, the less capable is a democratic government to regulate them. Thus the duty devolves more and more upon individuals and groups to regulate themselves, and intelligent citizens are disposed to assume it. That process is advancing with manifest vigor among the various groups of our people today, and is a sound assurance of the perpetuation of our political society.

One of the conspicuous groups is the journalists. In ages past it clothed itself in the mysterious name, "The Fourth Estate," and thereby obscured the identity of its members. But today, through the influence of the schools of journalism, it is taking on the form and substance of an openly responsible and expert profession. That is as it should be, a gratifying fact.

These various groups, instead of clashing, and making themselves an added burden on our already overworked government, are wisely seeking to co-ordinate themselves. And I believe the journalist group is earnestly endeavoring to co-ordinate itself with the interests and functions of the judiciary, instead of cluttering and impeding them.

How can this be done? In the first place, the journalists should give themselves heart and soul to the plans of the president "to reorganize our law enforcement mechanism" when they become known.

But there are obvious channels already open for similar service. The bar associations in all the large cities are constantly endeavoring to improve the personnel of the bench and redeem it from the disasters of political control. The methods vary

in the different places. But all of them depend upon the support of the press and the public. If we could effectuate the selection of the right men as judges throughout the country, the weaknesses and defects of our judicial system would be more than half cured in that achievement alone.

But taking the courts as we find them, and the current of every day's activities, what are the transgressions of the newspapers?

Court news naturally lends itself, in frequent instances, to sensational treatment, which gives it a commercial value in circulation results. Thus if it involves any impropriety, the publisher stands between his financial interest on one side, as against his ethical interest on the other.

But this dilemma does not need to involve much embarrassment, since it is a frequent practice in newspaper offices actually to censor the paid advertising matter offered, and reject whatever seems harmful to the public.

In the same way and for the same reasons, I believe the journalists of this country are ready to moderate and adapt the composition of court news when the principles and standards for doing so become generally recognized. And this end is brought nearer through the establishment of the journalists as an identified profession.

For it is not to be thought that such things should be regulated by statutory laws in this country. That would be the measure of a dictatorship. It was only last week that the Italian government stepped into journalism with plans to regulate it. And the British Parliament passed laws about two years ago restricting stories of divorce cases. But such measures are uncongenial to American tradition. Here our groups are working out their own regulation and co-ordination.

One of the greatest evils complained of for generations is the so-called "trial by newspaper." Ever since newspapers have acquired a considerable circulation, they have indulged in this trespass on the courts, and for many years it has been condemned by publicists. It involves looking up suspects and evidence in advance of the trial, publishing such stories with the inferences and insinuations of the writers, and influencing the mind of the public, including prospective jurors. It is a species of arrogance of the worst type, rendering the court and the accused helpless, ousting them both from the functions of a judicial trial.

The Remus case illustrates the point that the newspapers acquitted him and then turned around and sent him to the insane asylum. The following letter from Charles P. Taft is indicative: "In my judgment, the Remus case demonstrates just one thing: that the newspapers acquitted Remus and have since turned around and sent him to the insane asylum." Mr. Taft was the prosecuting attorney in the case.

I think the days of this sort of journalistic practice are now perceptibly waning, and the sooner it dies, the better.

The process of abating "trial by newspaper" was considerably advanced in northern Illinois last month. In the course of a prohibition raid a woman had been killed by a shot, and one of the Chicago newspapers was determined that the deputy in charge of the raid should be held for criminal homicide. Whether this should have been done or not, as the case may have been, the newspaper campaign was so insistent and arrogant that the coroner's jury evidently resented it, and made haste to turn free the deputy who had been the object of this violent attack. It had worked as a boomerang.

The courts, as one of the most important organs of government, can function effectively only if they have the respect and confidence of the people. But the reporters often write up proceedings in courts so as to make them appear ridiculous. The instances of this are too numerous to need citation. The court is turned into a circus or a vaudeville show, by the stories. I think the trouble is that the reporters are capable of seeing only the sensational or the ludicrous side, only the froth, and are totally

unaware of the serious essentials of the case. For every case in court, with very rare exceptions, is brought forward on serious premises. But the reporters too often find it impossible to resist being facetious, or otherwise superficial and trivial.

There are many ways in which reporting of court news runs into harmful and degrading channels.

Among these is the publishing of light and romantic stories of criminals, using such terms as "bandit" and "highway gentry" to glorify low thugs. Admiring and sympathetic descriptions of female criminals and the playing up of witnesses in news stories has a harmful effect. All this tends to make crime attractive to people. It creates a false fascination. I believe this is going to be done away with.

The misrepresentation of law causes much damage. In Michigan the newspapers adopted the phrase, "A life for a pint," and thus gave the public a complete misrepresentation of the state's liquor laws.

I know of nothing more offensive than a long flaring and exaggerated headline, about a criminal or a crime. It is a frequent practice to bring up some trifle and exaggerate it into a long headline across the top of the front page. I do not believe the people want this sort of thing. It is for stirring up an appetite by the newspapers to get people to buy papers.

Another infringement is the spying and listening in on juries. Juries are a sacred institution of our common law and are entitled to have privacy in their deliberations. The "enterprising reporters" listen in on them with special instruments and disclose details of their proceedings, which are supposed to be absolutely secret.

Then we have the habit of taking photographs of courtroom scenes and criminals. This practice has been widely condemned as being inconsistent with our judicial system. This should be abolished, but who is going to abolish it?

This brings us back to the qualifications of our judges, because the judges themselves, and the lawyers, are much to blame for the conditions mentioned. In some places the courts have gone to bat with the newspapers and put the reporters and photographers in jail. These courts have begun to sit up and clothe themselves with some semblance of real dignity.

A safe rule for reporters of court news is: "The newspaper reporter may, truthfully, fairly, accurately, objectively, write down and describe in words for publication, every physical fact which he legitimately sees or hears in or about the proceedings."

Such a rule at the outset eliminates the play of imagination, exaggeration, effusion, distortion, deduction, conjecture, prediction, and all of the secondary mental processes often exercised upon the primary physical facts by ingenious reporters, which do havoc to litigants, courts, and processes of public justice, and inevitably tend to undermine public confidence in our judicial institutions through deliberate misrepresentation.

It has become very evident, during the last two or three years, that the essential importance of proper reporting of court news is becoming generally recognized. The people are greatly in need of sound education in all respects regarding our judiciary, particularly in view of its imminent reorganization. The press is the strongest popular influence to aid in the movement, and generally to uphold the public administration of law.

The perpetuity of the nation depends upon the power of the law, and its instrumentalities, the courts.

Entangling Alliances

BY GEORGE B. PARKER

Editorial Director, The Scripps-Howard Newspapers, New York City

In view of the title that has been assigned, "Entangling Alliances," I would like to read as an introduction an editorial appearing at the time of the death in 1926 of E. W. Scripps, founder of the organization which I represent here today.

The editorial said:

" 'That there is room in America for newspapers which represent only their readers; which represent no party, or club, or bloc—no special interest whatsoever.'

"Such was the philosophy of which E. W. Scripps less than half a century ago founded the largest group of newspapers the world has ever seen.

"The philosophy was novel at the time.

"Before that day, back in the seventies, there were newspapers aplenty.

"But the newspaper which did not frankly serve some interest or other, political or commercial, was so rare as to be negligible. The journalism of that day was the journalism of the party organ.

"To wear a label, to belong to a clique, was 'the thing' in newspaper making then. The greatest of the dailies were either Republican or Democratic. And those that did not specialize in politics spoke for the organized commercial interests of their day. The '5 per cent' of the newspaper reading public was amply represented; the '95 per cent' had no medium of expression.

"To be the friend in court of those who had no other spokesman—

"To know news and to print it, uninfluenced by those who wanted something put in or something kept out—

"To comfort the afflicted, on the theory that the comfortable could take care of themselves, but to deny hearing to none—

"To be independent, and good humoredly to stand the punishment that true journalistic independence brings from time to time—

"Those were the tools that E. W. Scripps took to his job forty-seven years ago, along with a little money, and an unlimited capacity to inspire men.

"The beginning was humble, as have been the beginnings of most things in America that have grown great.

"E. W. Scripps is dead.

"But the thought of an independent journalism, the thought with which he pioneered, will live on in the organization he founded, and in the journalism of America."

And now a quotation from the first issue of the Cleveland Press, published in 1878.

"What is your politics?" asked a certain Cleveland gentleman today of the editor of the Penny Press.

"The gentleman was told to look for his answer in the paper.

"Here it is:

" 'We have no politics, that is, in the sense of the word as commonly used. We are not Republican, not Democratic, not Greenback and not Prohibitionist. We simply intend to support good men and condemn bad ones, support good measures and condemn bad ones, no matter what party they belong to.

" 'We shall tell no lies about persons or policies for love, malice or money. It is no part of a newspaper's business to array itself on the side of this or that party, or fight, lie or wrangle for it. The newspaper should simply present all the facts the editor is capable of obtaining concerning men and measures before the bar of the

public, and then, after having discharged its duty as a witness, be satisfied to leave the jury in the case—the public—to find the verdict!"

Half a century after that first Scripps-Howard newspaper was founded, the organization had grown to twenty-five daily publications scattered from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf. But the basic principle has remained unchanged. It is the same today as it was in the beginning.

Robert P. Scripps, son of E. W. Scripps, and successor to him as controlling stockholder, recently was asked by a reader to express his views on this growth of chain newspaper ownership and on the journalistic ideal in general. His reply sounded the same keynote that had characterized the original conception. His letter said:

"It strikes me that the chief concern of the public with the newspaper press is that its motives shall be unmixed, that it shall have no special interests to serve. If a newspaper be dull and uninteresting, slow or inadequate in news coverage, poorly printed or otherwise physically deficient, people can easily and quickly mark such shortcomings—and read some other paper. The serious situation and one that takes long to recognize, is that of the newspaper whose owner, or owners, have personal axes to grind.

"Given a reasonable degree of intelligence and just the elements of technical training, it strikes me that the best qualification for a newspaper publisher—not necessarily from his own point of view, but certainly from the public point of view—is that he shall be exclusively a newspaper man, with all of his eggs in at least one kind of basket, and nothing to do but watch the eggs.

"With all of this in mind, and considering the careers of a number of successful newspaper men that I have known or know of, I have often wondered what other course than the course toward group operation successful journalism in this country could logically take.

"Consider the case of the man, usually young, who has actually succeeded in establishing a great and financially independent journal in any American city. He has necessarily created an organization in both editorial and business offices competent to carry on with little supervision—and if he is the sort of publisher who seeks to make his paper an institution, not simply a means of personal expression, he lets his associates function as freely as possible. He has created cash reserves and credit, and a reputation for political sagacity and leadership. He is not temperamentally fitted to play golf six days a week.

"If such a man sticks to his home town he will go into outside business, or into politics as an office seeker or 'boss,' in either case establishing outside and quite 'special' interests, so far as the trade of journalism is concerned—interests bound to react unfavorably upon his journalistic reputation, if not actually warp his journalistic judgment and integrity, in either case injuring his newspaper.

"What else then should such a man do except go to another community and start or buy another newspaper? If he does so, then we have two links at least in a 'chain.'

"I can recall discussing exactly this turning point in his own career with my father. Apparently one of his earliest determinations was that when he adopted the profession of journalism he adopted it for life and exclusively, to prosper or to fail by. When he found that he had acquired control of his Cleveland Press, that it could make reasonable profits and function editorially without his personal presence in the office except for short periods, and when he found that his chief diversions of reading and study failed altogether to satisfy, he was at a loss for something constructive to do. And so he launched what has become the Scripps-Howard group of newspapers, by going to Cincinnati to put a badly run down and then bankrupt daily on its feet.

"A common phrase, and in derogation of the newspaper, is 'foreign ownership.' Geographically it describes the situation fairly accurately. Local editors and business managers of Scripps-Howard newspapers, as well as many other partners, are considerable and influential stockholders. Nevertheless I live in Ohio and Connecticut and have, as trustee of the estate of E. W. Scripps, controlling voice in affairs and policies of newspapers in California, Tennessee, and other states.

"However, it is my feeling that fundamental journalistic obligations are the same all over this country, and that I am actually less of a foreigner in any newspaper field in America than is, for instance, a contemporary who holds and chiefly prizes public office as a member of a political party, or who is in the real estate or banking or some other outside business which has its special point of view, and of whose total assets his newspaper interests comprise only a minor part."

It chances that within the last week, revelations before the Federal Trade Commission in Washington brought forth the fact that a great power and paper company has been entering the field of newspaper ownership. I will ask your indulgence for the reading of just one thing more—our editorial expression on that event:

"The daily newspaper is an institution of general as distinct from class circulation. By its very nature therefore it must be single in purpose to be effective. Its mission is to serve all the public and not just part. Its range of influence is in direct ratio to its freedom from entangling alliances.

"The history of newspaper failures is thickly dotted with those which have violated that principle.

"Why?

"Simply because it is not within the range of human nature for a newspaper publisher successfully to serve two masters.

"Take a concrete case:

"Suppose you owned both a newspaper and a gas company. Could you be impartial in your editorial attitude toward the gas rate that your community pays?

"For the same reason that a brother of a man on trial is excluded from jury service, so outside interests, whether they be social, financial or political, must be excluded when one goes into newspaper publishing.

"The effort, therefore, of the International Paper and Power Company to inject itself into American journalism contains the germs of its own destruction.

"The International Paper and Power Company's major interest, by its own testimony, is power.

"To it, accordingly, that great truth will apply:

" 'Where its treasure is there will its heart be also.'

"The public instinctively will recognize that.

"And the public will write its own answer."

I am emphasizing singleness of purpose as so vitally important for the very simple reason that the newspaper like the human race is not perfect. It is subject to and susceptible to the same temptations as is the human race. If its put itself deliberately into the path of temptation, it, like any human being, is likely to yield. If it so organizes its operation as automatically to avoid temptation it very much helps itself toward success.

Outside interests of whatever sort are temptations that may and probably will lead to failure.

As I view it, E. W. Scripps' ideal was one of enlightened selfishness.

He wanted to succeed. He wanted his associates to succeed. He did not flatter himself that he and his associates were inherently any more ethical than anyone else. He did not have the holier-than-thou attitude.

He merely decided that chances for success were better if the course were routed through that part of the journalistic sea wherein the sirens of outside influence would not be encountered.

Having at the outset become thoroughly convinced of the wisdom of that idea, he so directed his whole operation in all its detail to accord with it.

As his fortune grew, instead of investing it in other forms of property, the ownership of which would warp his journalistic judgment, he simply started or purchased more newspapers.

One illuminating and rather amusing incident will illustrate the point:

Back in the early days of a struggling young newspaper, the question of a new building came up. Mr. Scripps told his business manager to look for a site. One was found for which the business manager was exceedingly enthusiastic. An option was secured. But E. W. Scripps decided that the paper could not yet afford to build. So the deal was called off much to the regret of the business manager. About a year later the business manager took rather bitter delight in informing Mr. Scripps that the site on which the option had been held and allowed to lapse had just been sold for $60,000 more than the option called for.

Without the slightest flicker of regret, E. W. passed the incident off:

"I don't care about that, you know. We aren't in the real estate business."

Realizing the value in terms of hard work, enthusiasm and loyalty, of ownership interest, he arranged for his operating officials to become stockholders in his newspapers, thereby making it possible for them, as the properties increased in value, to gain in the appreciation as well as the salary column. But he insisted that they confine their interests to the single purpose as he had.

And to perpetuate the stockholding in the active management of the newspapers, he created an option plan by which those who retire resell their stock, take the appreciation that has occurred during their regime of activity, the stock then being resold in turn to the new local management.

As he neared the close of his remarkable career, in order that the purpose which had been the unifying influence of his professional life might not end with him, E. W. Scripps established the trusteeship which is unique in the history of American journalism.

The essence of that trusteeship is to continue that which he had built up as a dedication for the future to the same single purpose—to journalism and to nothing else. With the exception of certain scientific bequests and certain personal provisions, the fortune that E. W. Scripps established and the income therefrom are committed to an unentangled and independent journalism.

I have centered this discussion around one personality for a definite reason, a reason inspired by the fact that I am addressing many who propose to make newspaper work their life calling, and out of the inspiration of the personality of E. W. Scripps I would say, if I were asked to phrase in one sentence the best formula I can think of for success in that undertaking:

Avoid journalistic bigamy. Be monogamous.

Difficulties and Costs of Gathering the World's News

BY HUGH BAILLIE

Vice-President, the United Press Associations

I believe it might be stated that at no time in the history of journalism has the news—all the news—been covered by American newspapers as thoroughly and comprehensively as it is today. The mandate of the American newspapers for this kind of news coverage has been passed on to the press associations, which, consequently, are exerting tremendously greater and more expensive efforts in gathering and distributing the news than they ever attempted before.

I doubt that many of us realize the tremendous increase in news gathering organization and machinery which has been necessitated by the demand of the press of this country for greater and greater news coverage from all parts of the world. The press associations have multiplied their efforts in all directions and of course the costs at the same time have increased tremendously. The papers show a constant demand for more channels of communication in order to insure speedy delivery of the dispatches which are brought in from every part of the world and to insure practically instantaneous delivery of race results, stock market quotations, baseball games play by play, and all the other elements which go into the manufacture of a modern newspaper.

Not so very long ago, one or two telegraph wires were all that were required to handle the news and meet the needs of practically all the newspapers.

I remember that, during the war, the United Press was on a one wire basis, generally throughout the country, and we used to wonder what we would do for news when the war was over.

Today, papers like the St. Louis Star and the Kansas City Journal-Post have from six to ten United Press wires centering in their offices. During the war, our on wire system opened at 7 o'clock in the morning here in the central time zone. Today, the main trunk systems open at 3 o'clock in the morning. Ten years ago, we managed to handle all the national and foreign news on a single wire, and also found room on it for state and sectional news, and sometimes for baseball descriptions or race entries and results. Today, two wires are required to transmit the national and foreign news, two more for the financial news, another for baseball and racing, and the state and sectional news is developed on separate circuits.

All this has a direct bearing on the subject of difficulties and costs of gathering the news of the world, because it shows that the appetite of the public for more news, and faster news, has grown steadily keener ever since the end of the war and that this appetite is forcing the press associations to cover news on a scale hitherto unheard of, and has placed them in a competitive situation which necessitates the use of constant vigilance so that the latest developments in the science of news transmission may be seized and put into operation as soon as they come from the laboratories, to the end that the latest news from foreign countries, from Washington, from the race track, from the state capital and from the stock market may be delivered to the newspapers with the least possible delay. In this driving need for faster and faster transmission the old Morse operator has virtually disappeared. He is too slow. The telephone-typewriters of a few years ago with their thirty word a minute speed and their revolving type-bar have vanished and in their place has come the sixty word a minute printer machine, with practical use of the teletypesetter just around the corner, and with scientists hard at work in the Bell Telephone and other laboratories, develop-

ing transmission devices which—unless progress suddenly stops, which is not at all likely—will in time make all present methods as out of date as the pony express rider.

We do not know exactly what the future holds in this respect, but it is not too imaginative to predict that wireless will be much more generally used than it is now for regular news transmission, and that telephoto will be developed to a degree that will permit whole newspaper pages to be sent by wire or wireless on a practical, every-day basis.

This may all sound very fanciful now, but it is not at all beyond the bounds of reason, and it is perhaps no more strange than the spectacle of an electric typewriter hammering out the news at sixty words a minute in response to electrical impulses transmitted from a point 2000 miles away, I can easily remember when the die-hards used to tell us that that was, if not impossible, at least impractical. These strange new devices are matters with which those engaged in newspaper industry must concern themselves constantly as time goes on. The art of transmission is advancing so fast that it is sometimes hard to differentiate between what is practical and what is theoretical. Today's dream is tomorrow's routine job. Therefore it may be said that this proposition of keeping up with the advancement of science in news transmission is one of the difficulties which have to do with gathering and distributing the news of the world.

A few minutes ago I mentioned the printer machine. The printer machine is a concrete example of the necessity of keeping up with science if you want to remain at the front in the business of gathering news. Any press association which tried to operate today on a Morse wire basis would be in a hopelessly inferior position to its competitors. The use of the printer telegraph apparatus has developed to the point where only a few wires now are still handled on a Morse basis, and even those circuits which it used to be thought would always be handled by Morse operators, such as market wires and race circuits, have also become machine wires.

Until recently it was thought that market quotations would always be handled by Morse operators. Such technical sending was considered too complicated for the electric typewriters. Today all press associations use machines for handling stock quotations. The result has been such a speeding up in the process that whereas originally it was considered quite an achievement to handle the New York stock, bond and curb quotations, there is now room on the wires for the Chicago stock exchange, and for other exchanges as well. Thus as the wire capacity is extended, and enlarged, the appetite of the public for more news and more details becomes more voracious. The awakening of the public to the news interest of the stock market is still going on. More and more people appear to be getting into the market. It seems to be contagious. Stock quotation lists are read as eagerly as baseball box scores, even more so, perhaps, because in the case of the market, the figures mean money. A daily newspaper has just been started in New York, to cater to the little fellow who is interested in the market, the man who is not a professional trader, but who is playing the market on the side and who wants his market news written from that viewpoint. Another New York paper prints tips on the market in sporting phraseology.

This business of the public's getting into the market has put a great added responsibility upon the press associations. In many newspaper plants the circulation manager might excuse the managing editor for getting scooped on some official announcement on a matter of state, but he could never excuse him for not having the New York stock list complete in the Wall Street final edition which goes to press a few minutes after the market closes. That would be as serious an offense as getting left on the sixth race at Lexington, in cities where late street editions are sold on race results, or omitting a play by play description of a crucial World Series game.

You might get by for a day or two without an editorial page, but look out for trouble if you omit the closing price on Ajax Rubber, because that means more dollars, or fewer dollars, to a lot of readers. I am speaking now, of course, of those newspapers which regard market news as of great importance, and handle it accordingly. More and more papers appear to be getting into that class, judging by the demands which are made on us for more and more market news. We are planning extension of abbreviated market services to papers which a few years ago regarded any kind of telegraph news at all as a kind of expensive luxury, not exactly necessary. In the New York office of the United Press there are twenty men now engaged in producing the financial news report—more men than made up the entire New York staff a decade ago. This, of course, is a direct reflection of the demand of the public, through the newspapers, for more and more news of the market.

In surveying the work of the modern press association, it is interesting to look back into history for a few years, in order to get something of the background. One of the earliest press associations on record was conducted by the House of Fugger, a Bavarian banking establishment, which required the news of the world for its own information in conducting its banking transactions. It had correspondents all over Europe, and some of these reporters of this private press association were expert news writers. The execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, for example, is described in eyewitness detail, by this association's correspondent.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada was covered by this early press association, practically shot by shot. I have here a bulletin, from a correspondent of this association, dated Antwerp, July 2, 1588. Listen to this and see whether it has not a modern ring.

"This afternoon news came that His Highness, the Prince of Parma, has received information from Calais that the Spanish and English Armadas have met on the English coast and the Spanish Armada has been beaten. No details are reported."

That bulletin has to my mind a touch which shows that the correspondent was a born United Press reporter, even though born about 350 years too early.

The difficulties of gathering the world's news in those days were considerably greater than they are now, because of lack of telegraph or any other means of rapid communication. What this old press association lacked most of all, however, was an organization of correspondents comparable to those that exist today. Every time you start to analyze the difficulties of gathering world news you get right back to the proposition of man power. If you have enough of the right sort of men you are bound to get the news. The difficulty of gathering world news is pretty much the same as that which any city editor has in getting the city news, only on a magnified scale, of course. If the city editor has the right kind of reporters he is going to get the news no matter what the odds against him may be. And the same thing holds good for a press association. There is nothing mysterious about a press association. It is not a mere robot of electric wires and automatic typewriters. It is an organization of men —reporters and editors. The better these men, the better the press association. It can be truthfully said that the sun never sets on a United Press correspondent, and I imagine the same can be said of other press association, which is one reason why American newspapers get the news in the way they do. The costs of maintaining such armies of correspondents are enormous, of course, and every correspondent means cable tolls and other expenses. But while the American press associations pay huge sums for news, the cost to the individual members of these associations is kept down through their system of co-operative buying of news through the press associations.

The great development of the American press association is due, I believe, to the news demands of the men who are running the newspapers of America. You all

know as well as I do that the day when the newspaper editor was a semi-starred character, something like a comic supplement poet, has long since passed. The day when any fly-by-night could start a daily newspaper on a shoe string, here today and gone tomorrow, has passed also. The newspaper has become a business institution. The newspaper business has become a great American industry. The only paper that can be powerful in its fight to uphold the right, the only paper that can be a potent force for good, the only paper that can keep its soul and hold the respect which it must have in order to be powerful, is the paper which is producing a profit and paying dividends. A paper like that is independent. It cannot have its loans called; nobody can threaten it with a financial cudgel. Therefore I believe the newspapers of America are in a position to be freer and more independent today than they could possibly be were they not so prosperous and self-sustained. There has been developed in this country a new kind of newspaper man, a double threat man, you might say, who is equally good in the editorial room or in the business office. He can write a cracking good news story or an editorial in the morning and go out and sign a big advertising contract in the afternoon. Such men are found at the head of many important and prosperous newspapers.

The old days when the business office man turned up his nose at the journalist, and the journalist sniffed disdainfully at the business office man, have all gone. There is still some turning up of noses and disdainful sniffing going on, no doubt, but the men who are making such successful business enterprises out of our modern journals are not indulging in it.

These executives are in large measure to be given the credit for the fact that newspaper readers in this country have such complete news coverage as I have been describing. They appear to have appreciated the fact that news makes newspapers. So they saw to it that their readers got all the news. They saw to it that the American press association became the best in the world, totally free of subsidies or other temptations to color the news, responsible only to their newspaper members, serving no master but the newspaper reader. I do not believe any successful American press association carries propaganda, or colors news, or intentionally commits inaccuracies. No press association in this country which did so could hope to survive. Its doom would be as certain as that of any newspaper which betrayed its readers, and those who put their trust in it.

While we are on the subject of newspapers as seen from the business standpoint, so to speak, I might mention that the other day I saw a statement dealing with press association matters in which those who "traffic in the news for gain" were mentioned rather disparagingly. I do not know of a successful newspaper in the United States which does not traffic in the news for gain, if you want to put it that way. You get the news wholesale and sell it to the ultimate consumer in such a way that you show a profit on the transaction. The United Press is guilty of the same offense. We take pride in the fact that the United Press is a business institution. We take pride in the fact that in the twenty-two years of our existence we have been a sound and self supporting enterprise for twenty-one of them. The United Press was founded—as is every great newspaper in America—on the fundamental principles of sound business and we believe that that foundation is the most permanent ever devised. We have no quarrel with any other form of organization, but the history of commercial endeavor in the United States and all over the world for that matter has shown that the privately owned business structure is the best and most enduring.

Due to the demands of the editors and publishers who are successfully merchandising the news to the public in this country the volume of news handled daily in the New York office of the United Press, for example, has now reached the total of more than 620,600 words a day. This is the traffic in wordage of all circuits, day and night.

New York might be called the greatest clearing house for general news, which includes everything, foreign, national, sectional, sporting and so forth. Chicago ranks first, I should say, as the clearing house for news of a more domestic nature. Chicago handles about 250,000 words daily. The cables, the Washington stuff, and all that, goes through Chicago on its way to the Southwest and the coast, and a number of state and sectional circuits radiate from there also. In giving you this picture of the way a modern press association operates, I do not want to convey the idea that our chief interests are exclusively on the requirements of the big city papers with their multiple wire systems. Far from it. The small paper is still the backbone of the press associations. It gives the press association its contact with the news of America. Its editors are among the most keen and discerning in the land, and many of our best and most constructive suggestions emanate from them.

A press association without a great army of small papers as clients could never hope to be anything more than a supplementary or auxiliary affair, hitting the high spots. It could not be a press association in the most complete sense of the world. Therefore we have never lost our contact with the small papers, and we hope we never shall.

The demands of these smaller papers for state and sectional news, incidentally, has been responsible for a great deal of improvement in the machinery covering it. It is necessary to group these papers in state circuits so they may interchange news of common interest. Since the twentieth anniversary of the United Press, two years ago, twelve more of these sectional circuits have been established to facilitate the interchange of state news. They are in Missouri, Oklahoma, Indiana, Texas, Colorado, Louisiana and Mississippi, Montana, California, Nebraska, New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. I mention this because it shows how the demands of the newspapers for thorough sectional coverage have encouraged the United Press to overcome the difficulties standing in the way thereof, by creation of many additional circuits, thus making such sectional coverage a relatively simple matter, rather than a heavy undertaking.

The cost of creating these new circuits is considerable, but it is distributed among the newspapers themselves so it can be absorbed without trouble. So we have another example of the papers working in unison for their own good.

Now to get back once more to the difficulties of covering world news. As I said before the modern press association has been so well organized and the world so well blanketed with correspondents that the difficulties are usually overcome. I know that the men who superintend the news report of the United Press—a twenty-four hour job—often have serious problems presented to them which must be solved instantly, in cases where a wrong decision would have serious consequences, and they usually make the right decision because as part of our organization we have men at the top whose habit it is to make the right decision rather than the wrong one.

It is not a matter of luck or guess-work. The men of whom I speak are the most experienced press association men in this country, and they are men of sound judgment and logical reasoning. That is why they occupy positions where a bad decision on a big story would affect not only one newspaper, but 1158 newspapers, all over the world. With minds like that at the head, and other equally sound young men stationed at the strategic news centers the world over, I must say that the element of difficulty in the problem of gathering the world's news is pretty well eliminated.

It might be interesting for you to hear a few examples of how the difficulties in the way of gathering world news have been overcome. I mention difficulties which have to do with United Press coverage because those are the ones I know about first-hand.

For instance, there was the recent death of Marshal Foch on which we had the satisfaction of securing a beat of something more than twenty-five minutes. I do not mention this boastfully because that would hardly be becoming on this occasion. I mention this as an example of the way in which difficulties in world news gathering are overcome by proper organization in advance. For three months reporters had waited outside the Foch house maintaining the death watch. They endured hardships. The weather was so cold at times that they had to hire taxicabs for shelter. Yet our beat on the death of Foch was not due to this vigil but to certain inside arrangements which had to do with dressmakers and dollars.

When the German plane Bremen landed a year ago on Greenly Island in the frozen Strait of Belle Isle in the first successful western flight over the Atlantic, the whole world was interested in their story. Only the briefest high spots of the story were trickling out by wireless.

The United Press was most anxious to get a direct interview with these men. Its correspondent at St. Johns, Newfoundland, reported there was a telegraph wire into Flowers Cove, across the strait from Greenly Island in Newfoundland, but that the straits had never been crossed at that time of year when the ice was breaking up. However, the United Press offered a sum considered tremendous in those isolated parts, and three sealers started westward across the strait, towing their boat on a sort of sled when on the ice and rowing across the open stretches.

Repeatedly, while in the open water, the drifting ice would close in on them and hurl their boat high above the water, and then, parting, would throw the overturned boat and men into the icy waters. But after many hours of peril, the passage was made, the story obtained and taken back across the strait in the same perilous manner.

By a pre-arranged code, the United Press knew that the sealers had reached Greenly Island by a series of flashes from the Greenly Island lighthouse to watchers on the Newfoundland shore. And then the suspense began because it was a couple of days before conditions in the strait permitted the men to return to the wire head.

For fast spending of tolls, Lindbergh's flight to Paris is outstanding.

At every point from which he was sighted until his triumphant arrival, every line sent on him was full rate, and from the moment he landed in Paris until he left for Belgium, nearly every act of his was full-rated to this country, so great was the interest in his achievement.

While the cost of his flight was terrific, all limits to expenditure having been removed, the coverage of Lindbergh since has run into many thousands of dollars.

Even yet, when he drops out of sight for a few hours, it costs us anywhere from $100 to $500 to locate him.

He has greatly added to the cost of coverage because of his persistent secrecy as to his destination and other plans.

The Mexican War represents a story which had costs all out of proportion to its circulation-building power.

When the trouble broke out, United Press men were stationed at San Antonio, Eagle Pass, Laredo, El Paso, and Nogales, while staff men were sent to the front with the Federal army and with the Rebel army.

While we were spending thousands of dollars a week covering the first maneuvers of this latest Mexican revolt, circulation managers in New York told me that the story had not sold a single paper above average.

Yet we had to maintain very extensive coverage of this Mexican War until the Federal control of the situation became very dominant.

Of course, the cost of covering world news on the scale it is now done has multiplied many times over in the last few years and is still going up. Cable tolls alone

reach a very large figure. The total cable traffic of the United Press last year was more than 8,000,000 cable words. When the treaty was signed between the Italian government and the Vatican we brought it in verbatim from Rome. It ran about 11,000 cable words of text.

All this will, perhaps, give you an idea of the cost involved in gathering a world news service. And, of course, back of the mere transmission change, stands the even greater cost of getting the news itself, from the original sources. The cable tolls, and the cost of the leased wires and printer telegraph machines in this country, are mere freight charges. It cost about $2000 a week to cover the Mexican revolution, for instance. Mr. Hoover's trip to South America cost, I should say, $1500 a week.

I mention these few examples to convey an impression of what it costs to cover stories which are out of the ordinary. Of course it will be understood that such costs as these are small when compared with the day in and day out, steady overhead of gathering and distributing news. The wires are always overcrowded, no matter whether a Lindbergh is flying, or a war is raging. If there is no big news, plenty of smaller news rises up to take its place. And the news value of the small items increase as the big story fades. All news values are relative, anyway. So the cost is a 365-day-a-year proposition, all of which is borne by the newspaper publishers of this country in the interests of giving folks who pay 2 or 3 or 5 cents for a newspaper the biggest money's worth in the world.

Specialties in Women's Work in Journalism

BY MRS. L. G. RINKLE

Special Writer, Kansas City Journal-Post

Just as specialties are the things in every line of endeavor today, so it is in newspaper work, particularly in the woman's field, which we think of chiefly in terms of a woman's page, features, or Sunday magazine work.

A few recipes, a pattern and a half-dozen society notes can no longer constitute a woman's page on any up-to-date newspaper. Something more is needed to round it out and meet the demands of the women who are the real readers of the newspapers.

Never before have newspapers catered to women as they are at present, and the opportunities for women in the field are greater than ever before. This is due, for one thing, to the fact that the man-made woman's page is a thing of the past. A man may think he knows what women ought to read, but it takes a woman to know what a woman wants to read. And, it is the wise editor who is willing to give woman a place on his staff, a place other than that of society editor.

Until within the last few years, the position of society editor has been in the newspaper field what the profession of teaching has been to the woman who had to earn her living—the only ladylike thing to do.

Now the society job is the last thing that an honest to goodness newspaper woman wants. However, both it and that of the club editor have their possibilities, but to a great extent they are being overlooked. Pictures, those with action, not just pretty faces, chatty leads on the highlights of the activities, and less formality improve either of these features. These jobs also afford a certain amount of very good training, and certainly an opportunity for widening the acquaintance, which is so necessary in newspaper work.

For a long time newspapers have depended upon syndicates to supply most of their materials in the way of special articles on fashions, the care of children, interior decorations, foods, beauty and advice to the lovelorn, and similar problems that confront women in the homes, business and the professions. The tendency now is to localize as many of them as possible, and the results are proving most satisfactory, both from the readers' standpoint and the returns to the paper in the way of advertising and increased circulation. And a woman is chosen to do the work.

While this movement is making headway, however, there is another one that is gaining greater impetus and threatens to lower the woman's standard in the profession, which is a very serious problem. I refer to those girls and women who think the game an easy one and decide that training is not particularly necessary. They believe that, inexperienced as they are, they can just start out with nothing for a background and make a success of special work right now. But it cannot be done.

Most of the young women who apply for jobs on newspapers, journalism graduates just as well as those who never have been inside a newspaper office before, say they do not want to do reporting. They want to do special work. Now, I think when a woman assumes that attitude she throws one of the biggest stumbling blocks possible in the path of her career. In the first place she irks a would-be employer by over-estimating her own ability that way, and secondly, she deprives herself of the most vital form of training when she hesitates to become a cub reporter and develop a sense of news values.

Perhaps she does know something about foods, babies, beauty hints and the other things, but she has to know more. She must be able to disseminate that information in an interesting and intelligent way, and only practice in general reporting will give her that ability.

The schools of journalism are marvelous institutions. They lay a wonderful foundation for careers, but they cannot possibly offer the experience that is afforded through eight hours of work daily under a hard-boiled city editor. And, really, the city editor is not hard-boiled. He is just a stickler for details, accuracy, individuality and style. But what are more necessary requisites to a journalist's career?

In every line of work are certain details that have to be handled, and there is no getting around them. They are monotonous, but somebody has to take care of them; and the sooner the would-be newspaper woman realizes that and is willing to tackle them, the faster she will advance. Also, the better equipped she will be to handle the feature stories and special lines that eventually will come her way.

"I want to do feature stories" and "work on the Sunday section" are other desires often expressed by the inexperienced persons seeking jobs. The same rule applies in these cases. It takes an experienced reporter to write a good feature story—one who has had training in the fundamentals of news writing, one who has an understanding of human nature and an easy flow of words. And nowhere is one more likely to acquire all of these attributes than in general reporting.

The reporter who can take such deadly stuff as the weather report or vital statistics every day in the week and make a readable story out of them is very likely to turn out a good human interest story. But when a woman spurns such a detailed round of training and seeks to branch out into a special line, she is likely to find herself doing considerable floundering and wondering what it is all about.

Of course, the Sunday section usually abounds in features. It is the composite of the efforts of the best reporters on the paper. Here, too, it is experience and ability that gives them a place in that field.

Another important reason why women should not attempt specialties or department work until after they have had at least six months, and preferably a year's intensive training in reporting, is that they are not able to adjust themselves under possible changes. One is never sure when she will have to change locations, papers and even positions on papers. With a good background in the first requisite of newspaper work, reporting, she can quickly shift from one field to another with little difficulty.

Once in specialties work, women find it very interesting, however, as well as remunerative. Dorothy Dix, one of the pioneers in specialties, now is reported to be making more than $50,000 a year on her heart balm articles. Helen Rowland with her "Meditations of a Married Woman" and "Sayings of Mrs. Solomon," too, has made a name as well as a fortune for herself with her features. Both of these women do all their work through syndicates, and metropolitan newspaper fight for contracts on them because their articles are read with interest by both men and women.

The feature that is claiming the most attention from women readers today, however, is on how to be beautiful. Next to fashions, I believe this is the most widely read thing on the woman's page. Regardless of the thousands and thousands of beauty parlors where they now do everything from treating corns to face lifting, women are eager to try a few home treatments to improve their looks. They may not follow closely the advice and directions given, but they will read them, perhaps try them for a few days, and fall just as hard for the next new suggestion.

This feature affords a wonderful opportunity for a tie-up with the advertisers. No beauty column is a success without questions and answers and that is where the advertiser comes in. Statistics show that next to the automobile industry, more money was spent on cosmetics during 1927 than for any one commodity. That fact in itself is proof that women are at least interested.

The fashion field is one of the most overcrowded at present, and it is a field with much dead material. By that I mean material that never is read. Every newspaper

office is flooded with fashion stories, but they all sound alike and there seems to be something lacking. I do not know just what it is or how to remedy the condition. Perhaps the articles are not jazzy enough, if I may be permitted to use that crude term. Anyway, they lack pep and interest.

It may be because many women think their ability to distinguish between a pleat and a godet, or a piece of satin from homespun, renders them capable of writing fashions. Too, fashions are something exhibited every day in the shop windows, on the streets, or at any function, and most women prefer to see things through their own eyes rather than through the eyes of someone writing from the fashion centers of New York and Paris.

One of the most recent innovations in the fashion field and one that can be localized easily is a sketch and description of the frock which Mrs. John Smith wore at the Tuesday Club's annual tea, or a wrap worn by Mrs. Tom Jones at the last dance at the Country Club. The larger papers are using this scheme and finding it carries more interest than some syndicated sketch. However, they are not using this to the exclusion of all other material. It is just a diversion.

The present day mothers with their bobbed hair, short skirts and cigarets may be greatly derided, but when it comes to rearing children they are not overlooking a thing in the way of helpful material along this line. Consequently the feature on caring for children is growing in popularity.

The same is true of foods. There may be a lot of truth in the tin-can gag, but the day is here when the housewife, whether she specializes in the good old-fashioned meal with its hours of labor, or the hastily prepared one from tin cans, must know how to balance it. The younger generation of women has learned this and similar things in the public schools, but the older woman gets it by reading magazine and newspaper articles, if they are enlightening and interesting.

And, so, we go around in a circle with any form of specialties in women's work in journalism. To be worth while, they must be instructive and entertaining. These are the direct outcome of training and experience in writing and a sense of news value, the foundation for which has been built through a long period as a reporter. Therefore, my advice to any woman seeking a career in journalism is to begin at the bottom and work up. The road to success will be much easier and the final outcome much more satisfactory.

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Edited by
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