

HOW TO BE A  
JOURNALIST

*“ I believe that in the years ahead of us the power of the Press in India will increase. Papers which are edited with wisdom and conducted with vigour, based on sound principles and the adoption of up-to-date methods of production, will be more and more indispensable as India advances towards self-government.”*

SIR SAMUEL HOARE  
*(Former Secretary of State for India)*



PLATE I.—THE CREED TELEPRINTER.

*A mechanical link between the sub-editors' room and the outside world. At the transmitting station (Reuters) messages are tapped out on machines resembling typewriters, which perforate tape in Morse. The tape then passes through a Morse transmitter, which sends out signals along the telegraph lines at the rate of 200 words a minute. In the newspaper office the signals are received on a Creed receiving reperforator, and the perforated tape passes through the Creed Teleprinter which transliterates the perforations and prints the messages in roman characters on a roll of paper. A message is just "coming through."*

# HOW TO BE A JOURNALIST

BY

ADOLPH MYERS

OF

"THE TIMES OF INDIA"

*Ten Talks Broadcast from the Bombay Studio  
of the  
Indian State Broadcasting Service*

*Published by*

THE TIMES OF INDIA PRESS  
BOMBAY

## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE engineer may write about road-making, the teacher about teaching, the actor about acting; no-one will object. But let a journalist write a book on his craft and there is immediately an outcry. "Journalism cannot be learnt from a book!" "Journalism cannot be taught!" "Journalists are born, not made!" So runs the refrain.

Of course journalism cannot be learnt from a book. But no more can road-making, teaching, acting. Why then the distinction? It is the penalty that journalism pays for being an "open" profession, unique of its kind, against entry to which inability is the only disability.

For the result of this seductive case of entry is that most men and women, at one time or another, seriously think of "taking up journalism," either as a productive side-line or as a career. When they do so their first impulse is to buy a book about it; and there have not been wanting "journalists" to assure them that nothing more is needed.

Hence the confusion; because despite the fact that very much more is needed—which may be summed up in two words, ability and practice—I still maintain that a book of this nature can be of help. How? Divide men into three classes for assessment of native journalistic ability: those that are so devoid of it as to be beyond help; those that have so much of it that they do not need help; those that have just enough of

it to make help worth while. It is, paradoxical as it may sound, for all three classes that this book, as well as its companion volume, may be of help.

By showing just what is needed it may save the first class the anguish of repeated disappointment, lure the second class to success, encourage the third class to make the necessary effort.

This book treats for the most part of *what* to write and in what *form* to write for a newspaper, in English or any other language. For those who feel the need for instruction and practice in *how* to write for *English* newspapers I am preparing a companion volume to be called *Journalism Self-Taught*, with numerous exercises in English and Journalism. A key to the exercises will be published separately.

By including the illustrations, together with rather long explanatory captions, I have been enabled to give a description of some of the numerous and complicated mechanical processes involved in newspaper production, which otherwise could hardly have found a place in a book of this kind.

I am indebted to the authors of numerous books, pamphlets and articles which have been quoted or consulted. (A list is appended.)

Finally I must recall that much of the material of this book is based upon a series of talks, on "Journalism as a Career", which I broadcast from the Bombay Station of the Indian State Broadcasting Service. I have to thank Mr. C. B. Sethna, O. B. E., J. P., who has since become Director of the Delhi Station, for permission to publish this material in book form.

ADOLPH MYERS

# CONTENTS

## HOW TO BE A JOURNALIST

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION .. .. .	i
<b>CHAPTER I.—THE OPEN DOOR.</b>	
A Millionaire's Ambition—The Itch to Write—If Only. . . . !— Hundreds of Openings—Great Goddess Chance—Pioneer Work—New Reading Public—Press and Democracy— Newspaper Organisation—From Front Page to Back— Collecting the News—Filtering and Dressing-Up—Expression of Views—Making of Reviews—Food and Fashions— Gaining an Entry .. .. .	1-16
<b>CHAPTER II.—QUALIFICATIONS.</b>	
A Sound Body—The Unforgiving Record—A Chameleon Mind— All Things to All Men—Negative Knowledge—Counters, Not Coin!—To Be a B.A. or Not?—Newspaper Language— The Student's Output .. .. .	19-28
<b>CHAPTER III.—TRAINING.</b>	
A Personal Experience—Courses in Journalism—Born or Made?— Neither!—Begin from the Bottom—Stepping Stones—Trade Journalism—Other Professions .. .. .	31-38
<b>CHAPTER IV.—NEWSPAPER WARES.</b>	
What is a Newspaper?—No Subsidies—Newspaper Trade— Universal Appeal—Journalist A Trader Too—All the News— What is News?—The Only Absolute—The Unusual—Scales of Interest—India and America .. .. .	41-53
<b>CHAPTER V.—COLLECTING THE WARES.</b>	
Increasing Importance—Leaders and Leads—News Gathering— News Writing—Emphasis—Creating Interest—Interviewing— Being Interviewed—Mental Detachment—District Reporting .. .. .	57-72

## CHAPTER VI.—WINDOW DRESSING.

All Window—A Modern Creation—Pivot of the Paper—Tight Rope Dancer—Art of the Headline—Truth in Three Words—Legal Pitfalls—"No Space" No Excuse—Follow-Up Stories—The Files—The Ideal Sub-Editor—Disliked by All—Pleasures and Penalties .. .. .	75-90
---	-------

## CHAPTER VII.—TIPS FOR FREE-LANCES.

Why Not?—Study the Market—Heart-Breaking Job—The Newspaper Touch—What to Write About?—Make it Topical—A New "Slant"—The Dagger Style—Short, Short, Short—Frills Not Wanted—Indians and English—Pinning Down Ideas ..	93-106
--	--------

## CHAPTER VIII.—WHAT WE THINK.

The One and the Many—Does It Lead or Follow?—What You Think—Less Power, More Influence—Manner and Matter—Leader and Democracy—Sitting on the Fence—Weather-Cock Politics—Anonymity, Is It Worth It? .. .. .	109-119
---	---------

## CHAPTER IX.—THE EDITOR'S CHAIR.

"Fit for a Dramatist"—Responsible For All—Making of an Editor—A True Story—Not Official—Delane's Two and Two—Scope for Scoops—Readers' Views—Editorial Powers—A Business Man—Editing in India .. .. .	123-135
---	---------

## CHAPTER X.—NEWSPAPERS—AND NEWSPAPERS.

Now and Always—What People Want—The "Vicious" Circle—"Utter Solemnity"—"Let's Have a Censor"—"Preaching to the Converted"—Why Blame the Mirror?—The Journalist's Part—The Nation's Interests—Shakespeare and Crime—A Synthesis .. .. .	139-152
--	---------

## ILLUSTRATIONS.

## PLATE

i. The Creed Teleprinter .. .. .	FRONTISPIECE
ii. Type-setting Machines .. .. .	FACING PAGE 21
iii. Process Department .. .. .	43
iv. The "Foundry" .. .. .	61
v. Page Make-up Thirty-Six Years Ago .. .. .	76
vi. Page Make-up Today .. .. .	78
vii. Rotary Press .. .. .	99
viii. Mechanical Conveyors .. .. .	129



THE OPEN DOOR

## CHAPTER I.—THE OPEN DOOR.

A Millionaire's Ambition—The Itch to Write—If only . . . . !—Hundreds of Openings—Great Goddess Chance—Pioneer Work—New Reading Public—Press and Democracy—Newspaper Organisation—From Front Page to Back—Collecting the News—Filtering and Dressing-up—Expression of Views—Making of Reviews—Food and Fashions—Gaining an Entry.

**W**HAT could be easier than to become a journalist, than to cross the border into newspaper land? No passport required, no stodgy examinations, no expensive diplomas, no entrance fees, no age restrictions, no barriers of sex or caste or creed, no practice to buy or clients to wait for—to this profession alone the gate stands ever wide open for all to enter, if they can.

Yet how many of all the thousands upon thousands who would, if they could, find that they cannot! And how many of those who do succeed in entering find the road beyond, apparently so attractive and inviting, in reality too toilsome and arduous, quite beyond their powers! For although there are in fact no legal or professional restrictions, the nature of the journalist's work in itself imposes restrictions which are amply sufficient to limit the supply to the demand.

You will seldom find a competent and well-trained journalist out of a job, either in Europe or in India. But for every one competent journalist there are hundreds of people who have wanted to become journalists, have tried, failed and retired from the arena disillusioned. Is it not strange? No profession possesses a greater fascination for the multitude, and yet no profession is so little known to the outside world, so little understood by the man-in-the-street.

### ***A Millionaire's Ambition***

Some years ago a younger member of the Vanderbilt family, one of the richest in America, wanted a job as reporter on a New York paper. Asked why he, a millionaire, was keen on such a humble post, he replied quite simply :

“ Reporters are the best informed and brightest fellows I have ever met : I want to be like them.”

And it is on record that even Thomas Alva Edison, “ the world’s most famous inventor, the world’s most undoubted benefactor, the recipient of all the honours,” felt this fascination, and late in life regretted, yes, actually regretted, that he had not been a journalist. R. D. Blumenfeld, one-time editor of the *Daily Express*, in his reminiscences describes Edison as saying to him :

“ I always wish I had become a reporter. You fellows beat me to it there. I do not think there is anything more interesting, more absorbing, more diversified in life than is to be found in journalism. I don’t, of course, mean just reporting. What I mean is that it must be a wonderful thing to be able to sit down and tell a thousand or a hundred thousand people every day what is in your mind ; advise them how to conduct themselves in all matters, private and public ; educate them, amuse them, irritate them if necessary. You have got the better of me there. My public uses me. You use your public. That is the difference between us.”

### ***The Itch to Write***

Whether journalists are, in fact, in a position to use their public, as Edison put it, is a moot point. But more of that later. For the present we can take it as a fact that most people think they could write for the newspapers, and would like to, if only they were given

the opportunity. Most people indeed would give a great deal for the pleasure of seeing themselves in print. Why is it? Is it just vanity? Or is it because every individual, even the adolescent just left school, thinks that *his* experience of life is unique and essentially worthy of record. Within each one of us there is no doubt a little world of thought and feeling, sometimes perhaps great feeling and great thought, which is never revealed to others. So impassioned, so eloquent, are our secret utterances, that it seems impossible to believe that they would not be as eloquent and impassioned in print, or that, having seen the light of day, they should fail to shake the world.

Yet the sad truth is that between thought and feeling on the one hand, and the spoken word on the other, there is a tremendous gulf which only the lucky few have it in them to bridge. Are you, dear reader, one of the few that really *can*, or only one of the many that think they *could*?

***If only . . . .!***

That applies, of course, to all writing in general. But all writing is not journalism. A journalist is merely one who writes for a journal or journals. Yet even that limitation does not rob the word of its fascination: perhaps it makes it even greater. To be the eyes and ears of the world, to see for it and hear for it all that is of interest, to record the events that day by day are shaping the life of humanity, to have influence over the hearts and minds of your fellow men, to lead and interpret public opinion . . . .! Small wonder that every journalist who is a journalist, however minute and insignificant may be his contribution to the spate of

news and views that hourly floods the world, and even though it be, as it mostly is, anonymous, finds a satisfaction in his work that only grows as the years roll by.

Perhaps it is hardly necessary to stress, therefore, that the very first qualification of the successful journalist is the urge to make such a contribution, not merely a spasmodic desire—most people have that—but an unceasing and overwhelming impulse that will not be gainsaid. To him that has it opportunities will present themselves from every side. To him that has it not there will never seem to be even one opportunity. That is why, inwardly of course, I have to smile when people say to me with a sigh “If only I had the chance!”

### *Hundreds of Openings*

For the truth is that in one sense at least the chances are innumerable. To newspaper land there is not one gate open but many, not one main road of a university course, but hundreds of little pathways any one of which may lead to a reasonable competence. And the reason is that the field is so variegated and so diverse. The term “journalist” is loosely used to cover a multitude of occupations, which, though possessing a fundamental unity in that they are all connected with the making of newspapers and periodicals, differ widely in their nature and importance. You will often hear children exclaim, “I want to be a soldier” or, it may be, a doctor, dentist or detective. They seldom say, “I want to be a journalist”—because, like most grown-ups, they have very little idea what exactly a journalist is or does. But the grown-up wants to be one all the same!

### ***Great Goddess Chance***

Because journalism is an open profession, open inside as well as from outside, and because the different kinds of work touch each other at so many points, accident enters very largely into journalistic careers. A man works as private secretary to a business magnate for seventeen years. By chance he takes up journalism, and ends by becoming acknowledged leader of Bombay reporters. That was the story of G. V. Sirur, who was head reporter of *The Times of India* when he died recently. Another man starts as a general reporter or sub-editor. To meet an emergency he is put on to "do" a cricket match, and finishes up by becoming an authority on the sport with time for nothing else.

Anything can happen to you in journalism, and at any time. You never know what may be round the corner. Much depends on yourself, of course, but much too on the great Goddess Chance.

On the other hand it is equally true that the chances in India *at the present moment* for good "ready-made" jobs in first class journalism are strictly limited.

There are now published in India nearly two thousand newspapers, in all languages, some daily, some weekly. There are also nearly three thousand periodicals, some of them no doubt devoted to specific interests, of which I shall have more to say soon. But most of these newspapers and periodicals are probably one-or two-man shows; only a few have a staff of, say, thirty or more. Nevertheless, from what I have seen and from what I have been told, there is apparently such a vast amount of poor journalism in India that for

many years to come, even within the present framework, there should be ample scope for the young journalist who has really taken pains to master the technique of his craft.

### ***Pioneer Work***

If he is keen he will be prepared for the hardships as well as the joys of the pioneer. He will find no general fixed standards as to hours of work, salary, holidays and so on. Even in the West, where there are such standards, they are by no means universal; in India they are completely lacking. He will not even find professional standards of conduct. All this is for the future journalists of India to create.

There have indeed been newspapers in India, both English and vernacular, as long as there have been in Europe. The first, *Hicky's Gazette*, as it was called, was started in Calcutta in 1780, a century and a half ago. (It lasted only two years.) Nevertheless journalism here in India is as yet in its infancy. It is practically in the same position as British journalism was before the introduction of compulsory elementary schooling created that new huge class of newspaper readers and that opportunity to serve them which Lord Northcliffe so skilfully exploited.

### ***New Reading Public***

But it is impossible that the figures I have quoted should remain stationary.

It may seem all wrong, but the fact is that men are usually given the vote before, not after, they are taught to read and write. That, at any rate, is what

happened in Britain. It was only after the famous "leap in the dark" of 1870, the Reform Bill by which the British working man was enfranchised, that the upper and middle classes realised the necessity to educate their "new masters," as they called them. "It was felt," says the history book, "that for so important a purpose as voting for Parliament, if for nothing else, it was good that a man should be able to read."

The immediate result was the establishment of a national system of education. Ten years later it was made compulsory for all; ten years after that it was offered free of all cost.

To-day India is about to take *her* leap into the dark. And what a leap it is! The reforms contemplate, as far as British India is concerned, an increase in the number of voters from seven to thirty-five million, an extension of no less than five hundred per cent.

This is considerably more than the number of literates in British India, and if history is any guide one need not be a prophet to foretell that the first concern of the newly constituted provincial governments will be to see that every voter should be able to read, if not in this generation then at least in the next.

### ***Press and Democracy***

"I attribute my success," said Lord Northcliffe, the most outstanding figure in the history of British journalism, "to seeing ahead."

What lies ahead for Indian journalism?

With the growing literacy of the masses the demand for more and better newspapers must likewise continually expand. For it has been amply demonstrated



that nothing, neither broadcasting nor the cinema, can take the place of the newspaper, or even challenge its supremacy. The newspaper is already a fact in Indian life. As education spreads and social awareness dawns upon the people, as they learn to look beyond the confines of the village and the district at what is happening in the country as a whole and in the world at large, it will, I think, become a still greater fact. The Press, in efficient and capable hands, can itself do much to encourage this development. In fact the progress of India and the progress of the Press in India are interdependent; the one can and should help the other.

No-one has seen this more clearly, or expressed it more effectively, than Sir Samuel Hoare, former Secretary of State for India.

“I believe,” he said, “that in the years that lie ahead of us the power of the Press in India will increase. Papers which are edited with wisdom and conducted with vigour, based on sound principles and up-to-date methods of production, will be more and more indispensable as India advances towards self-government.”

Certainly for the young idealist there could be no finer way of serving his country than to help the growth of a powerful, clean, impartial, responsible Press. It is equally certain that if this is achieved he will be well rewarded for his trouble. Such a Press cannot grow of itself. It can come only from much study, much thought, much enthusiasm. It is principally to encourage such study and inspire, if possible, such enthusiasm that I have written this book.

### *Newspaper Organisation*

My first task will therefore be to give a brief outline of the scope and nature of newspaper journalism in all its aspects. This can best be done, I think, by describing the organisation of the large newspaper, with anything from one million to three million readers, which has become such a feature of British and American life.

Of course there is nothing like such a degree of specialisation in India, nor is there likely to be for many years to come, but specialisation does not change the nature of essential functions. If there are twenty different jobs they remain different jobs whether they are done by twenty men or by one man. Moreover, such a description will also illustrate more clearly the opportunities of gaining entrance to the profession, and define more exactly the qualifications necessary for a career in journalism. Readers should bear in mind, however, that, as far as organisation is concerned, what I am going to say now is only approximately true even of the largest newspapers in India.

### *From Front Page to Back*

Except in one respect: however large or small the staff, newspapers are tending more and more to approximate to a uniform pattern. Whatever its facilities every newspaper, down to the smallest local "rag", will endeavour to provide its readers, leaving advertisements out of account, with a **newspaper** section and a **magazine** section.

The newspaper section is made up of **news** and **views**—descriptions of what has happened, and opinions as to how we ought to appraise what has happened.

The magazine section gives : **literature** pure and simple—in the form of short stories, serials, poems sometimes even plays ; **criticism**—of books, drama films, music, etc. ; and **information**—on life as it is or should be, lived.

Let us examine each of these in turn. They may overlap to a certain extent, but in the main, for purpose of comparison and contrast, the division holds good.

### ***Collecting the News***

First of all—the news ! The first business of the modern newspaper is, of course, “to keep its readers in touch with every form of public activity and every phase of life in the world around them.” To do that it is not sufficient to have a staff of men to go out and **report** what is happening in the immediate vicinity, **juniors** for the lesser events, **seniors** for the more important.

There must be **local correspondents** or district reporters in every large town and district in the country. There must be one or more **special correspondent** with roving commissions to describe events of national importance where the local correspondents in the particular districts in which they occur are not sufficiently experienced or talented to do them justice.

There must be **foreign correspondents** in every important town of every other country. Then you will sometimes see, at the top of a column, “**By Our Own Investigator,**” or “**By Our Special Commissioner,**” or “**By Our Crime Investigator.**”

Not all newspapers, very few in fact, can afford to maintain such a large reporting staff. To a greater or lesser extent, but always to *some* extent, they have

to rely on a news agency, which recovers the enormous cost of collecting news from all parts of the world by supplying the same news, local, country and foreign, to many different newspapers at an agreed rate.

But these men, whether they work for a newspaper or for a news agency, whether they are attached to an office or work independently in their own locality or abroad, whether they receive a fixed salary or are paid "lineage," as it is called, whether they describe a street accident, an earthquake, or a war, whether they are asked to send in a report, or do so on their own initiative, whether they are engaged in their work continuously or only on occasion, these men, I say, are all reporters, perhaps the largest single homogeneous section in the profession of journalism.

Their work is directed and controlled by the **News Editor**, who is directly responsible to the **Editor** for the collection of all up-to-date news.

### ***Filtering and Dressing-up***

Imagine, then, all these reports, from staff reporters, correspondents and agencies, pouring in a continual flow into the newspaper office—postcards, letters, telegrams, cables, phone messages. The news has been gathered, but who is to present it in the form we know so well and like to see—with nothing of importance left out, nothing unimportant, incorrect or libellous left in, the relative importance of what does go in indicated by the position on each page, the whole made readable with bright headings and concise introductions and set off by pictures and maps?

Obviously this cannot be done by the printer at his machine. He has neither the capacity nor the

time. Nor can it be done, contrary to the general idea, by the editor and his assistant-editors at *their* desks. They have what they regard as even more important work to attend to.

The link between the men who provide the news and the mechanics who put it into print, the filter that strains the news, ridding it of all undesirable elements, the transformer that cuts it to size and dresses it up, is the sub-editorial staff, a body of highly skilled and efficient technicians of whose very existence, except as a group name, you are probably unaware. Although a sub-editor may do little actual writing he must know so much *about* writing, and about the presentation to the public of what is written, that, however vague the term journalist may be, used in other senses, there can be no possible doubt about its application to *him*.

At the head of the sub-editorial staff is the **Chief Sub-editor**, who is responsible to the Editor not for the collection but for the presentation of the news.

### ***Expression of Views***

So much for the news! Now for the views. This is that "more important work" which occupies a considerable part of the time of the Editor and his assistants. Though the Editor has supreme control of the whole journal, and is naturally responsible for everything which appears in it, it is the "views" portion, the leaders and the letters sent in by readers, that he personally supervises.

Under his immediate control and direction work a staff, not of *sub*-editors, but of *assistant*-editors, each one of whom is occupied in one way or another with

that section of the newspaper which is devoted to the expression of "views." Thus in most offices the leaders and topics are written by assistant-editors, after preliminary discussion, if necessary, with the editor. It is not often, in these days, that the editor himself has much time to write leaders.

In the largest offices, where assistant-editors also have organising and executive functions, there may be a special corps of leader writers. Where the subject calls for expert specialist knowledge the required leader is sometimes supplied by an outsider with a *flair* for writing "shop" in a popular and interesting way, though not regularly engaged in journalistic work. Perhaps lawyers as a class are most called upon in this connection, but many politicians, authors and clergymen have also delighted by their leaders newspaper readers who would have been surprised to learn by whom they were penned. Not infrequently, too, a local correspondent sends in, together with some news of exceptional interest, a leader such as only he, with his intimate knowledge of local conditions, could supply.

### ***Making of Reviews***

Furthermore, every newspaper worthy of the name is now expected to provide its readers not only with up-to-date news and sound views but with critical reviews of what is going on in the world of art and science. At one time, not so long ago, most of the work of reviewing books, plays, films, concerts and art exhibitions was done by inside staff men or "put out" to an unknown outside writer. In recent years, at least in Europe, this has become the exception rather than the rule. The professional all-round

journalist first gave place to the highly-skilled critic who is a specialist in the subject, but even the latter, apparently in response to a public demand, is now being gradually ousted by the writer "with a name."

### ***Food and Fashions***

The newspaper has long been the political guide and philosopher of the man in the street; it is only in recent years, however, that it has striven to become his friend. And what a friend! A friend that can and does give information and advice on everything that touches modern man and modern woman most nearly and dearly—on food, furniture, fashions; on marriage, motoring, medicine; on children, chickens and chess; on all the multifarious thoughts and activities that fill our hours of leisure.

Such information and advice is usually given in the form of special "feature" articles, as they are called, which appear sometimes side by side with the news, sometimes on a page or supplement devoted to one field of interest only. Here again, not all such featured articles are exclusive to one newspaper. Mostly they are bought up by special syndicates, which distribute them to many newspapers, each one paying far less to the syndicate than it would for an exclusive article at so much an inch or column.

But for all that, *someone* must write them. Who *does* write them? Not always, or even usually, the professional journalist, but people who have given their lives to the things in question. This is the chief field for the free-lance. Thus chefs and cabinet-makers, teachers and dress-designers, all sorts of people in all walks of life, have suddenly found new sources of

income opening up to them, and many have not been slow to exploit them. And as with actors and authors who write for the papers, so with chefs and teachers, it is difficult sometimes to say who in this field is a journalist and who is not; is it chef-journalist or journalist-chef?

Sometimes there is one **Feature-Editor** in charge of all features of this kind; when, however, there are many features each one is in charge of a specialist, such as the **Engineering Editor**, or the **Editor of the Women's Page**, or the **Motoring Editor**. It is said that in one London office you cannot walk down a corridor without colliding with at least six editors!

### *Gaining an Entry*

Does the reader now understand what I meant when I said that to the man with an itch to write opportunities will present themselves from every side? He need not rely only on the "situations vacant" column, though many a job has been found that way too. If he lives in a town where there is a newspaper there is nothing to prevent him sending in a report of some event that may, or may not, have escaped the reporters. A happy idea, expressed in a few well-chosen words, may be all that is needed to start the aspirant on his career.

If he is interested in and well-informed about local public affairs, a series of well-written letters to the editor may secure him an inside post, for there is little difference between the well-written letter and the well-written leader; if he has the art of telling stories there is the literary section; if he has made a hobby



of music or reading there is the criticism; if he has thought deeply and studied widely in relation to his daily work and has cultivated the ability to discuss it in a way that can shed light on the problems of the man-in-the-street there is the feature and the supplement.

There is hardly in the whole of India a village of importance to which some newspaper does not penetrate: there is no aspect of life on which it does not touch.

If indeed he has but eyes to see and ears to hear, therefore, there is nothing to stop him realising his ambition—if, and this is a big “if,” only he has the qualities of heart and mind and body to lift him above the struggling horde of competitors clamouring at the open door. Nor is there anything to prevent a man, suitably equipped, from going straight from school or university to the sub-editor’s or assistant-editor’s desk. There have even been men who have gone straight to the editor’s desk, though not many. He who aspires to be an all-round journalist, however, would do well to serve his apprenticeship as a reporter first, for reasons which I hope to make clear in later chapters.

## QUALIFICATIONS

## CHAPTER II.—QUALIFICATIONS.

A Sound Body—The Unforgiving Record—A Chameleon Mind—A Things to All Men—Negative Knowledge—Counters, Not Coin!—To Be a B.A. or Not?—Newspaper Language—The Student's Output.

**I**N the last chapter I spoke about the fascination of journalism and the opportunities before the would-be Indian journalist with an urge to write. Let us assume, at any rate, that the opportunities are there, or at least asking to be created. Let us take it for granted, too, that the urge is there.

What then are the qualifications of heart and mind and body that apparently make all the difference, by which alone the urge can translate itself into productive effort? Let us deal first with those that must be inherent in constitution and character, and afterwards turn our attention to those that can be acquired and developed by training and practice. Because only in respect of the former is it true to say that journalists are born, not made.

### *A Sound Body*

For example, no one who has not enjoyed constant good health from the cradle should ever dream of seeking work in a newspaper office. Physical fitness is very desirable in all vocations, of course, but in journalism it is absolutely indispensable; no other "black-coat" profession makes such demands on strength and stamina.

For the reporter, using the term in its widest sense, there can be no question of regular hours. In his constant search for news he must be ready at all times, day and night, to brave the heat of summer, the

cold of winter, the rigours of the monsoon. Much of his work is done in public halls and police-courts—not the most comfortable of places. Often there is a good deal of walking to be done, still more often he is forced to wait about on his feet for long periods. Above all are good eyesight and a quick ear essential, for is he not the “eyes and ears of the world”?

But even when he has been promoted to the comparative comfort of the sub-editor’s desk he will find life not much easier. Since people *will* insist on making the newspaper part of the breakfast ritual most of the work has to be done at night. And no one who has not done exhausting work night after night can realise the strain of such an unnatural existence, however much of the day may be given to sleep.

Coupled with this it has to be remembered that life in a newspaper office is one long struggle against time. No one hurries the teacher in his work; a lawyer can spin out his case as long as he likes and to his heart’s content. But the men who are responsible for “catching the mail” with the latest news all dressed up and properly displayed are goaded and driven as if by an invisible whip. A last-minute change in the make-up of a page, following the receipt of an important message, might well seem a miracle of organisation, quick thinking and endurance. There can be only short shrift for the man who shirked his duty “because he did not feel up to it.”

### ***The Unforgiving Record***

And then, on top of all, there is the awful strain of guarding against slips—or blobs, as the newspaper man calls them. Other people may blunder and no



PLATE II.—TYPE-SETTING MACHINES.

*A section of the composing room, showing operators at work on linotype and intertype machines, on each of which 1,600 words can be mechanically set in one hour. The keyboard resembles that of a typewriter, the depression of each key releasing a brass matrix and causing it to slide into place in the assembler of the machine. As each line is completed molten metal is automatically forced into the mould which has been formed, and a line of type has been cast. The matrices are then automatically redistributed, ready for further use. The metal can also be cast and recast over and over again.*

one be the wiser. For the most part their mistakes never see the light of day, but lie buried and forgotten in files and account books. But for the journalist there is no escape. The error, trivial or serious, is there on the printed page, irrevocable, irremediable, for all the world to see, laugh at, shake its head over in anger or disgust. A job in a newspaper office, whatever its attractions, can certainly be no sinecure.

I have deliberately sought to paint the picture as black as possible, to frighten off the weak, the timid, the hesitant, the indolent. For to the true journalist these things are the very breath of his life. Against the irregularity he sets the freedom; against the discomfort—the pleasure of participating in public events; against the rush—the excitement and the exhilaration; against the danger—the thrill of avoiding disaster. Have you within you the makings of a hunter, an explorer, a soldier, an aviator? Then you have the makings of a journalist.

### ***A Chameleon Mind***

But the test of physical fitness cannot, obviously, be the only test. The work is, after all, brain work—and brain work of a somewhat peculiar order. The mental qualifications that make for successful journalism have been variously described. “A *flair* for essentials?” Well, a lawyer must have that too. “Mental agility?” No mathematician could do without it. “Adaptability?” It is the very essence of the actor’s art. “The faculty for criticism?” Few people, unhappily perhaps, are without it. “A nose for news?” With that the detective earns his living. “The human touch?” If in this most humans

were lacking it would not be needed. "The gift of self-expression?" Naturally that is as essential as a violin to a fiddler.

In truth the journalist must have something of all these and something more besides. His mind must be like a seismograph, recording the changes and tremors of public taste, feeling and opinion. All men, in their living, must be of interest to him; and he, in his writing, of interest to all men. Take the sum of all human mental and spiritual powers, divide it by the number of all persons, dead, living, and yet to live, and you will get the mind and soul of the ideal journalist. Need it be said the ideal does not exist, never has existed, never will exist?

### ***All Things to All Men***

For what does all this mean? It means the journalist should have: the endurance of a travelling salesman, the courage of a mountaineer, the patience of a Job, the caution of a policeman, the alertness of a lawyer, the impartiality of a judge, the versatility of an actor, the imagination of a novelist, the perception of an artist, the resignation of a philosopher, the sympathetic insight of a psychologist, and, above all, the tolerance, sympathy and pity of a really human human being.

Having all these he *may* be an eminently successful journalist. But not all journalists are *eminently* successful. To have a little of each of some of these may well suffice to earn a living with the pen. And if they are not found combined all in one man, well, that is where the large newspaper scores—they may well be found compounded in twenty.

But supposing for a moment you are vain enough to think you answer to the description (most journalists, like all artists, are conceited), how will you set about equipping yourself for a journalist's career? What must a journalist know? What should the tiro seek to know?

Such questions are not easy to answer. In other professions there is no difficulty whatever. An architect would be as helpless without a sound knowledge of trigonometry as a surgeon, if there could be such, knowing no anatomy.

Yet a journalist can get on very well without a minute knowledge of history and a thorough comprehension of the evolution of political ideas, important as both these subjects may be to him in his work. That is why no one would dream of abolishing entrance examinations for architects and surgeons, while very few would seek to impose them on journalists, though the idea is gaining ground and might yet find legislative sanction.

### *Negative Knowledge*

Obviously the more a journalist knows about all sorts of things the better for him and the better for his readers. But for him, at least, it is better to know a little about many things than much about one and nothing about most. Other men learn a subject to gain distinction. The journalist learns it, as a reporter, to save himself from misrepresenting the man so distinguished; as a sub-editor, to be able to check the reporter; as a leader writer, to be able to discuss it intelligently, when called upon to do so, from the point of view of the public interest; and as an editor, to be



in a position to advise, control or challenge any one of his staff.

That is to say, the general knowledge required for journalism rests upon a negative rather than a positive basis ; it is ever a means to an end, not an end in itself.

The truth is—and once you have grasped this you have grasped all—that for the journalist knowledge is less important than ability to *utilise* knowledge, and experience in *supplementing* knowledge at a moment's notice when required.

The newspaper journalist is concerned only with the broad stream of life. A certain amount of general knowledge he needs to launch himself on the waters ; a good deal he picks up as he is carried along the stream ; but if he allows himself to be carried on an eddy of interest into the quiet reaches of some specialist backwater, and stays there—more often than not he ceases to be a journalist.

He is, above all, whatever his position—reporter, sub-editor, editor—an *intermediary* and an *interpreter*—an intermediary between the various sectarian interests of the community, an interpreter between the specialist and the layman. Thus, as all specialists are also laymen outside their speciality, he is the link between man and man.

### **Counters—Not Coin !**

If that is true of learning in general, it is still more true of that branch of learning, if such it may be called, which concerns him most closely—language. For this is the medium in which he works, as the potter works with clay and the artist with paint. All his life he deals in words, but he prizes them as counters, not as

coin. He may not write for writing's sake ; he writes to describe what he sees, to relate what he hears, to estimate and interpret what people around him are saying, doing, thinking, desiring, hating, hoping, fearing. He writes always "against the clock"; he writes not for the tinker, tailor, soldier, sailor, but, again, for the average man, the man-in-the-street.

### ***To Be a B.A.—Or Not?***

Many readers will appreciate the force of these observations and yet will be shocked and taken aback when I go on to say that *therefore* the average university in India does not provide the best training ground for the youthful aspirant to journalistic honours. I know the university has such a fascination for the middle-class youth of this country, that to suggest that in this field at least it is superfluous and most probably a waste of time may well seem like blasphemy. And yet surely it follows as a logical conclusion to what I have said that three years spent at the university as we know it will be more of a hindrance than a help? There is no university course in India, other than a special course, that can answer the would-be journalist's needs.

What *does* he need? First and foremost an intimate knowledge of the town in which he is working—of its history, geography, topography, of its highways and by-ways, its industries, shops and pastimes, its personalities and officials, its hospitals, police-courts, schools and places of entertainment, its politics and social problems.

This is essential, but no student can get this at the ordinary university.

For several reasons: the university town is not usually his home town; in any case most universities are not concerned with such vulgar and controversial subjects; and finally he can never be sure where his first job is going to land him.

Secondly, he needs a broad outline of general knowledge—the sweep, not the minutiae, of history, whether of his own country or of the world; the principles, not the footnotes, of economics; the development, not the terminology, of science. To cram details to satisfy examiners when, with a little experience, he can easily find out where to get them from reference books, is not merely a waste of time that could far better be devoted to learning the technique of his craft; it may, often does, make him pedantic, and what greater foe to the spirit of journalism could there be than the pedant?

Thirdly, it is, if not essential, at least highly desirable, for reasons that should be obvious, that he should know shorthand and typewriting and write a good clear round hand. In the university the first two are ignored, the third is not encouraged—is indeed considered unworthy of a scholar!

### ***Newspaper Language***

And, above all, he must have an innate appreciation of good English, or whatever language he hopes to use, and the ability to use it—not in any way, but in a certain way. For that newspaper language has a style all its own is beyond dispute. No doubt it uses the same words, follows the same idiom, obeys the same laws of grammar and syntax as all other writing in the same language. Wherein, then, does

it differ? Even to say that, because of the pressure on space and the premium on time, both for writer and reader, it must be simple, direct, forceful, arresting, essential as all these qualities are, does not explain everything.

Newspaper language is *par excellence* the language of fact: it must contain a higher proportion of facts to words than any other kind; it must be highly matter-of-fact in the presentation of facts; it must, or should, be absolutely impartial in its treatment of facts. Can such a style be taught and encouraged in the university as we know it? Only to ask is to know the answer.

### ***The Student's Output***

First, the "literary" output of the student is in essay form, and essay writing is as repugnant to newspaper writing as the pedant is anathema to the journalist.

Secondly, good writing can come only as the result of much practice. The college student, even with language as his main subject, writes probably not more than one short composition a week and one long essay each term. Even then, more attention is paid as a rule to ideas than to style, the object being to find out what facts the student has memorised, rather than what skill he has attained in the presentation of facts.

Thirdly, the subjects the student is called upon to deal with are for the most part academic—divorced from the life of the big outside world, of the police-court and the bazaar, the cinema and the council

chamber. That is, the themes have no *practical* value whatever—one reason, in my opinion, why students approach writing with distaste rather than with eagerness.

This disparagement of the university as a preparation for journalism is not, however, based entirely on theory. Indeed, theoretically, one would be inclined to favour such a preparation as providing at any rate *opportunities* for the acquisition of at least a grounding in general knowledge of men and affairs, a broad outlook on life, a faculty for logical reasoning, and facility in self-expression both in speech and in writing. But that the university does not give these things I know only too well from personal experience in weeding out, interviewing and examining candidates, mostly college graduates, many with two degrees, for posts on a newspaper in India.

# TRAINING

## CHAPTER III.—TRAINING.

A Personal Experience—Courses in Journalism—Born or Made?—Neither!—Begin from the Bottom—Stepping Stones—Trade Journalism—Other Professions.

**S**PEAKING about the qualifications for journalism, I said that in my opinion the average university course in India, as at present arranged, does *not* provide the best training in the shortest time for the would-be journalist.

Theoretically, I said, one would indeed be inclined to favour such a preparation as providing at any rate *opportunities* for the acquisition of at least a grounding in general knowledge of men and affairs, a broad outlook on life, a faculty for logical reasoning, and ease in self-expression, both in speech and in writing.

### ***A Personal Experience***

But in interviewing and testing candidates, mostly college graduates, many with two degrees, for posts on the staff of a newspaper in India, I have invariably found the average standard of general knowledge incredibly low—so low that one would think that most of the candidates had never read a newspaper in their lives. Perhaps the one (B.A., LL.B.) who estimated the population of Great Britain at a few lakhs was indulging in a little gentle leg-pulling, but I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of another (M.A., B.T.) who wrote that Italy was a republic and France a monarchy!

As far as language is concerned I can of course speak with authority only about English. What the standard is like in the vernaculars I do not know. But

in English, at all events, one could make no greater indictment than to say it is on a level with the standard of general knowledge. It would, naturally, have been unreasonable to expect "newspaper English". I should have been completely satisfied with good, grammatical, literary, "essay English". But was it forthcoming? It was not, except possibly in one or two cases.

I do not altogether blame the universities for these results. It would be foolish to expect them to do things which they do not set out to do, which they are not equipped to do. Their whole orientation to life and learning is different from that of the journalist. That to *some* extent it must differ goes without saying; whether it should differ to *such* an extent is a matter of opinion.

I myself am inclined to think that if the universities adopted in some measure the methods used in training journalists we should have not only better journalists, but also better, in the sense of more effective, citizens.

But so long as it does so differ the tiro would be well advised, providing of course he has had a good high school training up to, say, matriculation, to give the university a miss, and to concentrate on learning to write, learning that which he needs to know, and learning where to hunt up what he does not know.

That does not mean, of course, that his education should cease at sixteen or eighteen. "The one thing that disables almost all young journalists," said one of wide and long experience, "is that their general education has not been liberal and has stopped in the middle." But the middle can be put at twenty-two or even thirty-two as easily as at sixteen; it depends on the man.



### ***Courses in Journalism***

I am not alone, however, in thinking the usual university course unsuitable for the would-be journalist. Were not others in agreement there would never have been instituted at so many universities courses specially arranged for training in journalism.

Such courses have long been known in America, the school at Missouri being particularly famous. London University, more recently, has begun granting diplomas after two years' intensive training. In India the Universities of Madras and Annamalai have, at least decided to follow suit, though what stage of preparation they have reached I do not know. Other universities in India are contemplating taking similar steps. To my knowledge, only one, that of Mysore, has definitely rejected a proposal to do likewise.

### ***Born or Made ?***

Those who decry the value of schools of journalism, or even of books on journalism, usually fall back on the old argument that "journalists are born, not made," and that in any case nothing can eliminate the need for a fairly long apprenticeship in a regular newspaper office. That, to *some* extent, journalists are born and not made no one can deny. I think I said sufficient in my last talk to make that clear. Nevertheless a question still remains to be answered: to *what* extent ?

No exact figures can, of course be given ; but one is fairly safe in assuming that the percentage of journalists who are born and not made is not greater than the percentage of surgeons, lawyers, soldiers—even teachers—that have been born to their profession and

have not drifted into it either on account of some slight predilection or merely by force of circumstances. But the world could hardly make do with the small number of the elite of each of these professions, and even if *they* could equip themselves satisfactorily without the prescribed university courses, there must still be courses for the specialists who must be “made”—because they are not “born.”

### ***Neither !***

What is agitating the minds of those who demand specialised courses in journalism is, I think, the thought of the large number of “journalists” at work in India who are neither “born” *nor* “made,” and whose inefficiency and ignorance of the very principles of fair journalism not only make newspaper reading distasteful but constitute a danger to the country. That is why I am inclined to believe there is something in the suggestion that a course in journalism should form part of the training of *every* student in the country, whatever he intends taking up afterwards. Perhaps not one would be made a good journalist, but few would escape deriving some benefit.

It is needless to stress the importance of good journalism in these days when democracy, which depends so much on the Press for its successful working, is on trial. The journalist, as the interpreter and intermediary between the specialist, in statecraft as in science, on the one hand, and the common man, the voter, on the other, occupies what is perhaps a key position in society. Those journalists who realise this and its implications by instinct, and do their work accordingly, are no more than a handful; the others have to be trained, as far as is possible.

### ***Begin from the Bottom***

At any rate, although it is true that no university course can replace the direct contact and experience by which the journalist learns his craft, it can make things a good deal easier for the new recruit in a newspaper office, and save much time and explanation—and exasperation—for those who have to direct and sooner or later rely upon his efforts. His practical work in the school will at least have taught him the ropes; how he shapes in the ring will depend on his willingness to do disagreeable tasks, to take advice from his seniors, to keep on learning, every day, through books and through life, in short to go through the mill with at first little return but the satisfaction of knowing he is laying a sound foundation for a career as an all-round journalist.

Where such courses are not available, however, and even if they did exist in India not all would have the means or opportunity to take advantage of them, the best taking-off ground is undoubtedly a reporter-ship on a daily or weekly newspaper. This is the school from which so many eminent journalists have graduated. And it should not be difficult to understand why. By common consent the highest prize to which the journalist can aspire is the editorial chair. The man most likely to get there is the man who has had experience of every branch of newspaper work, particularly reporting, sub-editing and leader-writing, and so is competent to direct, control and criticise the work of his subordinates.

That is why a small newspaper, provided that it is run on sound lines by an experienced journalist with

a sense of responsibility, is usually a better taking-off ground than a large one. The staff of a small newspaper, consisting perhaps of no more than two or three men, cannot possibly specialise to the same extent as that in a large office, where even the work of the sub-editor is often narrowed down to a specific task, the news being divided up into various categories, such as foreign, commercial, Assembly, provincial councils, sport and so on.

In the small office the editor has frequently to be his own reporter, sub-editor, leader-writer and not seldom proof-reader too. In his absence, through leave or sickness, the junior will likewise have to make himself generally useful, and he will be surprised in what good stead this experience will stand him if and when eventually he gets his chance on the big daily. He is sure to be a better reporter for having done some "subbing"; he cannot fail to be a better sub-editor if he has been a reporter; as a leader-writer he will be helped by having been both. And even if, ultimately, he becomes a specialist, he will never be the worse off for having more than one string to his bow.

### ***Stepping Stones***

Training for newspaper work, whether at a school or at home or in an office, is unique, I think, in this respect: the time you spend will never be absolutely wasted. Even if you abandon journalism, whether soon or late, what you have learnt will come in useful in many another career. And the opportunities to get out of journalism are almost as numerous as the opportunities to get into it.

Just as there are so many approaches to the broad

field of newspaper journalism, so there are not a few exits leading out of it, not only to other branches of the profession, but even into other professions. If there is a constant drift into it, there is just as constant a drift out of it—not always involuntary!

### ***Trade Journalism***

First and foremost there is the rapidly expanding field of trade journalism. In England and America there is hardly a trade, from the selling of sweets to the selling of sofas, hardly an industry, from brush-making to brewing, hardly a profession, from teaching to wireless telegraphy, hardly a service, from motor transport to meteorology, which does not publish one or more journals for its members and such of the outside public as care to read it. I do not think there is a game, sport or hobby of any importance that likewise has not a weekly or monthly journal devoted exclusively to its interests. All over these countries there are men and women that once served the ordinary newspaper who, by learning all that was possible about some trade or pursuit in which they became interested through daily contact, have been able, because of their training and experience, either to add to their income or secure more lucrative posts.

We are far from having reached that stage yet in India, but a beginning has been made in more than one industry, and in at least one sport, and as industrialisation expands and leisure increases there will be more and more scope for this sort of thing.

Then there are the new and closely allied professions of advertising and publicity, both relying to a large extent on the same qualities and technique

as make for successful newspaper journalism. Of publicity work I shall have more to say in a later chapter.

### ***Other Professions***

Of other professions the Bar has often attracted journalists who have specialised in legal reporting. A legal reporter in the course of his work cannot help acquiring a profound knowledge of the law and specially of court procedure. Moreover, having learnt to express himself in writing, as he must, he does not usually find much difficulty in learning to express himself as clearly in speech.

In the same way most journalists could, if they so desired, make good secretaries. They have learnt the value and technique of organisation and the art of diplomacy; they know their way about, as the saying goes, and they can usually present a case with skill, either in speech or in writing. Lastly it is perhaps natural for one who has for long held up the mirror to public life to desire, at some time or another, to take a share in it; when he does so it is usually not without success.

Briefly, ability to write convincingly is useful, if not essential, in most walks of life, and he who goes all out to acquire it will never regret the time, trouble and expense involved. If English is to be his medium of expression there are several good books with the help of which a man with determination and the necessary *flair* can train himself to avoid the common pitfalls.

**NEWSPAPER WARES**

## CHAPTER IV—NEWSPAPER WARES.

What is a Newspaper?—No Subsidies—Newspaper Trade—Universal Appeal—Journalist a Trader Too—All the News—What is News?—The Only Absolute—The Unusual—Scales of Interest—India and America.

ONE thing that contributes largely to the fascination of newspaper land, as I have already said, is that no official passport is required either to enter or to leave it. I gave as the reason that the gates are too wide and too numerous, the test of fitness for residence is too vague, the wealth of the natural resources of this territory depends too greatly on the constant infiltration of people of all ages and walks of life.

But there is another and still more powerful argument against passports to newspaper land; no one knows quite just where the boundaries lie. Ill-defined as they are, however, I must, if only to keep this book within reasonable limits, make *some* attempt to define them.

### *What is a Newspaper?*

The shortest but most comprehensive definition I have yet seen or heard is this: A newspaper is a commercial enterprise which lives by the selling of all news and appropriate views.

That contains implications that deserve the attention of the would-be journalist. To take the more obvious ones first, it rules out anything published at less frequent intervals than a week, and also those weeklies which devote themselves more to comments on the week's news than to the news itself. Such journals demand a technique, both of writing and make-up, sufficiently different to make the distinction worth while, as we shall see later on.



Secondly, this definition cuts out those papers which give not all but only a section of the day's or week's news—the political, say, or the financial or the sporting. These appeal only to special classes of readers ; the newspaper aims at a much wider circle.

Thirdly, according to this definition, to give only news without views would not be sufficient. There have been such bulletins in the history of journalism ; they are given out now daily on the wireless. But a bulletin is not a newspaper.

### **No Subsidies**

Lastly, I shall have nothing to say, at least in this talk, about the kind of publication that, unable to pay its way and show a profit, has to be subsidised to exist at all.

Readers will know the kind of thing I mean. Perhaps, for example, you are a member of a society whose aim is social uplift. The society decides that it is not getting sufficient publicity in the press, and, having funds, determines to start a paper of its own. To sugar the pill of uplift news it feels obliged to give other matter too, and makes the necessary arrangements, including agreements with news agencies. Nevertheless the paper does not attract a sufficient number of readers, and therefore of advertisers, to pay its way. As it is doing good work, however, the society is content to meet the losses out of its general resources.

Such a journal may be a very good journal, well sub-edited, attractively got up, but it is not, strictly speaking, a newspaper ; it is a *publicity* organ. The people who run it are not business people ; they are reformers. The people who write for it are not,



PLATE III.—PROCESS DEPARTMENT.

*Here pictures, after being enlarged or reduced as required, are etched by means of chemicals into zinc plates which, when mounted on steel blocks, take their place in the page forme together with the ordinary type preparatory to stereotyping (see illustration facing page 61). By this process 15 blocks can, if need be, be prepared in one hour.*

strictly speaking, journalists; they are publicists. The people who buy it are not, to use a term of economics, striking a bargain; they are receiving, at least to some extent, a gift.

### *Newspaper Trade*

The newspaper then, as defined, lives by selling. To the public it sells news and views; to advertisers it sells space in its columns to reach the eye of the public. News, views, space—these are its wares. To most people it is no secret that its income from advertising is much greater, as a rule, than its direct income from sales. But obviously it could not attract advertisers unless the quality of its news and views was such as to obtain a fairly large number of readers in the first place. It is, therefore, the quality of the news and views wares that ultimately determines its success.

Now any business man will tell you that to succeed in business you must give the public what it wants. The same may be said of the newspaper—but to say it does not carry you very far. The fact that even successful newspapers differ widely as to the quality, the relative quantities, and the presentation of their different wares, shows that there is wide difference of opinion as to what it is the public *does* want.

The truth is, of course, that in any one country there is not one public but many, all overlapping in some degree, but each having a different set of tastes and requirements sometimes as far apart as the poles.

The business man, when pressed, will modify his advice by telling you first to choose your public

and then to give it what it wants. If you want to make furniture, say, you have to decide whether it is to be for the wealthy few or for the many poor. Fortunes have been made both ways.

### ***Universal Appeal***

But the daily newspaper, again by definition, cannot, must not, dare not, do that. Once it limits its public to a certain class, no matter on what basis of division—wealth, profession, interests, amusements—it loses its newspaper status. The universally standardised price of the newspaper—in England one penny, in India one anna—is in itself a clear indication that the common aim of all newspapers is to reach as large a public as is humanly possible, and that the common ideal of each is to wipe out every competing newspaper and to make the number of its subscribers co-extensive with the populace it serves.

If newspapers have different policies with regard to the selection and presentation of news and articles it is not because they aim consciously at different publics; it is because each one hopes that, if not to-day then to-morrow, the one *great* public will learn to recognise that *its* policy gives the most satisfactory return for the purchase price of the paper.

I emphasise the “to-morrow” as well as the “to-day” because, if there is one thing we know for certain about human wants (and it is about the only thing we do know for certain), it is that they are incalculable, unbounded, infinite; that they are constantly changing with changes in education, taste, fashion; and that they can be tremendously influenced, some stimulated, some enfeebled, by the power of advertising and propaganda.

That is no doubt true of all the wants that business men try to make their fortunes in satisfying. How much more must it be true of the wants that the newspaper, itself the chief instrument of advertising and propaganda, aims at satisfying!

In fact the most successful papers, most successful, that is to say, financially, are, like the most successful businesses, those that have not been content to meet a need already known and well established, but those that have created new needs; so to speak, and have been first in the field to answer them.

### ***Journalist a Trader Too***

All this may perhaps seem of little concern to the young man in search of a career, or to the large numbers of both young and old who have been repeatedly disappointed by rejection slips—"The Editor regrets. . . . ." But in reality it is of prime importance. For see what follows. . . . .

If the newspaper lives by trading in news and views the journalist too must be a trader. Like any other trader he may be bound by certain traditions, conventions, ideals. But at the same time he must be a trader. Just as the newspaper chooses a certain policy to reach the public, so *he* has to choose his newspaper or be prepared and equipped to follow any policy. Just as the newspaper strives to give the public what it thinks the public wants, so he has to give the newspaper he has chosen (or that has chosen him) what *it* wants: just as a newspaper finds success in creating new needs and then meeting them, so it is the pioneer journalist that, provided he strikes out in the right direction at the right moment, will reap

the greatest reward. This, true everywhere, is particularly true, it seems to me, in India, where a wholly new and untried newspaper-reading public is in the making. But of that, again, more anon.

For the time being it is enough to say that unless you realise the trading aspect of journalism any success you may achieve will be due more to luck than to forethought.

It is not enough, you see, to choose newspaper work as a career; it is not even enough to plump for that side of newspaper work you think you are most fitted for; you have to study the market, select your objective, and produce your wares accordingly.

### ***All the News***

What then does the public look for in a newspaper? A certain amount of information of a purely utilitarian nature there must be—market rates, exchange quotations, crop forecasts, all that goes by the name of commercial news. But this, though essential, would not satisfy more than a very small proportion of the reading public. If the newspaper had had to rely on *essential* information to build up its circulation it would never have achieved its proud position as what is known as the “fourth estate.”

What the public wants is *all* the news. Man is not only a social animal, with an itch to know and discuss what is going on. He is also a vain animal; he does not like to be caught out in ignorance of some happening which may be of general interest or of interest only in his particular group. If his paper lets him down or leads him astray he will soon transfer

his allegiance elsewhere ; for if there is one thing he will *not* do it is buy two papers to make sure of being thoroughly well-informed.

It is this prime necessity to provide not some news or any news but all the news that makes the newspaper's task so difficult ; the necessity, that is to say, of deciding what the great big public will consider constitutes all the news, what for that public is less or more important, less or more interesting.

It is not, mark you, only a matter of collection and selection ; it is also a matter of emphasis, of arrangement and display. A news item tucked away in a corner of a back page is, for the scanner of headlines, as good, or as bad, as left out altogether.

### ***What is News?***

What, then, does the great public consider to be news ? If you could answer that question to the complete satisfaction of every man and woman reader in the country you would be worth your weight, to any newspaper, in platinum. You can try, of course ; there is indeed value in trying, for your success as a journalist will depend very largely on how near you can come to the real answer. But you will never find the real answer, simply because, as an American journalist has said, there can be no absolute in news, for "news depends upon innumerable factors of all but infinite variation." What is news in Bombay may be dead stuff in Calcutta ; what is news for a Hindu may be junk for a Muslim ; and what is news for the sportsman may be a weariness of the flesh to the intellectual.

That is why, of course, of all the reading matter provided for the general reader he consults as a rule only a small part. There is little that immediately interests him, and much that does not. From his point of view there is a large amount of space regularly wasted. But as *all* newspapers strive to provide some interest for all classes of readers there is very little he can do about it, except take in the paper which gives him most of the particular kinds of news in which he finds greatest interest.

The indifference of a large proportion of readers to what he writes is one of the things it takes a journalist a long time to get used to. There is a story of a young reporter who had brought off quite a good scoop, as an exclusive story is called in newspaper land, and had been complimented on it by his chief. Next morning, travelling on an early train, he lent his copy of the paper to a solitary fellow-passenger. After glancing through it from front page to back the stranger returned it with the remark: "Nothing in the blessed paper these days. I wonder why they don't put the hessian market in this edition." It made the reporter miserable all day, but he got used to it in time.

### ***The Only Absolute***

There are, indeed, some events that interest and concern all people, seizing the general attention to the exclusion of all other matters for the time. Such, for instance, was the Quetta earthquake, of recent and painful memory. There was then not a paper which did not give all the information it could come by on



its most important pages and displayed in the largest type at its disposal. But earthquakes, fortunately, do not happen every day. If they did they would cease to be news !

Apart from such events there is nothing that may be termed, in the news sense, absolute, which means that, as every issue has had at least as much news matter provided for it and rejected as appears in the paper, there is nothing the inclusion of which is not subject to editorial decision. Even those things which you or I may consider of the greatest importance, such as the formation of a new political party or the passage of a protective measure through the Legislative Assembly, may not be considered worth more than a paragraph. Important news is, after all, often dull, and to be dull, it is said, is a capital crime in most papers.

### ***The Unusual***

It was Lord Northcliffe who, more than anybody, set the standard of news values for modern journalism. I cannot do better, therefore, than give what may be regarded as his creed. Speaking in 1920 he is reported to have said :

“ You could search the Victorian newspapers in vain for any reference to changing fashions, for instance. You could not find in them anything that would help you to understand the personalities of public men. We cannot get from them a clear and complete picture of the times in which they were published, as one could from the *Daily Mail*. Before that was published journalists dealt with only a few aspects of life. What we did was to extend its purview to life as a whole. This was difficult. It involved

the training of a new type of journalist. The old type was convinced that anything which would be a subject of conversation ought to be kept out of the papers.

“Did you know there was a sub-editor on the *Times* who once spiked an elephant? Yes, an elephant once escaped from a circus in South London and went careering about the streets. When this sub-editor received an account of the incident, he stuck it on the waste-file with other rejected copy. It was too interesting!

“Most journalists of that time had that kind of mentality, though perhaps not quite so pronounced. Or else they thought that the way to sell a newspaper was to have first-class criticism of books and pictures and music and plays. The only thing that will sell a newspaper in large numbers is news, and news is anything out of the ordinary. You know, of course, the great American editor’s definition? Dana said, ‘If a dog bites a man, that’s nothing, but if a man bites a dog, that’s news.’”

It was, no doubt, a disciple of this doctrine who, in reply to a Bishop who complained because discussions at his Diocesan conference about affairs of world-wide interest were not much noticed in the papers, replied: “The papers do not care very much for that kind of thing. If you were to stand on your head on the platform, however, you would be in all the papers.”

It should be added that if he had done it last week it would no longer be news. News, to be news, must be *new*. The modern newspaper prides itself on keeping that word “last” out of its columns. It must be “to-day,” “this morning,” “this afternoon”, at least

“yesterday,” or not at all. Hence the enormous sums that are poured out to make the description as nearly as possible simultaneous with the event described, to be first with the news. Hence the summary treatment meted out to reporters and correspondents that, to use a popular expression, “sleep on it.”

Next to nearness to time as a guarantee of interest comes nearness in place. Where it was that the Bishop stood on his head, that is to say, is an important consideration. If it was in New York it might be considered, in Bombay, worth four lines on a back page. But if it was our own Bishop here in Bombay nothing less than half a column would do justice to the story.

Half a column for a Bishop, but the same four lines, if that, would do for an unknown itinerant preacher. Shakespeare was a good journalist in this respect—he made nearly all his heroes kings or generals. News about the great is always of interest; in fact the interest may be said to vary in direct proportion with the rank of the person concerned.

### *Scales of Interest*

These, then, timeliness, nearness, prominence, are some of the things that go to the making of news, but you will all agree that not one is *essential*. If a story has interest but is old and remote the skilful journalist will find a way of linking it up with the here and now. It is rather in the events themselves that elements of news value must be looked for.

A popular London newspaper has stated them, for

the guidance of its staff, in the following order of importance :—

- (1) Drama, that is to say, human interest.
- (2) Comedy (not farce).
- (3) Sex (within limits).
- (4) Mystery.
- (5) Money (with an eye on the small investor).
- (6) The romance of science.
- (7) Religion (growing interest among young people).
- (8) Personalities (the human touch).
- (9) Sport.
- (10—and last) Politics.

That is the standard of values that has brought success to a London newspaper. Does it, or would it, achieve success for the Indian newspaper? That is the first question the would-be Indian journalist has to ask himself.

### *India and America*

I have my own answer, but I shall not give it now. I should prefer you to think about it yourselves first. You may, of course, go so far as to say that all this talk of time and place and personalities is utterly foreign to what is known as “the soul of India”, that India is interested more in Nirvana than in ‘now,’ more in the next world than in this one, more in the eternal than in the temporal, more in the universal than the particular. That is for you to decide. But read first how the

Hearst newspapers in America claim to have built up a circulation of twenty million readers. This is *their* definition of news :

“Eager, restless, ambitious America has,” they say, “one great dominating passion—*it wants to know*. Whatever happens, wherever it happens, America must know and know at once. Everything great, everything vital, it must know; but it must know lesser things too. It must know if a Balkan king slips from his tottering throne, but it must also know what took place yesterday in the home town, who died, who was married, all the thousand and one things that go to make up the budget of the day’s news. Everything that happens, everything that is done or said or thought must be known. This eager, healthy curiosity, this desire to know, this eternal search for new full light on every subject, dominates America. It has made America what it is. It developed America, discovered its gold and coal and oil, harnessed its electricity, founded its cities and schools, made its farms, built its factories.”

Does India want to know? you must ask yourself. Does India want electricity, cities, factories? I am going to assume, at any rate for the time being, that she does, and that our success as journalists will depend on our ability to give information and news of all kinds in the most interesting and efficient way possible. The methods commonly adopted I shall describe in the next two chapters, first the collection of news and the technique of news writing—that’s for would-be reporters; then the selection of news and the technique of arrangement and display, for candidates to the sub-editorial chair.

**COLLECTING THE WARES**

## CHAPTER V.—COLLECTING THE WARES.

Increasing Importance—Leaders and Leads—News Gathering—News Writing—News Emphasis—Creating Interest—Interviewing—Being Interviewed—Mental Detachment—District Reporting.

**M**ORE than once men have come to me and said they would like to be reporters. When I ask them what they think their qualifications are, the reply is almost invariably: "I took first prize in commercial school for shorthand and typewriting," or words to that effect.

There are not a few people, I suppose, who confuse stenography with reporting. Fifty years ago, when all papers modelled themselves on the *London Times*, the two did perhaps more or less tally. Political speeches and important legal cases were taken down almost verbatim, and it was left to sub-editors to cut them down, if cutting was thought necessary, which was not often. Meetings and speeches of one sort or another took up most of the space. Very little else was thought worth while reporting.

Since then, however, there has been a revolution in news values and reporting methods, as indeed there has been in nearly all branches of newspaper journalism. Where the revolution has been carried furthest, in America, the 'star' reporter is little more, or less (it depends how you look at it), than an amateur detective with a *flair* for narration and description in newspaper style.

Between the stenographer-reporter, a species which still exists in newspaper land but which is rapidly

dying out, and the reporter-detective there is a wide range of types. The kind you are going to be will depend almost entirely on the kind of paper to which you attach yourself, unless of course your writing is so brilliant and your personality so powerful that you can force a change on the paper itself!

### ***Increasing Importance***

Reporting in its most developed or revolutionised form is a highly skilled and in most cases a fairly well-paid job. It is everywhere becoming, and may become still more in the future, even more important than leader-writing and criticism, hitherto considered the plums of the profession.

The reason for this ought to be sufficiently clear from what I said in Chapter IV about newspaper wares. Newspapers aim at giving the great public what it wants, and many of them believe, rightly or wrongly, that what the great public wants is (1) news entirely separated from views, (2) much more news than views, and (3) news which is interesting rather than important.

So far have we advanced in this direction, even in India, that you will no doubt be surprised to hear that the London *Times* at one time regularly published the best news of the day in the leading article and nowhere else in the paper.

Sir Edward Cook, in his life of Delane, editor of *The Times*, tells of the great excitement caused by the announcement that Peel had resolved to repeal the Corn Laws. "That piece of news," he said, "which



was exclusive to *The Times*, was a scoop of the first order. It caused a tremendous sensation, but no piece of news was ever given in a less sensational way. It appeared as the first paragraph of the first leader . . . . There was not even a headline."

Imagine, to take a comparable instance, that the Government of India had decided to alter the rupee-sterling ratio. One newspaper gets wind of their intentions—and keeps the news tucked away in an editorial. You cannot even imagine it; it's inconceivable.

### ***Leaders and Leads***

To-day, if you look at a popular English newspaper, you will find the leaders reduced to little more than notes, each of half a dozen lines, vigorous no doubt, terse and very much to the point, but more a statement of belief than a reasoned editorial. Each could be written in ten minutes at the outside.

Then turn to the news pages. See the care with which the leading news-story, called the lead, is displayed, the time, trouble and expense that have gone to its make-up, the number of reporters whose day it must have filled, the skill with which their contributions have been combined and dovetailed. And what is it all about? A new Bill in the Commons, a new convention of the International Labour Organisation, or a report on the working of the Unemployment Insurance Act? Nothing so dull! Nine times out of ten it will be an accident or a crime or a suicide or the marriage of a film star or the romance of a boy who left home and made a fortune—something, as Lord Northcliffe said, unusual!

“How wonderful reporters are!”, I once heard an old lady say in this connection. “They always seem to know when something is going to happen and reach the spot in time to report it.” I suppose there are plenty of people like her who have a vague idea that newspaper men wander aimlessly up and down the streets of a city, waiting for two cars to collide or a man to stab his rival in love.

### ***News Gathering***

As a matter of fact a reporter never leaves his office without some definite destination in view. If newspapers had to police the streets with watchers not all the advertising in the country would keep the cost down to one anna.

Where then does the reporter go when he leaves his office? If he is on his regular beat he goes to the unofficial non-paid news gatherers, the police stations, the morgue, the coroner’s office, the fire stations, the hospitals, the stock exchanges, the city health department, the hotels, the shipping offices and perhaps half a dozen other places where anybody, who knows how, can pick up news for nothing.

His real work starts when he gets the bare facts.

This, say, is what he gets :

MURDER AND SUICIDE ATTEMPT

S. R., aged 20, arrested June 10,  
student, shot brother and attempted  
suicide by swallowing opium, sent to J. J.  
Hospital. Ambulance No. 1. 10-30 p.m.

Now starts the search for family history, motive, background, etc.—all the ingredients of a first class

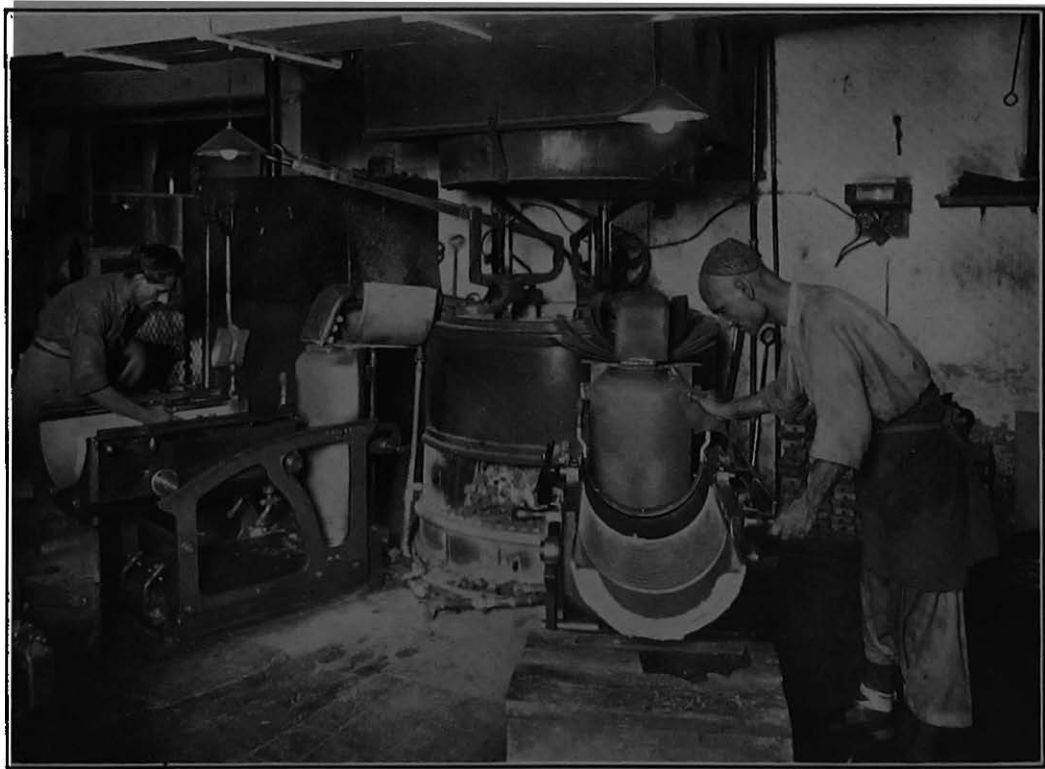


PLATE IV.—THE "FOUNDRY".

When the lines of type and picture blocks have been arranged in columns and the columns put together according to the sub-editors' "page make-up" (see page 76), the page forme is pushed through a "mangle" to produce an impression on a sheet of papier mache. From this sheet a semi-cylindrical stereotype steel plate is cast, which, after a finishing process, fits on to one of the rollers of the huge rotary press ready for printing.

mystery. If the motive is obscure or conventional a short paragraph may be all to show for the day's work. But this is where the reporter reveals whether he has or has not that "nose for news" which is so essential a part of the journalist's professional anatomy.

For this short paragraph of three lines may cover material for a week's agitation, and start a movement with all sorts of unforeseen consequences. The student may have just failed matriculation, along with eighty per cent. of the other candidates. Or he may be an M.A., LL.B. with first class honours in six subjects, who has been unable to find a job during the five years since he left college. Or he may have got into the clutches of a moneylender charging five hundred per cent. interest, as a result of gambling in cotton futures. Or he may merely have been affected by the extraordinary heat . . . .

The reporter has to start out on the assumption that everything is news, and that almost anything may become big news, if it can be shown to be in any way connected with the interests of the vast public.

### ***News Writing***

Only when he has done his detective work can he start writing; and here again, just as his nose for news will have led him unerringly along the only path worth investigating, so will it now dictate to him that selection and arrangement of detail which make all the difference between a more or less prosaic narrative of events, with little specific appeal to the reader, and a story with point and punch. The same story can always be presented in several different ways, humorous if the

paper demands humour, or pathetic if the paper demands pathos. He has to know *which*, and he has to know *how*.

It has been said that a reporter needs three eyes: one to keep on what he is doing, one on the clock, and one on the man who makes up the paper. Few people realise until they try how difficult it is to get all the important facts as well as the interest feature of a story into the first lines of the first sentence of the first paragraph, so that the interest of the reader may in the first place be attracted. Nor is it less difficult to keep paragraphs so absolutely distinct and self-contained that they may be cut out or changed about like the pieces on a chess board to suit the needs of the make-up man; or to keep them in order of diminishing importance so that the tail, or even the whole body, may neatly be whipped off in the stress of the last moment before going to press, so as to make the column fit, without leaving the head "hanging."

Fortunately, like most things, it comes with practice; if it did not the reporter would be in a sorry way.

Of course if you study the newspapers you will not always find such care exercised or skill displayed. It is in this respect, as much as in anything, that Indian journalism betrays its lack of training and amateur origins.

### ***News Emphasis***

Here is an example of the almost innumerable possibilities of presentation inherent in a few facts. It is a story about a Pathan who was stabbed one night

and died in hospital. Naturally the story was reconstructed afterwards from details supplied by the police and the hospital porter. As it appeared in the paper it read :

PATHAN DIES IN  
HOSPITAL

DISPUTE OVER THREE  
RUPEES

After he is stated to have stabbed a Pathan moneylender in Grant Road, Bombay, on Thursday night, a man, armed with a knife dripping with blood, made a bold bid for freedom.

Then, after two paragraphs of details of the chase and the man's escape, we read :

The Pathan, who joined in the chase, though injured in the chest, followed his quarry for a considerable distance and dropped on the road owing to exhaustion. Later on he was taken to hospital, where he died.

It is not until we are nearing the end of the report that we stumble on the item, featured in the heading, that:

A dispute over the sum of Ra. 3 which the Pathan had lent him some days before is stated to be the motive for the crime.

That was bad reporting or bad sub-editing or both. As it is the *cause* of the dispute which is featured in the heading the report should have commenced on these lines :

A dispute over a loan of three rupees is believed to have been the motive behind a murderous assault, staged on the foot-path of Grant Road on Thursday night, as the result of which S. F. R., a Pathan moneylender, lost his life.

But don't you think that the real human interest of the story lies in the wounded Pathan's himself joining in the chase? Almost every day, unfortunately, there is a stabbing affair. What makes this one different, unusual, worthy to be called *news*, is the Pathan's bravery or foolhardiness or whatever you like to call it. I think if I had been writing the report I should have started off by saying :

With blood draining from a deep wound in the chest a Pathan moneylender, suddenly stabbed while walking along Grant Road on Thursday night, forfeited his life in a vain attempt to bring his assailant to book.

Lust for revenge making him heedless of his condition, or perhaps unaware how grave it was, he kept up the chase for a considerable distance until he dropped from sheer exhaustion. An hour later he died in hospital.

And I should have expected the sub-editor to have given a heading something like this :

## WOUNDED PATHAN CHASES ASSAILANT

### FORFEITS LIFE FOR REVENGE

Another way of arousing interest is to look at the event from the point of view of the spectator :

People walking along Grant Road on Thursday night suddenly found themselves caught up in a thrilling but unsuccessful chase after a man still carrying in his flight a knife dripping with blood. He had just stabbed a Pathan moneylender in the chest and was making a bold bid for freedom.

Yet another reporter might try to bring out the suddenness of the attack and the contrast with what went before. Then you would get :

At 8-15 on Thursday night, S. F. S., a Pathan moneylender, twirling his lathi and at peace with the world, was strolling leisurely along Grant Road. At 8-16 he was running madly, dripping with blood from a gash in the chest, in pursuit of the man said to have made it. At 8-30 he was in hospital, with the doctors vainly trying to make good the blood he had lost in the chase. Ten minutes later he was dead.

Such a description savours, however, somewhat of American style, and might be frowned upon by an Indian newspaper editor.

The same might be said of the following attempt to stress the fact that the crime took place, and the assailant escaped, *on a city highway* :

That it is possible to stab a man fatally on the crowded footpath of a crowded and well-lit city highway and then elude capture was demonstrated, but not merely for demonstration purposes, in Grant Road, Bombay, on Thursday night. The man assaulted was S. F. S., a Pathan moneylender, who died shortly afterwards in hospital. The assailant is still at large.

I am not sure, however, that Indian newspaper editors do know what they want, because they themselves are not sure what the public wants. It will be interesting to see what style eventually evolves.



### ***Creating Interest***

Even newspapers which content themselves for the most part with *expected* events, such as meetings, movements or legislation, and care little for the *unexpected*, such as fires, accidents or crime, sometimes demand a high standard of journalistic ability from their reporters.

A speech, for example, can be left dull or made vividly interesting ; it depends purely on the reporter's grasp of the subject, his *flair* for essentials, his appreciation of trends and movements, his insight into character, his skill in the alternate use of direct and indirect speech. The same technique, that is to say, is necessary in routine reporting as in star reporting.

Unfortunately, however, in their desire to avoid any suspicion of sensationalism, some papers seem to go out of their way to avoid, or at least they neglect, such technique. That is a pity, because it leads people to believe that what is important must always be dull, and that, I think, is not necessarily true.

There is no excuse, for example, at least in my opinion, for this sort of thing—a long report, nearly a column in length, of a lawsuit, the result of which is brought out neither in the heading nor in the first paragraph but in the last paragraph of all. The report reads :

ESTATE SUCCESSION DISPUTE  
IN JAIPUR

STATE COUNCIL'S DECISION

Jaipur, May 20.

Whether succession to a Thikanadar of  
Shekhawati should be guided by the law

of primogeniture or by the indigenous custom of equal partition between the respective heirs, was raised by the parties in the Malsisar succession case, which has recently been decided by his Highness the Maharaja of Jaipur in Council.

And you have to read on for thirty lines of more or less wearisome detail before you discover that equal division won the day. It would have been just as easy to write :

**EQUAL PARTITION SYSTEM  
UPHELD**

**ESTATE SUCCESSION DISPUTE  
IN JAIPUR**

The principle that succession to a Thikanadar of Shekhawati must be guided by the indigenous custom of equal partition, and not by the law of primogeniture, was laid down by H. H. the Maharaja of Jaipur-in-Council in the Malsisar succession case, which has just concluded.

Here again, if you wanted to go in for American methods, you might have said :

"Something for everybody ; not everything for one" is to be the principle governing, etc. etc.

At any rate, whether he resorts to American methods or not, the reporter has to remember that the newspaper reader simply has not the time to wade through a column of close print to get to the news. He expects to find it either in the heading or in the first paragraph. If he is interested he will read on ; if he is not, he won't.

***Interviewing***

Interviewing is perhaps the most difficult branch of reporting, which is no doubt why it is seldom

attempted in India, or, when attempted, poorly done. It is like cross-examination, except that the journalist, unlike the barrister, cannot exercise compulsion.

Finding your man is sometimes the worst part of the task, says an American journalist, but more often it is still harder to get him to talk. People to be interviewed are of three kinds; those who talk too much, those who talk too little, and those who will not talk at all. And after you do get your man to talking it takes the concentration of all your mental powers to do your part of the work. You must pay the closest attention to what he is saying, grasp and remember the points he makes, make mental notes of the statistics he may quote (the best interviewers avoid notebooks; "they frighten the interviewed"), jot down, again in your mind, some of his most striking sentences, be on the look-out for pet phrases and characteristic gestures, and at the same time keep up your end of the conversation and bear in mind all the other questions which you must ask, for it will avail nothing to think of a neglected point afterwards.

A well-written interview with a prominent man on an important subject, he concludes, is a thing of which any reporter may be proud.

Such are the ways of American reporters, however, that sometimes the interview is a thing of which a respectable British journalist would be ashamed. An American editor apparently had no qualms in offering this typical bit of advice :

"Reporters become star reporters because they observe things that other people miss and because they do not let it appear that they have observed them. When the great man who is being interviewed blurts out that which is

indiscreet but most important, the cub reporter says: 'That's most interesting, Sir, I'll make a note of that.' And so warns the great man into silence. But the star reporter receives the indiscreet utterance as though it bored him; and the great man does not know that he has blundered until he reads of it the next morning under screaming headlines."

### *Being Interviewed*

Interviewing will not come fully into its own in Indian journalism until the Government official has given way to the minister responsible to a popularly elected assembly and thus ultimately to the populace. As keen as the official is to avoid publicity, so keen will the politician be to secure it. Not the least important of the things he, for his part, will have to learn is how to deal with journalists. It will probably be a long time before he acquires the *savoir-faire* and the skill of the late M. Briand, French statesman, who, confronted by a crowd of journalists at a time of grave crisis in his political career, is reported to have said to them:

"We are old friends, old neighbours, old lovers, old fighters, you and I, and will be till the grave. You have represented me, misrepresented me, been my loud-speaker, the painters of my character, the critics of my words, the cog in the wheel, the stone in my shoe, the body of men I cannot do without, which is indissolubly knit with my fame, my name and my public life. Crush around me; I will never rebuke you. Get what crumbs you can! You will make loaves from them. But let me pass now, for I have my train to catch, and a Frenchman must never miss his train to Paris!"

and so he left them standing, flattered and amused, but no wiser than before.

### ***Mental Detachment***

Seeing that the reporter is always an observer and recorder of the scenes and events with which he deals it is hardly strange that in the course of time he should acquire a sort of mental detachment which puts him in a class apart from his fellow men. Perhaps you know the story of the missionary who, after the meeting, asked a newspaper reporter whether he was "saved." "I am reporting the meeting for so and so," he said. "Oh!", apologised the missionary, "that's different."

Whether he is called upon to report an earthquake or a communal riot the reporter's first thoughts must be: What sort of a story will this make? What are its implications? What will it mean for my public? How shall I deal with it?

And having answered this question to his own satisfaction he proceeds accordingly, irrespective of whether the person or place or community concerned finds favour in his eyes or not. He is the one man that cannot afford personal likes or dislikes.

This sense of detachment lays the journalist open to the charge of cynicism, and no doubt it is to some extent justified. Nevertheless it is a good thing in so far as it keeps the reporter unbiassed and impartial. In fact India, with its divisions and jealousies, could, I think, do with a good deal more of it.

### ***District Reporting***

The district reporter or local correspondent is both like and unlike the regular reporter. In his district he is the paper's representative and is responsible for the accuracy or inaccuracy of the news published.

At the same time he is almost completely free from supervision and direction. Whereas the staff reporter usually has his assignments chosen for him, the district man has to make his own. He must therefore have a nose for news as keen as that of the news editor or editor himself, and a very discriminating nose it must be. Woe to him if he wastes the firm's money in telegraphing a column about a local squabble; equally woe to him if he "saves" the firm's money through missing big news. Then too he has often to rely on his own judgment in estimating the possibility of libel—the "big bad wolf" of every journalist.

These are the directions with regard to libel sent out by the Associated Press, America's largest news agency, to its local correspondents :

"While accuracy in Associated Press despatches is of the highest value, and we would rather be beaten than send out an untruthful statement, there is such a thing as carrying the effort to secure accuracy so far as to delay the perfectly proper announcement of a rumour."

"Be careful but not too careful" is not easy advice.

However, if opportunities are rightly used, a year or two spent as a district reporter may be of considerable value as journalistic training, and the job can often be made a stepping stone to better things.

Such things there are in plenty for the reporter who has learnt his job. Nine-tenths of the men abroad who hold important posts as special correspondents, foreign correspondents, parliamentary lobbyists, crime commissioners and so on began as reporters who served their apprenticeship on police-court news, political speeches, religious gatherings, sport, petty fires,

accidents, and even school concerts, prize distributions and amateur theatricals !

As I said once before, in journalism you never know what's around the corner. Provided you have the ability, keenness and enthusiasm can carry you a long way. There is no seniority rule in *this* service.

# WINDOW DRESSING



## CHAPTER VI—WINDOW DRESSING.

All Window—A Modern Creation—Pivot of the Paper—Tight Rope Dancer—Art of the Headline—Truth in Three Words—Legal Pitfalls—“No Space” No Excuse—Follow-up Stories—The Files—The Ideal Sub-Editor—Disliked by All—Pleasures and Penalties.

**S**HOP-WINDOW dressing, like advertising in general, is a comparatively new art, a by-product of the new age of mass production and mass consumption. A hundred years ago, even fifty years ago, traders did their business through private connections. If you wanted a suit you went to your tailor and ordered one. It was a “bespoke” world. To-day it is a world of the “ready-made”.

Traders, at least in the West, cannot afford to wait for custom. They have to advertise, and the most important part of their advertising is the window display by which they catch the eye of the footpath public.

Hence they spend large sums on lighting and decoration; they employ artists and highly skilled technicians. The ensemble as a whole must be arresting and attractive; the goods must be the most outstanding and most representative; they must be displayed to the best advantage; tickets and labels must make clear quality, origin and price.

### *All Window*

This development has had an almost exact parallel in the newspaper business. In this business, however, window-dressing is even more important, because the newspaper is, so to speak, *all window*; all the wares are on display; and it is as much on account of the display as the wares themselves that most people buy it, though they may not think so.

If you take a typical paper of fifty years ago you will find the wares stacked up all anyhow, no one item standing out, no labels, no variety, no guide to the more important and the less important. Indeed you did not need such a guide, because either you were one of the small, educated, leisured, politically-conscious ruling class, and waded through the paper from cover to cover, perhaps with one or two naps in the process, or you were one of the toiling masses, and could not read at all.

### ***A Modern Creation***

Thus the sub-editor, the newspaper window-dresser, is essentially a modern creation, the most significant product of what is called the new journalism. "Fifty years ago he was hardly known. A long, important, brilliantly written despatch from a distinguished war correspondent would be published in the same small uniform type, with paragraphs half a column long and no oasis headings to break up the Sahara of print, as the poultry show report on the next page." Its only heading would be "Foreign Intelligence."

To-day "such a piece of news would be given chief place on the chief page, heralded and trumpeted by large and arresting headlines, backed up by a two-column width introduction and indentations, its most significant passages indicated by black type, and parts of the text skilfully steered round inset pictures and maps."

This is the most spectacular part of the sub-editor's work. He does many other things, too, however.

He corrects spelling, punctuation, grammar, style and paragraphing, extends and interprets cabled reports,

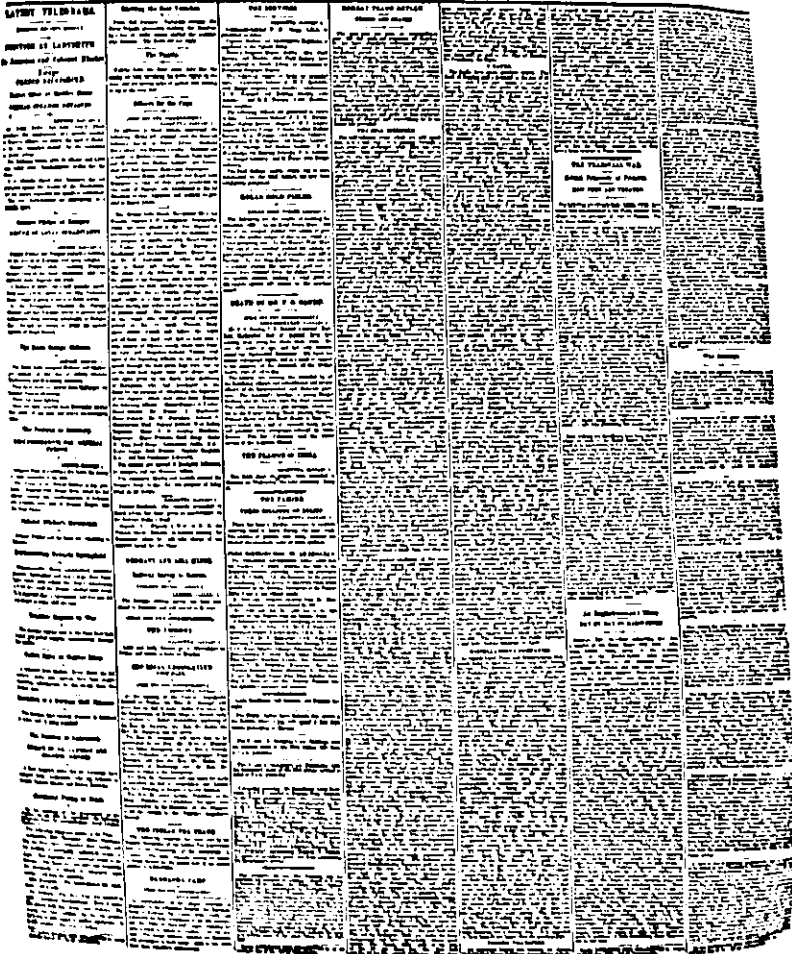


PLATE V.—MAKE-UP THIRTY-SIX YEARS AGO.

The chief news page of "The Times of India" thirty-six years ago, showing the almost entire absence of display. (See page 70).

rejects or rewrites stories where the main feature has been missed or obscured, or reconstructs the opening paragraph, cuts out duplications and libellous or incorrect statements, condenses, recasts, remodels, elaborates, fuses and co-ordinates matter of cognate interest, or separates where separation is required. He may turn his material upside-down and inside-out. There is nothing that he may not do with it—except make “yes” into “no”—and sometimes he almost does that!

It is only after all this has been done that he settles the order and place in which each item is to appear, the type in which it is to be set, the size and type of the headlines that must accompany it and the illustrations to appear with it.

In Chapter V I remarked that the reporter has to have three eyes; it has been said that the sub-editor has to have *four*—keeping one on the probable accuracy of the facts as stated, another on the law of libel, another on various other considerations which crop up from time to time, such as the law relating to elections, and yet a fourth, which must be no less vigilant than the other three, upon the clock.

### ***Pivot of the Paper***

He is, in fact, the pivot of the paper, the liaison officer between the brain workers and the manual workers whose combined efforts are essential to its making. So pivotal is his work indeed that in an outspoken attack on the methods of the popular press Mr. George Blake, himself a journalist of repute, attacks not the editors, not the leader-writers, but the sub-editors. “The leading article,” he says, “has lost its power in this, the most widely read, section

of the Press to influence the people, and appeals to the electorate in political matters are made much more effectively in the sub-editors' room. . . . Policies are made by those whose business it is to arrange, select, and present the news of the day. A newspaper can and does most effectively influence the public by its method of handling news."

That such influence is exerted there is no doubt, but it is wrong to say that policies are made by the sub-editor. Policies are made by the editor, or rather by those to whom he is responsible; the sub-editor merely interprets them in his style and manner of make-up. Editors realise the waning power of the leader as much as anybody; and they keep a keen eye on the news pages to see that the interpretation of policy is as they want it. It is for this reason that the sub-editor has to acquire, if he does not already possess, that same power of mental detachment as I said last week marks off reporters as a class.

### ***Tight Rope Dancer***

For newspapers are as varied in their methods, if not in their aims, as shops and other businesses. Unless a sub-editor wants to stay with one paper all his life, and die unchanging with it, he has to make himself adaptable, to master all styles of journalism, the heavy and the light, the popular and the prosaic. As Lord Riddell once said :

" He is like a tight-rope dancer. He may be called upon to give several different kinds of exhibition—the straight dignified walk, startling gymnastics or attractive tricks. Often, to fill the bill to the satisfaction of the public, he has to do them all at the same time. If he

# PARIS PROPOSALS BEFORE LEAGUE

## HOARE-LAVAL FIRMULA DEAD?

### Ethiopia Refuses To Accept "Peace Of Capitulation And Spoilation"

#### STORMY DEBATE IN COMMONS FORECAST

The League Council proposals for ending the war in Ethiopia have been rejected by the Ethiopian Government. The Ethiopian Government has refused to accept the proposals, which are regarded as a "peace of capitulation and spoilation".

The British and French Governments have proposed a settlement which would require Ethiopia to accept a "peace of capitulation and spoilation". The Ethiopian Government has refused to accept these proposals, and has declared that it will continue to fight for its independence.

#### WILL THE SANCTIONS BE ENFORCED?

The League Council proposals for ending the war in Ethiopia have been rejected by the Ethiopian Government. The Ethiopian Government has refused to accept the proposals, which are regarded as a "peace of capitulation and spoilation".

The British and French Governments have proposed a settlement which would require Ethiopia to accept a "peace of capitulation and spoilation". The Ethiopian Government has refused to accept these proposals, and has declared that it will continue to fight for its independence.

The League Council has now to consider the question of whether the sanctions against Italy should be enforced. It is expected that there will be a stormy debate in the League Council on this subject.

### Italy Determined To Impose Her Will

#### WIMBOLDS'S SPEECH

### War On "Threatening And Dangerous"

WIMBOLDS, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said today that Italy was determined to impose her will on Ethiopia.



### TWO-DAY BATTLE NEAR PASS

#### Heavy Casualties

### MAFISTE-STRONG OF ETHIOPIANS

#### Italians Surprised

A two-day battle near the pass of Mafiste has resulted in heavy casualties on both sides. The Ethiopian forces, led by Mafiste, were reported to be strong and determined. The Italian forces were surprised by the strength of the Ethiopian resistance.

### Increase in India's Cotton Output

#### Official Forecasts

### Yield 10 Per Cent More In 1930-31

The official forecasts for the cotton crop in India for the year 1930-31 show an increase of 10 per cent over the previous year. This is due to a combination of factors, including improved cultivation techniques and favorable weather conditions.

### "RED" INFLUENCE IN SIKHIAH

#### Move Towards Difficulties

### Indian Trade Shows Difficulties

There is a growing concern in India regarding the influence of "Red" propaganda in the Sikh community. It is feared that this influence may lead to difficulties in the Indian trade sector.

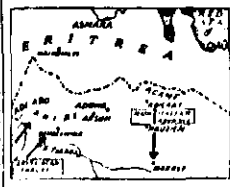
### BAN ON SILVER SPOT TRADE IN BOMBAY

#### Crash Seized

### BIG DECLINE IN LONDON

#### U. S. Buying at Lowest Level

The Government has imposed a ban on silver spot trade in Bombay following a sharp decline in the market. The U.S. buying of silver is reported to be at its lowest level.



The map shows the location of the Mafiste pass in Ethiopia, which is a key strategic point in the region. It also indicates the positions of the Italian and Ethiopian forces during the recent battle.



Map of India showing cotton producing regions.

### NEW PRESIDENT OF CELEBSULAWATI

#### Dr. B. S. Dutt



### ALL-INDIA TEAM FOR CALCUTTA

#### Scholarship Dilemma

An all-India team has been selected for the upcoming competition in Calcutta. There is a dilemma regarding the award of scholarships to the winners.

### WEDDING VENUE FOR W. S. WINT

#### Queen's Hall, London

The wedding of W. S. Wint is to be held at the Queen's Hall in London. The ceremony is expected to be a grand affair.

### BRITISH GLE DISTILL

There is a report that the British Government is planning to distill the gle, a traditional Scottish drink.

### FOREIGNERS IN IRAQ

#### Not Allowed to be Recused

Foreigners in Iraq are not allowed to be recused from their duties. This is a measure to ensure the stability of the country.

### INDIAN STEAMER SERVICE

The Indian Steamship Company has announced a new service between India and Europe. This will provide a faster and more reliable route for passengers and cargo.

### LONDON NEW YORK PRICE DISPARITY

There is a significant price disparity between London and New York for certain commodities. This is due to differences in supply and demand in the two markets.

### Late News

**PARIS, Dec. 19 (AP)—** The League Council today rejected the British and French proposals for ending the war in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Government has refused to accept the proposals, which are regarded as a "peace of capitulation and spoilation".

**ADDIS ABABA, Dec. 19 (AP)—** The Ethiopian Government has declared that it will continue to fight for its independence. It has also announced that it will accept no peace that does not guarantee its sovereignty.

**ROME, Dec. 19 (AP)—** The Italian Government has expressed its disappointment at the League Council's decision. It has also announced that it will continue to support its claims in Ethiopia.

**NEW DELHI, Dec. 19 (AP)—** The Government has announced that it will continue to support the Ethiopian Government in its fight for independence. It has also announced that it will continue to provide financial and military assistance to the Ethiopian forces.

PLATE VI.—MAKE-UP TODAY.

The chief news page of "The Times of India" today. Note the large bold headings, double column introduction in the top left-hand corner, pictures and maps. (See page 70).

does only the dignified part of the business, he is regarded as dull, whereas if he performs only startling gymnastics and pretty tricks he is regarded as purely sensational."

### ***Art of the Headline***

That which above all has given the sub-editor his place in the modern newspaper world, which gives him most scope for brilliance, which saddles him with most responsibility, which most entitles him to respect, which most exposes him to denunciation and ridicule—is undoubtedly the headline, the caption. That is the crux of his problem, the index of his worth, the essence of his art. For, say what you like, it is an art, as difficult, in its way, as music or painting. Certainly, for every one heading entitled to the name of "art" you will see hundreds, if not thousands, of mediocre ones—hack-work pure and simple. But is it not the same in every art?

It may not seem, to the outsider, anything great to give a story a label, even though it has to be compressed into four or five words of such and such an order and such and such a length.

But a good heading is much more than a label, more than a title, more than a summary, more even than a description. At its best it catches the whole spirit of the story, reflects its tone, conveys its atmosphere, lights up, as if by a flash of lightning, its whole background and significance. A good heading is more easily felt than defined; you just sense that it is, as the art critic says, "inevitable," like the stroke of a brush or the ending of a story.

There are four processes by which the newspaper reader is induced to part with his half hour and his

anna a day in the interests of the paper. He must see, he must read, he must understand, he must believe. To make him see is not difficult; to make him read is most difficult. This is the function of the headline, and it is a legitimate function.

Even G. K. Chesterton, most uncompromising critic of American life and ways, was forced to admit this. "If," he wrote in an essay on the American Press, "I choose to head an article 'An Inquiry into the Condition of Mycenaean Civilization in the Heroic Epoch, with Special Reference to the Economic and Domestic Functions of Women Before and After the Conjectural Date of the Argive Expedition against Troy'—if, I say, I choose to give my article some snappy little title like that, I really have no right to complain if (when I send it to the *Chicago Daily Scoop*) they alter the title to 'How Helen did the Housekeeping.'"

### ***Truth in Three Words***

Like all other arts, the art of the headline can be, and often is, prostituted to base ends. Distortion is the most objectionable; vulgarisation hardly less so. Neither is always deliberate. The tight-rope walker cannot be blamed if, to keep his balance, he bears his weight first to one side and then to the other. It is hard at all times to know the truth. Ask Pontius Pilate! It is a feat of the first order to tell it in three forceful words, one of which must denote action, not longer in all than 15 letters counting spaces, two in the first line and one in the second.

Perhaps you will remember the fire of criticism to which the popular Press was subjected in both Houses



of Parliament some time ago. In the House of Lords Lord Kilmaine, denouncing scare headlines, quoted the "recent dangerous situation" between Italy and Abyssinia when Sgr. Mussolini, "greatly to his credit", agreed to submit the matter to arbitration by the League of Nations.

One would have thought, Lord Kilmaine declared, that the Press would have done nothing to add fuel to the flames. Nevertheless a certain London paper produced one day a headline in large type ITALY CLIMBS DOWN, than which, he suggested, nothing was likelier to annoy a proud popular leader like the Italian dictator.

It is possible, of course, that the sub-editor concerned was out to humiliate Mussolini; it is also possible that he did not fully comprehend the significance of the Italian gesture. But, judging from personal experience, I should think his chief preoccupation was merely to squeeze an effective heading into a two-inch column. If, admitting defeat, he had run over three columns and put ITALY AGREES TO SUBMIT ABYSSINIAN DISPUTE TO ARBITRATION BY LEAGUE OF NATIONS he would have laid himself open to severe reprimand, if not something worse.

Nevertheless I agree, of course, that exigencies of space are no excuse for distortion or sensationalism. To resort to either is in itself an admission of failure. That is all the more reason why sub-editors should be highly educated men, trained journalists and responsible citizens of the world.

Be that as it may, the first-rate caption writer is in a class by himself, and he sells his brains in a rising market.

### ***Legal Pitfalls***

The only check on headline distortion, whatever its motivating cause, and indeed of sub-editorial antics in general, is the ever-present danger of libel. Even experienced sub-editors, who have the law of libel at their finger tips, as they are expected to do, sometimes fall in the trap. Although there have literally been scores of trials fought out on knotty points of libel law, so many that one would suppose all the ground to have been covered time and again, there still crop up border-line cases where transgression was obviously not intended.

There was, for example, a headline *STUDENT'S LEGACY STORY* in connection with a police court case. The student, suing for libel, claimed that the headline would convey to the reader that he was telling a cock-and-bull story to the magistrate about a legacy, and that in making the statement he was guilty of perjury. The newspaper concerned maintained that "story" bore the ordinary and familiar meaning of "narration" or "recital" and was in no way disparaging to the student. The student was awarded £10 damages, but when the case was taken to the Court of Appeal the newspaper won!

The danger does not lie only in headings. A heading is the last word in compression, but some compression is needed throughout, and is frequently fraught with peril, as many newspapers have discovered to their cost. Even as I write a report is to hand of an action brought against a group of London newspapers by a woman who was conducting an establishment for massage and other treatment. Such undertakings

require a license from the London County Council. There were allegations of improprieties at the establishment ; an application was made for the revocation of the license, and a public enquiry was held. Evidence was given of the alleged misconduct, but the plaintiff was able to give an entirely satisfactory account of herself ; her character was cleared and her license was not revoked.

### ***“No Space” No Excuse***

The proceedings were prominently reported in the morning, evening and Sunday papers. The woman complained that the reports were unfair and that her business and reputation had suffered. She said that the evening papers, published on the same day, contained the evidence of the alleged improprieties but never stated the favourable result of the enquiry, while the morning papers gave the result but devoted disproportionate space to the damaging allegations and cut down the evidence of her denials.

The evening papers said they could report only what was available up to the time when they went to press ; they left the later information to be found in the morning papers next day. The morning newspapers replied that matters had to be ruthlessly summarised in the Press ; whatever was omitted, someone was sure to say that the omitted portions were the only bits that mattered. The jury took the view that the reports had been unfair, and gave the plaintiff a total of £1,500 damages against seven of the defendant journals.

So disastrous can a slip like this be for the sub-editor at fault, possibly wrecking his career, that sub-editors sometimes go to ludicrous lengths to safeguard

themselves. It was probably a novice scared by stories of the dire penalties that attend the perpetration of a libellous heading who wrote, to be on the safe side,

### HANGED FOR ALLEGED MURDER.

“Alleged”, of course, is the sub-editor’s rock of refuge. In time it gets into his blood; he writes it down almost without thinking. That is how this freak must have happened :

### ALLEGED SUICIDE AT LARGE.

Hardly less important than the rewriting of stories and the writing of captions is the “expanding” of telegraphed news items. So great is the cost of telegraphing, despite the concessions allowed by the post office, that correspondents and press agencies naturally confine themselves to a bare recital of the *new* facts which constitute the news. The memory—and the general knowledge—of the average reader being what they are, such bare summaries would have little meaning, and therefore little interest, for him if published as telegraphed. That is, they would be “dead” stuff.

### “Follow-up” Stories

It is only by describing the events that *led up* to this war or revolution or Cabinet crisis, by showing the strategical importance of the new naval base that is to be, by sketching the life of the general that has just died, by recalling who held the record that has now been broken, and when and how it was established, by explaining why Ruritania simply had to go off gold—it is only in these ways that the sub-editor can bring such bare summaries to life.

For example, here is a typical *Reuter* message received late one night:

"The death is announced of Sir Claude Champion de Crespigny, age 88". That was all.

"Well, who was he, anyway?" asks the reader.

"Ah," says the "follow," "as remarkable a man as any that lived. Don't you remember? This man was both a soldier and a sailor—that's not usual, is it? But, what is more, he was a modern Hercules. So iron-like was his constitution that no injury could keep him on his back. His pluck and endurance were phenomenal".

And then come instances of his remarkable strength and bravery—a truly interesting "story", brought to life by the man's death and the sub-editor's alertness.

In looking for "follows" the sub-editor relies chiefly on the files of his own newspaper. Without files newspapers could hardly live and flourish. It is impossible to exaggerate the value of the files. In every newspaper office worthy of the name there is a man employed to do nothing else but keep them up-to-date and available for easy reference in one way or another. Even Rudyard Kipling, who worked as a journalist for the Lucknow *Pioneer* long before he became a great author, found in them a fit subject for his rhyming propensities. This is what he wrote :

### ***The Files***

"Files—

The Files—

Office Files!

Oblige me by referring to the Files,

Every question man can raise,

Every phrase of every phase  
 Of that question is on record in the Files—  
 Threshed out threadbare—Fought and finished  
 In the Files.”

When his own files fail to yield what he wants the sub-editor resorts either to the office “morgue”, where are kept obituary notices of everybody worth “noticing”, in the newspaper sense, or the reference library. *Who's Who* and the *World Gazetteer* are never out of reach. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* is a daily stand-by. The *Statesman's Year Book* is a mine of information, if you know where and how to dig.

His trouble is not, usually, too little material but too much! It is in the selection of just those facts that are relevant and none other that the sub-editor here shows his news sense. It is in their logical and literary arrangement that he shows his writing ability. We have divided news and views pretty rigidly. Here, however, is a class of wares that falls between the two. The “follow” is not news in the strict sense of the term; it only amplifies the news. Nor is it “views” in the meaning of policy; it is only the bare bones of the next day's leader. It is, in a way, a link between the two, and because it is such a link, the man who has shown a special *flair* for this kind of work may regard himself as well on the road to becoming a leader-writer—if that is his ambition.

### ***The Ideal Sub-Editor***

The power and responsibility of the sub-editor, already enhanced as a result of the new journalism, has thus been increased still further by the growing tendency of newspapers to rely on Press agencies for their routine

reports and on sub-editors to cast them in the mould they require. This increase in power and responsibility has in its turn naturally meant a widening of the qualifications, natural and acquired, needed for the job. For a description of the ideal sub-editor I do not think I can do better than give the analysis offered by F. J. Mansfield, a veteran London *Times* sub-editor, in his book *Sub-Editing* (see Appendix).

It is significant, one should note, that a staff man even of so dignified and sober a paper as *The Times* should place first and foremost the need for the "human" personality, by which he means sympathy, insight, breadth of view, imagination and a sense of humour.

After these, he says, come

Orderly and well-balanced mind, which implies level judgment, sense of perspective and proportion.

Cool head; ability to work in an atmosphere of hurry and excitement without getting flurried or incapable of accurate work.

Quickness of thought, coupled with accuracy.

Conscientiousness, keenness and ruthlessness, rightly directed.

The judicial faculty, i.e., well-informed common sense.

Capacity for absorbing fact—and fancy—and imparting them in an acceptable manner.

Adaptability—the power, whatever be one's prepossessions, of getting the reader-angle.

Sound general education and wide general knowledge.

In particular, a thorough grasp of questions and persons of the day—political, industrial, etc.—and close acquaintance with contemporary journalism and literature.

Knowledge of the main principles of the law of libel, contempt and copyright.

Ability to write good English, and hence to ensure that the stories handled are converted into that currency.

Physical fitness for a trying, sedentary life, which takes its toll of nerves, sight, and digestion.

The team spirit—a newspaper is one of the most striking products of co-operative enterprise and effort.

And last, but by no means least, a *penetrating sense of news values*.

From reporting of the ordinary kind to sub-editing is usually regarded as promotion. Although the pay is not very much greater the responsibilities, curiously enough, are, and consequently the opportunities to acquire a more varied experience. Particularly in these days, when so much stress is placed on make-up and sub-editorial work in general, the chances of an editorship are greatly increased for the man who understands the work from A to Z and has proved his worth at it. Nevertheless the work has so many undoubted drawbacks that many reporters are content to sacrifice ambition and remain what they are.

### ***Disliked by All***

In the first place, sub-editors are undoubtedly the most unpopular members of the newspaper staff. They are subject to a double criticism, from the editor who watches for mistakes and the reporters whose mistakes they correct. The editor holds them responsible for poor headlines, libellous statements, involved sentences; the reporters blame them for pruning and cutting and changing.

“They receive no thanks from above or below while the possibilities of reproof and disaster are endless,” says one who knows.



The work is thus unpleasantly negative. I know an office where a prize is offered each week to the reporter who turns out the week's best story. One prize story I saw before it went to the sub-editor and after it had left his hands, hacked, turned, twisted, rearranged, almost rewritten. It was not merely described by the heading ; it was brilliantly illuminated. If anyone deserved the prize it was the sub-editor. Needless to say he did not get it. The editor would not even have known who had "subbed" it, had it not been for a small mistake made by the reporter and passed on by the sub-editor—who was duly reprimanded !

### *Pleasures and Penalties*

For the rest the nature of the work is well summed up by Mansfield, who has spent a lifetime at it :

"The work has its penalties. It is performed in most offices in a drab room, and those who toil at night are cut off from the currents of outside life—from the theatre, from civic engagements, from social pleasures, and even from the dissipation of the wireless at home. If the nights are spent in strenuous work at the desk, the daylight hours are largely swallowed up in "reading the paper" and seeking other sources of information to keep the mind abreast of thought and action. The sub-editor has a limitless field of study to fit him for his work.

"A life of isolation and intensive labour, redeemed only by the occasional morning game of golf or tennis, or an hour of gardening, to brace the body and the brain for the nightly strain ; a calling full of romance and zest to the born journalist, yet singularly dull and uninspiring to the outside observer. When visitors are shown round the big office it is not the plain rooms which house the "brains department" which excite interest, but the

lino-type and autoplate, the giant press. There is nothing spectacular about a sub-editor. The desks at which the troglodytes with horn-rimmed spectacles are bent amid a mass of manuscripts and stacks of reference books claim polite attention but no real interest, but they are nevertheless the birthplace of the ideas and conceptions which the mechanical departments exist to serve."

"Taking everything into consideration," says another veteran journalist, "if you wish to see life—to enjoy journalism—shun sub-editing, go reporting or special corresponding and put as many miles between yourself and the office as possible."

But if you want to get on in the newspaper world, he ought to have added, and take your chance of seeing life and enjoying journalism later, you will find a few years as sub-editor a good investment.

## TIPS FOR FREE-LANCES

## CHAPTER VII.—TIPS FOR FREE-LANCES.

Why Not?—Study the Market—Heart-breaking Job—The Newspaper Touch—What To Write About?—Make It Topical—A New “Slant”—The Dagger Style—Short, Short, Short—Frills Not Wanted—Indians and English—Pinning Down Ideas.

### **E**XTRACT from the *Writers' and Artists' Year Book*, 1935:

“Times of India, Bombay, London, Salisbury Square, E.C. 4. One Anna Daily. Topical articles and photographs likely to be of particular interest in India and to Indian readers. Length preferred, 1,000—1,500 words. Payment: Rs. 20 a column.”

Thirty-one journals published in India are mentioned in the *Year Book*. There are hundreds more, of course, not mentioned, but let us restrict ourselves to these thirty-one. They pay from Rs. 5 to Rs. 25 a thousand words. Take the average as, say, Rs. 15. Suppose you wrote one article a month for each. That would give you an income of about Rs. 450 monthly. Not bad for work done in your spare time sitting at home, or even if you gave all your time to it!

Nevertheless I do not suppose there is a man or woman in the whole of India who is *regularly* earning that much at free-lance journalism, either spare time or whole time.

### **Why Not?**

Not for want of trying, I am sure. There are plenty of people who would be glad of the opportunity to earn half that money or even less at so fascinating a hobby. A few do, no doubt. Others, thousands of others, probably, make one or two more or less

determined efforts; their articles are rejected and they try no more. Perhaps the most unfortunate of all are those who do succeed in getting one or two things accepted, and are thereby encouraged to believe that their true vocation in life is journalism.

With the thrill of that first cheque in their blood, and undeterred by constant rejections, they go on and on, putting in an enormous amount of work, of which perhaps a fraction is rewarded, giving them 50 or 60 rupees a month, just enough for a miserable and precarious existence.

Nor is it for lack of a market. Newspaper editors in India, like editors all over the world, will willingly pay for brightly written, informative, topical articles by which the newspaper's reputation might be enhanced. But so great is the lack of real journalistic ability, backed up by technical knowledge and experience, in India, at least to serve the English Press, that mostly they are forced to fall back upon the syndicated articles sent out from England or America, or they rely upon their own office staffs. A man who could regularly earn 400 to 500 rupees a month at free-lance journalism would soon be snapped up by one or other of the larger newspapers for inside work. Then he would no longer be a free-lance. That is why there are none.

### ***Study the Market***

I am convinced, however, that it is not lack of ability so much as lack of technical knowledge and experience that causes the rejection of a good deal of the stuff which pours into newspaper

offices. People think that all they have to do is to sit down and write about the first thing that comes into their heads, without regard to subject, length, style, or ultimate objective.

That is, they write primarily to please themselves, not editors. I have said before, and I repeat again, that a journalist, to be a journalist, and not just an occasional writer, must be a trader. What would you think of the real trader who bought or made things to please himself and not his customers? He would very soon be out of business.

Obviously common sense demands that the first thing to do is to study the market, to find out where newspapers differ, and how therefore they are likely to differ in their requirements. Rustling a few well-known papers is not enough. It requires a critical analysis of the columns of as many papers as you can lay your hands on over a considerable period. That, as well as many other things you have to do to make free-lancing pay, requires effort, time, probably some expense.

Free-lancing, that is to say, is not as easy as it sounds. The first question that you have to ask yourself, therefore, is: "Is it worth it?"

### ***Heart-breaking Job***

If your object is simply and solely to make a living the answer, at least *my* answer, is emphatically *No*. As a whole-time job it's a heart-breaking job. Fashions change; you never know where you stand. The slightest slackening of effort will mean a big hole in your income. No one knew more about free-lance

journalism than Kennedy Jones, for a long time Northcliffe's right-hand man. This is what *he* says about it in his book *Fleet Street and Downing Street*.

"It is breaking a man on the wheel. For one article printed two are refused, others perhaps held back. In some offices trouble may ensue about the payment: it is "forgotten" or "overlooked," and much more time may be occupied in collecting the money than in writing the article. The journalist who takes a pride in his work and realises the essence of it is to suit the taste of the moment has his heart quickly broken if he allows himself to be tied down to this wheel."

As a spare time hobby, however, when your position in life is already well established and you have nothing more to hope for along that line, it can be a source of never-ending interest and possibly of a little spare cash. More than that, it gives you an opportunity to test your skill, so that, at the cost of a couple of postage stamps and without throwing over a permanent job, you can impress upon editors the value of your ideas and writing ability. If you *can* do that, jobs will be yours for the asking!

### ***The Newspaper Touch***

Always provided that you have ability there is one sure road to success in free-lancing: GET THE NEWSPAPER TOUCH. That is, first of all, make your article appear as if it comes from a man with years of newspaper experience. Of two articles,

One brilliant, but far too long, not paragraphed, scrawled all over both sides of flimsy slips of paper, heavily and untidily altered, difficult to read, difficult to correct and condense;

the other less brilliant, but the right length, neatly typed in double or triple line spacing on one side only of good stout paper, left unfolded if possible, with wide margins at each side and top and bottom, with the name of the author and approximate number of words clearly stated on the title page,

it is the latter that will be preferred every time.

If you can give it a bright and catchy main heading, which will fit the column in the kind of type you think is likely to be used, with minor headings at the right intervals, also calculated to fit, so much the better.

The editor, you see, is a busy man, no one more so. His staff is, too. If he can see at a glance the style and content of your article; if in addition he finds it all ready for the printer, without the need for drastic "subbing", (which, sub-editors being paid, costs money) the chances of acceptance are already multiplied a hundredfold.

Moreover so few amateurs have the common sense to do this that the chances are he will think the article is the work of a professional newspaper man. Thinking that, his suspicion of possible mistakes will be lulled; he will read it probably with less care; he will be inclined to give you the benefit of the doubt where doubt exists. In short he will be *sympathetic*. There is a freemasonry among journalists as strong as in any other profession. Most journalists are cynical about life in general and their own work in particular; but they can be sentimental where other journalists are concerned.

The editor will definitely know, however, that you are *not* a newspaper man if you write him a long



covering letter, telling him how hard up you are and how worthy of assistance, or that you have been a devoted reader of his paper "from the cradle." Newspaper men know better than to think that an article will be accepted or rejected for any reason other than merit.

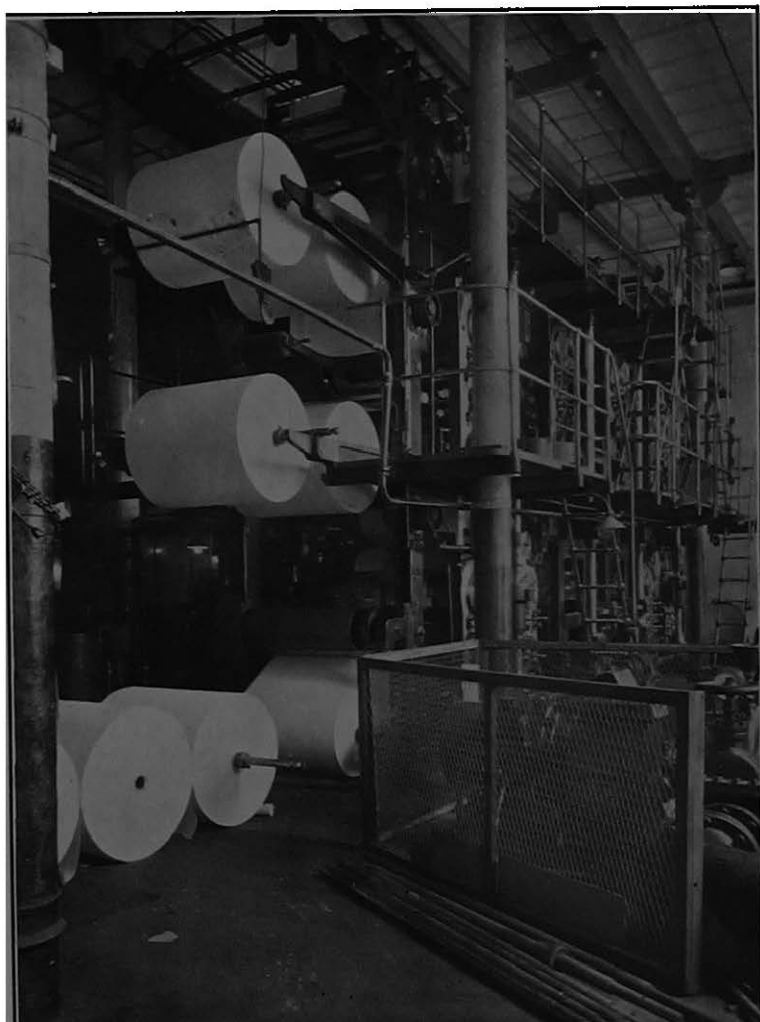
These are the mechanical little things that make all the difference; but they are only the little things. The big things are **subject** and **style**.

### ***What To Write About ?***

What to write about is naturally the first consideration. As I have said, it boils down to this—who to write for ?

Strangely enough it is the advertiser that has made the free-lance possible. Owing to the advertiser's ever-increasing demands on space, newspapers have been obliged (not unwillingly, of course) to increase the number of their pages. But a newspaper which permitted an overwhelming proportion of advertisements would not retain the allegiance of its readers for long. Nor would it keep its advertisers. Hence the need for additional reading matter, for matter, that is to say, which will not be *glanced at* but *read*.

So varied is this matter, and in addition so technical, requiring knowledge as well as a gift of popular presentation, that it does not pay a newspaper to employ a regular staff to fill out these pages. They are content to rely on free-lances, either directly or through agencies. It is therefore the papers with the largest amount of advertising that offer the most likely field for the free-lance. Even these, however, differ enormously as to requirements.



It is not enough merely to conform to the political views and policy of any given paper. There are still more subtle differences which will repay study. Some papers have what is called the human touch, others the literary touch, one at least I know in India has what is called a philosophical touch. But *all*, ALL, ALL have the news touch, the topical touch. For without that they would not be newspapers. An article rejected in November may be accepted in June, or even rejected one week may be accepted the next, if in the meanwhile something has occurred to bring the subject dealt with into prominence.

Don't mistake me. I do not insist that what you send in should be *news*. Indeed, newspapers are so well organised for the collection of news, the net is spread so wide and the meshes are so close, that you cannot hope to compete with the professional news-gatherers. It would be sheer luck if your version of a street accident reached a newspaper office before that of the paid reporter.

But there is a difference between news and news value. Suppose, for instance, you have prepared an article on earthquakes. Unless brilliantly or humourously written from an entirely new angle it would—at most times—have a hard struggle to get past the editor.

### ***Make it Topical***

But if sent in on the heels of an earthquake, when the whole country is still rocking from the shock of the news, the editor will “sanctify your name and call you blessed.”

Suppose, again, you have an article on the industrialisation of India. There's very little you can say

that has not been said a hundred times before, but there might be some chance if you began with something like this :

“News leaked out yesterday that a scheme is on foot for the mass production of motor cars by a group of industrialists and capitalists in India. Will they succeed? Research workers at the American Institute of Industrial Psychology would answer: No. At a recent conference they decided that workers in hot countries are, both temperamentally and physically, unfitted for mass production factory conditions.”

And then you go on to say why and under what circumstances such conclusions must be true or false and so on.

Yet one more instance, because this is almost, if not quite, the whole secret of successful free-lancing. In your ideas book you have written down “Congress attitude to religion and caste system—is Gandhi representative?” So far it is only an idea. Then one day, scanning the papers, you light on a report commencing :

“I shall never on any account give up my sacred thread”, said Mr. Satyamurthi in answer to a question, etc., etc.”

Now is the time to cash in on that idea. If you don't now you never will.

That is what I mean by topicality. Obviously it can only be achieved by a close study of newspaper files; unless you have the memory of a Macaulay you will even find it wise to keep a file yourself, organised and arranged either on a subject basis or an “idea” basis for ready reference. In building up your article you will need files as much as the sub-editor does in his

search for "follows". And not only files but reference books as well—hence membership of a good library is essential.

### ***A New "Slant"***

Provided you can maintain contact with the news, or, alternatively, are fertile in finding new angles of approach, there is almost no limit to the range of subjects at your choice. There is nothing that has been written about before that cannot be written about again—with a new "slant," as it is called. As a great French story writer once said :

"Everything that one desires to express need only be looked at a sufficiently long time to discover in it some aspect which no-one has as yet seen or described. In everything there is still some spot unexplored, because we are accustomed only to use our eyes with the recollection of what others before us have thought on the subject which we contemplate. The smallest object contains something new."

Which the journalist interprets as "for every old story there's a new end somewhere!" And when he does find the new end and puts it into print the reader says "Gosh, that's true. Why have I never thought of that before?"

At the same time it would be as well if you drew up for yourself a list of the subjects that you consider would be of greatest interest for Indian readers. A London editor gives the chief popular interests as Women, Food, Money—in that order. Do you think that estimate holds good for India?

Another secret of success in free-lancing is specialisation. I have said that a journalist should know a little

about everything. If, in addition, he knows much about one thing—sport, archæology, politics, finance—his chances of survival in the struggle will be multiplied a hundredfold. When, having established for himself a reputation in that subject, he finds editors inviting articles from his pen, then he will know his day has come.

### ***The Dagger Style***

As far as style is concerned, the newspaper touch may be summed up in a sentence. Think of it as a dagger—short, pointed at one end, rounded at the other, blade dead straight and with two cutting edges.

The “point” of your article is the opening paragraph. If it’s sharp it makes its way into the editor’s mind, or heart, and carries the rest with it; if it’s blunt it slithers off, leaving no impression. Few editors read beyond the first paragraph or two. If *they* are good he passes the article on to an assistant for further consideration. If they are bad he calls for a rejection slip. The moral is—tell your story in the first paragraph, the lead, as it is called, in the brightest, most vivid, most striking, most topical, most interesting way you can. A good title and a good opening paragraph and half the battle is won.

But you have to remember the assistant editor too. He knows the “point” is sharp: otherwise he would not be handling the thing. So he concentrates on the blade, the body. Does the article as a whole “cut ice”, as the Americans say? He looks to see if it is transparently clear, logical, well-knit and sweetly flowing. It must be one whole body, not half a body or two or more bodies strung together; that is, it must

be rounded off by an ending which neither leaves the reader dangling in the air, so to speak, nor comes as an anti-climax. A good ending is almost if not just as important and difficult as a good beginning.

### ***Short, Short, Short***

As for length you can generally tell to an inch how much space a paper reserves for feature articles as distinct from news. An article is seldom allowed to run to more than 1,500 words. More often it is less than 1,000—about a column in a fairly large newspaper. That's not much. It takes ability to get anything worth saying at all in that space. But it must be done—and you are the one to do it. Unless it's extraordinarily brilliant no one will do it for you.

But even a short article is too long if *words, sentences, paragraphs* are not correspondingly *short*. Book print usually gives ten or more words to a line; a newspaper column can manage only five or six. Hence a paragraph in book print will be twice as long in newspaper print. Moreover book print has wide white margins on either side, which make for ease in reading. Newspaper columns have no margins; only other columns. Book print is as a rule almost twice as large as newspaper print. Reading a newspaper is thus under any circumstances a strain. It is a still bigger strain if the eye is not given a rest at frequent intervals. Hence the newspaper paragraph should be about a quarter of the length of a book paragraph—that is, about 75 words, which make about fifteen lines or two inches of print.

But a paragraph to be a paragraph must contain three or more sentences. Thus each sentence may not

contain an average of more than 25 words as the maximum. Then again, with short paragraphs and short sentences you cannot have a ponderous, literary, latinised vocabulary. In any case if you want to write for the masses you may not use any word not understood of the masses. And the shortest words, like those, in English, of Anglo-Saxon origin, are the most easily understood.

### ***Frills Not Wanted***

Plain writing, that is to say, without frills and furbelows, is what the plain man wants, and plain writing the newspaper journalist must give him. Michael Joseph, in his book *Journalism for Profit*, quotes Tchekov in this connection :

“ Anyone can understand me when I write, ‘ The man sat on the grass ’ ; they can understand me because it is clear and arrests the attention. On the other hand one cannot easily understand me, it is a load on one’s brain, if I write ‘ A tall, narrow-chested, middle-sized man, with ginger-coloured beard, sat on the green grass, trampled down by pedestrians ; he sat down quietly, timidly, nervously looking round.’ This cannot get into one’s brain straightaway, and writing must get into the brain at once, in a second.”

I quote this particularly because as it was written by a Russian in Russian it seems to imply that simplicity of style and language is an asset to the writer in *any* language ; I suppose it is as true of the Indian vernaculars as it is of English.

### ***Indians and English***

I need hardly say, of course, that the most carefully cultivated newspaper touch in the world will fail to



“touch” unless it is backed up by good, grammatical, idiomatic English. I have no axe to grind in this connection. I speak in all charity and sincerity when I say that of all the Indians I know, and I know a good many, the number of those above reproach in this respect could be counted on the fingers of both hands.

It is not through lack of intelligence or language sense; Indians as a people have as much of both as any other. I think it is the universities that are mostly to blame; their methods of language teaching are too loose. One unfortunate result of this is that having become B.A.'s and M.A.'s graduates believe that their English must be faultless. Once they can be persuaded that it is not the faults are easily remedied. A good syntax book with exercises and a key, worked over twice or thrice, would solve the problem for most. But let me warn you it *must* be solved—or your chances as far as English journals are concerned are almost if not quite hopeless.

### ***Pinning Down Ideas***

Having overcome that hurdle, your chief object is to find ideas, ideas to transform what would otherwise be dead junk into living matter. As soon as an idea strikes you write it down, and never lose sight of it. Remember the unhappy fate of that poor French journalist who, while walking in his garden, had a really brilliant idea, the most brilliant of his life. He made a “mental note” of it and went on to think of something else. By the time he reached his study that note had been “mis-laid.” He remembered that he had had an idea, but he had forgotten what it was. After two days’

unsuccessful search in the recesses of his brain the thought of what he had lost made him so miserable that he committed suicide !

But I think it was O. Henry who was always *intending* to write a story about a good boy spoilt by good influences. He died before it was written. Anyhow, he has left a subject to start you on your career as a free-lance. May it be a successful one !

**WHAT WE THINK**

## CHAPTER VIII—"WHAT WE THINK."

The One and the Many—Does It Lead or Follow?—What You Think—Less Power, More Influence—Manner and Matter—Leader and Democracy—Sitting on the Fence—Weathercock Politics—Anonymity—Is it Worth It?

**I**N India the sensational part of journalism is still thought to be, as it was in Britain before the war, the control of opinion, and the most envied position, short of the editorial chair, that of the leader-writer.

How the British leader has degenerated from the proud position it occupied in Victorian times, when by a word it could make or unmake ministries, to the ten-line exhortations of today, "written by office boys for office boys," as Lord Salisbury said of the *Daily Mail*, is a story in itself, and one not without significance for Indian journalism.

In Delane's time, that is, roughly the middle years of the last century, the London *Times* was practically the only newspaper worthy of the name. It was then that Emerson, the American essayist, wrote of it:

"No power in England is more felt, more feared, or more obeyed. What you read in the morning in *The Times*, you shall hear in the evening in all society. It has ears everywhere, and its information is earliest, completest, and surest. It has risen year by year and victory by victory."

"And when," says Delane's biographer, "after his thirty-five years of editorship, Delane retired from his post, the event was spoken of, among those behind the scenes, in the tone which we apply to the passing of the mighty ones of the earth or to the close of some memorable epoch."

### ***The One And The Many***

It was, indeed, the close of an epoch. The power of *The Times* was due not to its circulation: that, in point of numbers, would today be considered ridiculously small, a paltry few thousands. It was the conditions of the age that gave to *The Times* its easy pre-eminence. It was an age of restricted franchise and of little general education. Few people had the vote; and those that did read *The Times*. Hence its peculiar influence as the representative, or the guide, of public opinion, as the "unofficial opposition."

How changed are the conditions of today! *The Times* is only one of many, and of all the great nationals it has probably the smallest number of readers. It is no longer these that decide elections but the great mass of readers of the popular press, voters who have no fixed political allegiance, who have minds below—or above—leading articles, and who are yet sufficiently wide-awake, cynical if you like, to be immune to the blatant propaganda of the news columns.

The decline of the direct political power of the British Press, exercised through its leaders, began in 1856, when the Stamp Tax was taken off and the *Daily Telegraph* offered to give its readers "*The Times* for a penny." From that day the British newspaper began to lose its character as a political organ, and set out to become a topical journal appealing to the tastes and interests, mainly non-political, of the great public, or rather of all the different publics, created by the Education Act of 1870, that make up *the* great public.

### ***Does It Lead—or Follow?***

It may be argued, however, and indeed it has often

been argued, that even under the most favourable circumstances the leader does not really *lead*—it merely *follows* public opinion. Even *The Times* in the heyday of its power and prestige would not go out of its way to advocate a policy which it knew would run counter to the opinion of the majority of its readers. It sought rather to determine and reflect public opinion.

It was even insinuated by an unkind critic that with this object in view *The Times* used to employ "a shrewd, idle clergyman, who made it his duty to loiter about in places of common resort and find out what people thought upon the principle subjects of the time; he was not to listen very much to extreme foolishness, and still less was he to listen to clever people. His duty was to wait and wait until he observed that some common and obvious thought was repeated in many places and by numbers of men who had probably never seen one another. That common thought was the prize he sought and, when found, he carried it home to his employers," who, we may add, promptly thundered it forth through their leader-writers.

People who argue in that way, however, overlook one important point. When you look in a mirror you not only see your reflection; you are guided by what you see there. The views which the mythical clergyman picks up are presented in the leading articles to the man-in-the-street with a logical forcefulness, an ease of literary expression, and a range of knowledge much greater than his own. His general conclusion, already vaguely formulated, is confirmed and given shape by the reasons which the leader supplies. Because he sees that public opinion as a whole believes in it, his conviction gains

in strength thereby. Even the leadership which, "having caught the way of the wind, heads the gale", as George Meredith said of Mr. Tonans, is leadership—of a kind.

### ***What You Think***

It is not the leadership of the dictator ; rather is it the leadership of the constitutional monarch who is content to bow to the will of the people. The leader-writer, paradoxical though it may sound, is thus in the last analysis as much bound by the tastes and inclinations of his public in the matter of opinion as the news editor and the sub-editor are in the matter of news. He may be a socialist, but if the thousands or millions of his readers are "anti", he must keep his socialism to himself.

What we (the journalists) think, that is to say, is merely a synopsis and a summary of what you (the public) think, put into literary form.

It cannot be otherwise ; readers who found their paper consistently putting forward unpopular views would soon regard it as being run by cranks ; they would not continue to read it for long.

This raises a question which every leader-writer has sooner or later to face: Is he justified in using his knowledge and skill to uphold views with which he disagrees ?

This problem crops up in other ways too. The late C. E. Montague, in his time a prominent journalist, used to tell the story of a man of brains who, every day, having written his leading article for a Conservative

paper, walked across the street, again took off his coat, and sat down to write a slashing reply to it on behalf of its Liberal rival.

Leader-writers who have found themselves obliged to write against their convictions generally excuse themselves by comparing themselves with lawyers, who are also paid, they say, for their skill in stating a case. The leader, they claim, is anonymous ; it is the newspaper, not the writer, which is responsible for the views expressed.

Usually, however, the leader-writer is in sympathy with the policy of the paper for which he writes. If he wishes to be a pioneer he goes over, if he can, to one of the smaller intellectual journals where, as likely as not, he finds that he is after all only preaching to the converted and regrets that he did not use his greater position, while he had it, to exercise as moderating and civilising an influence on public opinion as public opinion would allow him.

### ***Less Power, More Influence***

But however illusory the *power* of the press, in a free and democratic country, may be, its *influence* is enormous. These two things, power and influence, have to be distinguished. The *Daily Mail* has a circulation of nearly 2,000,000. You will all remember, indeed it is recent history, with what zeal it sought to prevent the India Bill from passing into law, how day after day it thundered fire and fury, how it tried to engineer a split in the Conservative party. What effect did all this have ? It stiffened the backs of the die-hards, made them determined to die all the harder, but it stiffened still more the backs of those who were



determined to see the Bill through. In the result the *Daily Mail* might well have saved its money and energies. So much for the *power* of the press!

But it was this same *Daily Mail*, only a few years ago, that succeeded in putting an end to what was nothing less than a national scandal. There was a patent medicine known as "Yadil." It was widely advertised as a universal panacea for the thousand and one ills that flesh is heir to, and purely on the strength of its advertising campaign its sales increased by leaps and bounds until there was hardly a home, rich or poor, in the country, which did not possess a bottle.

Then suddenly the *Daily Mail*, which had itself until then advertised the stuff extensively, changed its mind. It invited and published an article by a Cambridge professor of chemistry, analysing "Yadil," as then constituted, as a concoction of 95% water, 4% glycerine, 1% formaldehyde—and a "smell." There was another article to the same effect by another chemist of repute; then an editorial to polish it off, and by that time, says the chronicler, "Yadil" had ceased to have any commercial value worth talking about.

That is only one example of the *influence* of the press, an example which could be multiplied *ad nauseam*. Such campaigns, or "talking points," as Lord Northcliffe called them, belong however rather to the realm of editorial or business initiative; the leader-writer only carries out orders.

### ***Manner and Matter***

It has not been my intention to belittle the art of the leader. I merely wanted to show its limitations on the one hand and its possibilities on the other.

Within these limits, and in view of these possibilities, there is wide scope for skilful and good writing, as much as there is, say, for skilful and good speaking in presenting a case in the law courts. That this is not fully realised in India, among journalists, is unfortunately only too apparent.

For the leader *can* influence and shape, if not the *matter* of the reader's thinking, at least the *manner* of his thinking. And it is the manner, as much as the matter, of the nation's thinking that decides its place, or indicates its place, in the scheme of things.

Listen to two coolies having an argument. They will wander from the point, go round and round, assume things that are not true, fly into a passion, resort to personal abuse and not unlikely end up by coming to blows.

That is the manner of barbarians. They are not out to learn, they are not open to conviction, each will allow nothing good to his opponent. They admit of only one judge of right or wrong—brute force. To some extent such barbarian elements prevail in every society and to some extent, therefore, they are reflected in some of the newspaper leaders of every society.

### ***Leader and Democracy***

It is in this that the leader-writer can exert a potent influence over his public. If he seeks to explain rather than to convince, to examine rather than expostulate, to counter rather than contradict, to argue rather than ridicule, to describe rather than denounce; if he fights *for ideals* rather than *against individuals*, and credits other people with as great a public spirit as his own; if he appeals to reason rather than passion

and prejudice ; if he does all these things, whatever the *matter* of his argument, he may have some share in creating that *civilised* public opinion upon which depends the smooth working of democratic institutions and majority rule.

Say what you like about the British Press ; the fact will always remain that it, as much as anything, has been responsible for the growth of the principle that His Majesty's Opposition is as essential to good government as Government itself, whichever party is in power ; for the patriotism that places nation before party theories and dogmas in the hour of crisis ; for the tolerance by which Britons, unlike so many Continentals, are content in their domestic affairs to "live and let live."

And if the British Press has been able to do that it has done it as much through the leader as through anything.

### ***Sitting on the Fence***

The leader-writer's job is thus not an easy one. For the first requirement of a good leader is that it should be timely, topical, that it should talk about current events. It must come as hard on the heels of the news it deals with as possible ; if it appears at the same time so much the better.

What does this mean ? It means that when the writer is suddenly confronted with some news which makes a "new departure," as it is called, introducing a new political problem, or denoting a fresh orientation of opinion, or marking a new grouping of powers on the international chessboard, the leader-writer has either to *anticipate* what is likely to be the attitude of his

readers, or, by wrapping himself in studied ambiguity, lay himself open to the charge of sitting on the fence, to see which way the cat will jump.

But the measure of his difficulty is the measure of his opportunity. If the leader-writer, or the editor who directs him, is timid, or time-serving, or unready, he will groan aloud in his vexation : how to get out of it without pronouncing judgment will be his only concern. If he is bold, resourceful, a real leader of men, he will seize with zest the opportunity to give a lead to public opinion by the immediate expression of a clear and decided judgment. He may make mistakes ; but there is little doubt which readers prefer. “ The man who does not make mistakes makes nothing.”

### ***Weathercock Politics***

At the same time too many false starts involving too many recantations of faith or belief will soon acquire for the paper an unenviable reputation for inconsistency. Even *The Times* of last century, having at its command as brilliant a team of leader-writers as ever sat in a newspaper office, and under the direction of no less a man than Delane himself, was not entirely above reproach in this respect. You may recall in this connection the witticism of John Bright, the Liberal statesman. “ *The Times*,” he once said in a speech, “ says I repeat myself ; *The Times* says I am guilty of what it calls tautology ; *The Times* says I am always saying the same thing. What I complain of about *The Times* is that it *never* says the same thing.”

But not only has the leader-writer to make up his mind on the instant what attitude to adopt, or whether

to adopt any attitude at all; he has to hammer out, within an hour or so, a polished, vigorous, interesting article with a style worthy of the authority with which it is invested. Here, indeed, lies the difference between the journalist and the writer of essays. You will sometimes hear journalists pleading haste as an excuse for shoddy work, bad grammar, involved expressions, confusions, illogicalities. The true journalist never does, for it is this very need for haste that makes *his* art what it is, distinguishes it from the art of the writer pure and simple.

Many people read the newspaper and *only* the newspaper, so that it becomes for them a standard of what in the language is correct or incorrect. So simple and matter-of-fact is the language of the news columns, however, that there is hardly room for the reporter or sub-editor to go astray; nor are the news columns regarded with such seriousness. It is the language of the leader, with its more literary style and air of pontifical authority, that sets the standard. It is therefore the leader-writer who, above all, must regard himself as a trustee for the language in which he writes. Here is no question of politics or popularity: it costs no more to write well than to write badly; nor can it antagonise anyone. On the contrary, it raises the whole tone of the paper. The leader, therefore, though written at white heat "in the very furnace-hissing of events," must have all the appearance of lavish pains and infinite care.

### ***Anonymity—Is it Worth it?***

The fact that the leader is anonymous in no way detracts from the writer's responsibility in this respect,

nor, it should be added, from his zest in the work. It may seem hard to have to write, day in, day out, for half-a-lifetime, and then at the end to have nothing of your own to show for your pains. A great editor may at least become known *after* his death, and have his memory enshrined in a biography or memorial. A great leader-writer goes into eternity unwept and unsung.

But there are, as always, compensations. There is the pleasurable feeling of *esprit de corps* that is always, or at least should be, present “where men work as a team for something which in the aggregate is greater than each individual member.” That is one side of the picture. On the other there is the privilege, as well as the responsibility, of speaking as the mouthpiece of an impersonal organ whose pronouncements carry the authority of accumulated traditions extending perhaps over half a century or more. “My articles” said Henry Reeve, a *Times* leader writer, at the end of his career, “were the expressions of a great system of foreign policy, such as I should have acted upon had I been born to the position of Minister. I enjoyed the power *The Times* conferred on me of governing public opinion.” It was a power he would never have possessed as an independent writer.

Nevertheless, the literary genius would soon find himself irked by thus having to hide his light continually under a bushel. If you are one you had better take the advice given by Thackeray, the English novelist, to a friend on *The Times* :

“Don’t wrap yourself in *Times* foolscap” he said, “try work for yourself.”

## THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

## CHAPTER IX—THE EDITOR'S CHAIR.

"Fit for a Dramatist"—Responsible for All—Making of an Editor—A True Story—Not Official!—Delane's Two and Two—Scope for Scoops—Readers' Views—Editorial Powers—A Business Man—Editing in India.

**T**HE Editor!

"I want to see the Editor . . ."

"Editor says. . . ."

And so it goes on, all day long.

Somewhere in the great building that houses the newspaper staff and the great rotary machines is the controlling mind, directing, ordering, prohibiting, encouraging, laying down the law of one province of newspaper land.

To thousands upon thousands of readers he is the paper itself. If they want a job they write to the editor. If they have an article to sell they write to the editor. If they have a complaint to make or views to air or information to convey—they write to the editor. If they have written a new book, started a new movement, invented a new machine, discovered a new "truth"—the editor!

They credit him with tremendous powers, colossal influence. Yet they have never seen him, know not what he looks like; few even know his name.

### ***Fit for a Dramatist***

In *A Hind Let Loose*, a novel by C. E. Montague, you get a somewhat romanticised but essentially true account of what goes on daily round the editor's chair in a large newspaper office.

"Brumby's editorial room," he writes, "was fit to visit the dreams of a dramatist. Used as a scene,



whole ranges of characters could have popped in and out of it all night, and nobody run into anyone else till the good of the play required. For its walls were mainly door; with doors to the right of him, doors to the left of him, at one hand a row of bell-buttons, close as on a page's bosom, at the other a serried squad of mouths of speaking-tubes, Brumby sat like a brain centre in a nervous system. . . .

"All day all the forces of the Press, now centripetal and now centrifugal, drew in upon this core to take direction or were sped outwards from it, aimed and animated. To and from the central, octagonal, skylighted room were sucked in or radiated forth, each by his proper door, along the spoke-like corridors, the office messengers with 'copy,' proofs, letters and telegrams; the foreman, shirt-sleeved from the composing room, asking the size of to-morrow's paper; the publisher, not yet perspiring, to know how much per cent Lord Allbury's speech, the thing of to-night, should add on to the parcels for the outer towns; sub-editors doubting how much to make of some not very well-born rumour of a row inside the Cabinet, or if it might be libel, though it were true, to say a borough treasurer had turned invisible since Thursday; the porter from the lift bringing in callers' cards—the Manager, Theatre Royal—would not detain the editor one instant; writer of a letter—turnstiles needed on trams—would the editor see him, simply for five minutes—reform vital; small deputation from Hospital Committee—had not liked to give him the trouble beforehand to make an appointment; bankrupt of some hours' standing—just two words about to-morrow's report—could nothing be done about the judge's conduct?—

method of choosing official receivers, too, thoroughly faulty.

“Thence would the war correspondent post, at Brumby’s bidding, over land and ocean without rest, bent to sweeten the sacred home life of the *Warden’s* readers with all the heroic pleasures of war unalloyed by groin wounds or enteric. To this call at the heart of the hive the reporter, home from some delicate quest, would come to lay up in the charge of the queen-bee that most perfect flavoured news, which you could never put in the paper.”

### ***Responsible for All***

All this is true, but not quite as stupendous as the visitor might imagine. He sees it only once, but it goes on day after day, for 363 days in the year, in a routine so thoroughly organised that it is an old joke among journalists that if the editor disappeared he would be the one person who would not be missed !

But it is no more than a joke. The paper could run without an editor one day, two days, a week, even a month. If after that it did not show signs of deterioration it would indicate either that it had always lacked the inspiration and individuality of the truly great editor or that somebody equally brilliant had taken his place.

Apart from his work of inspiration and initiation the editor is important not so much for what he does, as for what he allows to be done. He does no reporting ; he seldom sets foot in the sub-editor’s room ; he has no time for leaders ; yet he is responsible for all. If the paper has to pay heavy damages for libel it is he that takes the blame. No use on his part to cry “But

I never saw the thing till it was in print." It was he or his assistant that engaged the subordinate who wrote or passed it. It is his name that appears, together with that of the publisher, in the imprint!

### ***Making of an Editor***

What then are the qualifications that go to the making of a successful editor? R. D. Blumenfeld, a former editor of one of England's great national dailies, basing his opinion on fifty years of successful journalism and newspaper editing, gives them as follows:

(1) A good sound education. It may be university or primary school, but it should be sound.

(2) Good health, from which follows good temper. The editor of to-day has so many responsibilities, so many pulls on his nervestrings, and such demands on his good nature that he must be able to forego not only meals but sleep. He must dine out and lunch out in order to meet people and learn what they are thinking and saying, so that he himself knows what his paper is writing about. He must be in close touch with ministers and leaders of the public in all callings. He must at the same time be in closer touch with his own newspaper office, to direct, to guide, to assist, or to check the rash impetuositities of ambitious young subordinates. In order to do this he must himself have gone through the various grades from reporter upwards. He must sit patiently in his office and listen respectfully to the importunities of foolish people of importance who cannot be ignored. In other words he must suffer fools gladly.

(3) A technical knowledge of the making of a newspaper. He must know type and how to use it to the best advantage in order to secure the last ounce of emphasis. I know a number of editors, admirable men in many respects, who are quite ignorant of this advantage; who do not know

one face of type from another and consequently are at the mercy of the printers and printers' foremen.

(4) I put this last because it is the most important. He should know the difference between news and opinion. That is a gift which comes to men with their mother's milk or even before. The man who is not so gifted should attempt the search for success in another field, for without it he will never make a newspaper, no matter how gifted he may be in other respects. It is difficult to define the distinction. News come to some people as inspiration. To others it is only news after it has been officially announced.

### ***A True Story***

Having said so much he goes on to give a case in point of this distinction.

He was sitting one night at dinner in a famous London club in company with a friend, the editor of a great newspaper. This friend was a man of the highest scholarly accomplishments, but he knew little about newspaper-making or the exigencies of news gathering. He had for years been engaged in another profession; had never been a reporter nor a sub-editor, but had walked straight to the editor's chair, where he was deeply interested in political movements. He had little regard for the actualities of life which, after all, says Blumenfeld, ordain the course of all other activities, political as well.

While they were dining, a great church dignitary known to them both came up to them and showed them a letter from the Empress Marie of Russia, sister of Queen Alexandra, giving full details of the assassination of the Russian royal family. This was in 1917. The story was minute and substantial, and, coming

from such a source, Blumenfeld felt, was certain to be authentic. They talked for some time over this tragic fate of Russia's ruling family, and then went off to their respective newspaper tasks.

### ***Not Official !***

Blumenfeld made the most of the news on his front page. He was aware that his colleague was also in possession of the facts and that he was, therefore, not in the happy position of being able to present what is called "a scoop." But it was news of the highest importance and he was content to share it. His headline type was adequate to the subject; across three columns, with portraits, descriptions and appropriate obituary notices.

The first thing he did the next morning was to seek his colleague's newspaper to see how he had treated the great news item. He searched the paper from end to end. Not a line! He rang up and asked for an explanation. "Well, you see," was the reply. "I never print anything like that unless it is official. I know it is important, but . . . . ."

"There is, of course," adds Blumenfeld, "something to be said for the editor who refuses to publish until he is dead certain, but there is much more to be said for the editor whose instinct for news, coupled with a trained sense of responsibility, impels him to publish information so far ahead as to give the public the impression of enterprise and reliability which is so essential to the success of a newspaper. The success or failure of a publicity business," he concludes, "depends almost wholly on the mental pabulum employed by the editorial head."

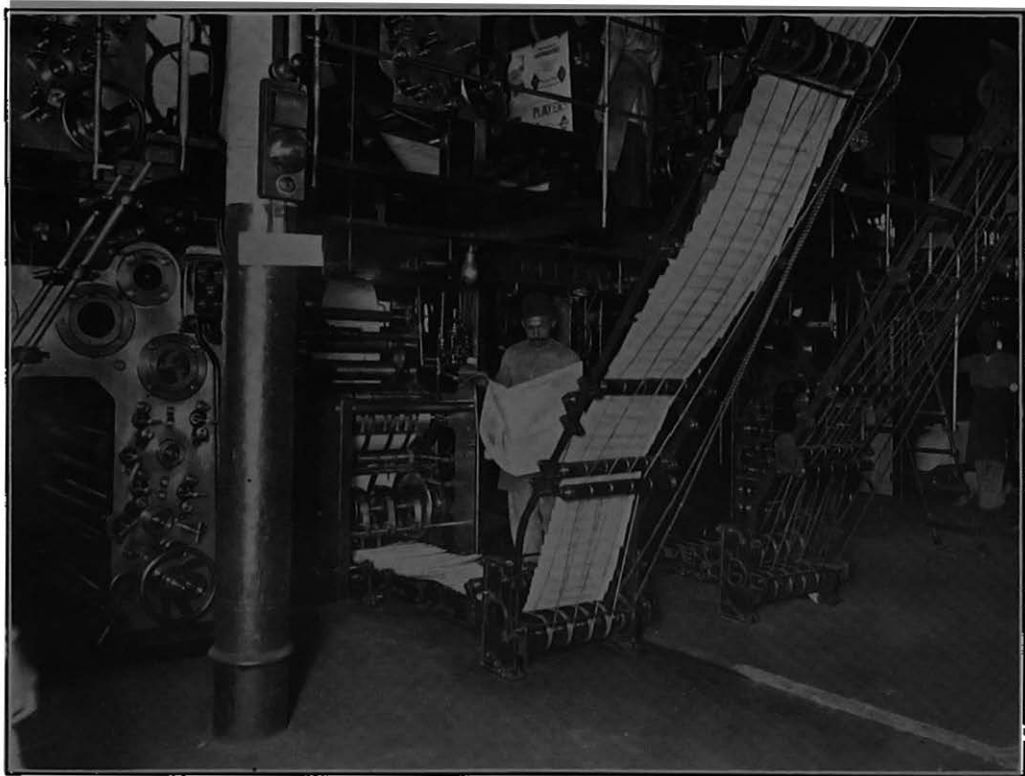


PLATE VIII.—MECHANICAL CONVEYORS.

*Mechanical conveyors take the finished papers, printed, cut, folded and counted, direct from the rotary press to the packing and despatch department. Here they will be touched by hand for the first time since the roll entered the machine.*

### ***Delane's Two and Two***

But perhaps the classic instance of an editorial scoop is that recorded by Sir Edward Cooke in his life of Delane, editor of *The Times*.

Meeting his doctor one afternoon at his club, Delane talked of the weather, and the conversation turned to different climates and their effects on different constitutions. The doctor chanced to say that he had just been telling Lord Northbrook, in reply to an enquiry, that a hot climate might suit a delicate girl very well. The next morning it was announced in *The Times* that Lord Northbrook had been appointed Viceroy of India to succeed Lord Mayo. The new Viceroy received at once many congratulations, which he had to declare quite premature. "How *The Times* got hold of it," he said, "I cannot imagine, for no one but myself and Gladstone have even discussed it."

### ***Scope for Scoops***

In India there is not, as yet, very much scope for that sort of thing. Most of the news comes from the great news agencies or is supplied from official Government sources, and competition among newspapers is not so great as to impel editors to be constantly on the alert for a possible scoop, or to take the risk of publishing what may be a false prediction.

Only on very rare occasions does one find a particular newspaper publishing exclusive news of great national import. On the other hand there is considerable scope for what is called "following up" the news, working out the implications, securing long interviews from the right people, sending out special correspondents to the right places. In matters of this

sort the editor can show a *flair* for news as great as, if not greater than, that exemplified by Blumenfeld. After all, the incident he described was purely fortuitous, a stroke of luck such as seldom comes an editor's way even in England, while in Delane's case, even his biographer admits, it was conceivable that his friend may have *intended* to drop a timely hint. But to secure an advantage where all start equal does indeed require brains—and news sense.

Nevertheless, even in the India of to-day, and still more of the future, when parliamentary oppositions begin to play the part that democracy demands of them, it is true to say that what the editor does with his time outside the office largely determines the character of his paper. He must, above all things, be a "good mixer." How else can he be in touch with public opinion? How else can he know what great events are impending? How else can he know the men whose thoughts and activities it is his duty to chronicle? How else can he judge the correctness or worth of a letter sent in for publication?

### ***Readers' Views***

This last is one of the functions that editors, despite the pressure of purely executive and administrative work, have not entirely delegated to subordinates. The correspondence columns are a well established link between the newspaper and its readers. It is probably the most popular feature, in the sense that most people at least glance at it, despite their general diversity of tastes. There may be, they think, a letter on the one or two subjects in which they are interested. It is thus the focussing point of interest.



Very often, too, you will find there contributions from men and women eminent in the world of art, politics or learning who would not "stoop" to write for the papers in a professional or semi-professional capacity. When they do write, even anonymously, they usually have in their minds something well worth writing—and reading. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that great influence on affairs has at times been exerted through the correspondence columns of, for example, the London *Times*.

A letter has almost the same publicity value as a leader; hence the editor's care in the selection of what shall and shall not be published. Most of you must know, by the way, that not one-hundredth part of the editor's mail bag ever sees the light of day in print; there simply isn't room.

Moreover the correspondence column is often made the arena for a battle of words, and it is essential that the editor, as umpire between the disputants, should see that the game is played according to the rules and without giving undue advantage to either side.

Finally, whereas the news and leader columns are served by men who know the law of libel and the provisions of the Press Act, and are constantly on their guard against a slip, the casual correspondent is neither as conscious of that ever-present danger, nor as concerned. Editors at one time sought to protect themselves by informing the world, in a little note at the top of the column, that they were not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. This went on until it became clear that as a legal safeguard such a disclaimer is not worth the paper on which it is

printed. Before the law the newspaper is responsible for *everything* it prints.

British and American papers are beginning to attach such importance to correspondence that letters of unusual interest are sometimes treated as "news" and given an honourable place in the news columns, with large headlines and black type all complete. One weekly newspaper even illustrates its correspondence column. Others have dropped the rôle of umpire and enter the lists by appending an editorial foot-note to each letter.

One other function that the editor has not yet altogether sloughed off, though he may do so in time, is the choice of subjects for leaders and of the angle from which they are to be written. Often, too, he reserves the right to revise the leaders in proof, and to correct, delete or amend where he thinks necessary.

### ***Editorial Powers***

It would seem then that the editor wields enormous power, and that his power increases in direct proportion to the circulation figures of his paper. As a matter of fact in most cases it is the opposite which is true—the greater the circulation, the less is his power. For the greater the circulation the larger the organisation required. The larger the organisation the larger the capital needed. The larger the capital needed the more subject is the editor to the demands of the proprietors.

There are very few editors to-day with sufficient capital to run a paper of their own; if here and there you find one the paper is a small local journal with little influence. The arbiters of newspaper policy are nearly

everywhere not journalists but business men, to whom newspaper production is essentially a commercial undertaking with profit as the chief and perhaps the only measure of success.

This is another, and perhaps the most important, of the changes brought about by the new journalism, with its reliance upon advertising as the main source of revenue and its tremendous circulation figures. The degree of latitude allowed by proprietors to editorial views and predilections varies naturally from paper to paper. Even to-day there are a few where the editor is allowed an absolutely free hand in matters of policy, always provided of course that circulation does not suffer.

In others, where the newspaper has been founded or acquired by a financier with political or social ambitions of his own, or with very decided opinions as to the way the country should be governed, his position is more like that of a publicity agent. Either he has no convictions of his own, or he denies himself the luxury of a conscience and if necessary carries out a policy which is against his convictions.

Not infrequently it happens that a newspaper changes hands, and an editor formerly left to his own devices has to decide between "publicity" work or perhaps no work at all. In France and other continental countries, where changes of this kind are apparently almost as numerous as changes in government, a journalist is entitled by law to compensation, if, owing to a change in policy, he is faced with such an alternative. It is not quite clear what happens when the boot is on the other foot.

### ***A Business Man***

In general, however, even the most independent editor can no longer afford to be the purely "literary gent", as he was often referred to, of Victorian times. He too has to be at least something of a business man. After a good deal of opposition and hesitation, he has now learnt to appreciate that without the advertising and business side of the paper his own activities would be almost useless.

Most young journalists at the foot of the ladder aspire to reach the top. It is not merely that the material rewards are greater, as a rule, than can be secured in any other position. No true journalist is out solely for money. If he were he would go into business. But round the editor's chair there is undoubtedly a romantic glamour that few can resist. Some do, of course; others fall into a rut and lose all ambition when half-way up. Yet others remain reporters or news editors, preferring the thrills of the chase to the lesser excitement though greater responsibility of making executive decisions. Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown of authority; it may be cowardly, but it is human, to fear responsibility.

### ***Editing in India***

Perhaps nowhere is that responsibility as great as in India. For although on the one hand the editor's powers may be limited, on the one hand by his proprietor's dictates and on the other by the demands of the business management, he may still within these limits in divers ways impress his personality on his paper and on the society it serves. In my first chapter, you may perhaps remember, I quoted Sir Samuel

Hoare's belief that in the years ahead of us the power of the Press in India will increase. "Papers," he said, "which are *edited* with wisdom and conducted with vigour. . . . will be more and more indispensable as India advances towards self-government."

There is no need for me to tell my Indian readers what democracy and self-government entail, what they depend upon—wholesome respect for law and order, irrespective of what party is in power, minimum of communal friction, subordination of sectarian and partisan interests to the welfare and prestige of the country as a whole, education of the electorate in matters affecting its very existence—in the achievement and maintenance of these things newspaper editing *must* play a vital part.

But this brings me to a much wider question, the relations between the Press and the Public, and this I must leave for my final chapter.

**NEWSPAPERS—AND NEWSPAPERS**

## CHAPTER X—NEWSPAPERS—AND NEWSPAPERS.

Now and Always—What People Want—The “Vicious” Circle—“Utter Solemnity”—“Let’s Have a Censor”—“Preaching to The Converted”—Why Blame The Mirror?—The Journalist’s Part—The Nation’s Interests—Shakespeare and Crime—A Synthesis.

**I** ONCE heard a journalist, a very competent journalist, regret bitterly that murders, dacoities with violence, cases of criminal assault, and other crimes of the same nature are so commonplace in India. “Very noble of him”, you will say, “so do we all regret.”

Yes, but not for the same reason. The regret this man felt sprang not from a mental picture of the lust or hatred that motivates a murder, the pain and the horror of its execution, the long-drawn-out wretchedness of its expiation, but merely from a sense of frustration.

You see, he was out to brighten up his newspaper. “Crime”, he complained, “that unfailing source of interest in the West, is so commonplace here that it has hardly any news value at all. Still”, he added, “even that does not excuse the general dullness of newspapers in India.” He was referring, of course, to the English press.

This was at a social gathering and there were some non-journalists listening to our talk. “Well!”, exclaimed one, “if that isn’t the last word in cynicism; some of you journalist fellows must be absolutely heartless.”

“You’re wrong”, was the retort, “I have a heart, but I have a stomach too, and it has to be filled occasionally. If I can’t make the paper interesting for John Citizen I lose my job. John Citizen is a pornographic little beast, brimful of repressed desires;

he likes crime stories ; I have to give him what he likes. Journalists have to live, just like grocers, and grocers live by pleasing their customers."

"Perhaps you're right", came the reply, "but even the grocer would be sorry to find that the butter he can most readily sell is the kind that contains most poison."

And that closed the conversation.

### ***Now And Always***

But it did *not* close a controversy which has been going on almost since the first news sheet appeared, and which will no doubt go on till the last one has disappeared. It is an important controversy : important for the journalist because upon it depends his present and future status ; important for the world because upon it may depend, in the last analysis, the issue of peace or war, progress or annihilation ; important for India because India still has time to learn from the mistakes of the West, if indeed mistakes there have been.

It all boils down to this : people in the mass are influenced more by what they read than by anything else ; people in the mass read one newspaper and very little else ; therefore people in the mass are influenced more by one newspaper than by anything else. They are influenced because what they read there they believe to be true ; they are influenced because what they read there shapes their conduct and colours their mentality. So far so good. All the newspaper has to do then is to tell the truth and those things which make for good conduct and a wholesome mentality, and we shall all be ideal citizens in an ideal world.



But, and here lies the snag, in a free country people are allowed to choose what paper they please ; in a free country papers are allowed to tell or not to tell more or less what *they* please ; and even the most passionate of reformers has had sorrowfully to admit, "The *awful* fact remains that the masses buy and support those papers that have the least intellectual appeal." "*The News of the World*," he groans in despair, "has a circulation of more than 3,000,000 copies, the largest in the world, bar none."

### **What People Want**

The *News of the World*, I ought to tell you, in a typical issue gave about 8 columns to news of political and economic interest, 18 columns to sport, and 25 columns to news of criminal or passionate interest.

Of the 25 columns of crime and passion—

Matrimonial Troubles ( Divorce, Bigamy, Abduction, etc.) account for .. ..	6
Robbery and Theft, with and without violence .. .. .	4
Assault, ordinary and indecent .. ..	3½
Murder and Manslaughter .. ..	2½
Fraud, False Pretences, Forgery, etc. ..	2
Suicide .. .. .	1
Blackmail and Shadowing .. ..	1
Miscellaneous (including offences against Boys, Indecent Exposure, Drugs, Coining, Motoring offences and accidents, etc., etc.)..	5

"A newspaper" said Lord Riddell, who was at the time of his death chief proprietor of the *News of the World*, "is a mirror reflecting the public". If that is true, and, judging from the 3,000,000 circulation, it

must be true, John Citizen gives 15 per cent of his spare time and energy to reading about politics, 35 to sport, and 50 to the shady side of life. Or you can put it this way: of every hundred British citizens 15 are interested mainly in politics, 35 mainly in sport, 50 mainly in crime and passion.

Moreover the *News of the World* is or was controlled largely by one man. By his powers of selection, emphasis, and suppression, exercised through his "slaves" in the sub-editorial room, he was able, it might be thought, to dictate what kind of picture his 3,000,000 readers should form of the political and economic situation both at home and abroad. Naturally the picture would not be such as to embarrass his own financial and political interests!

### ***The 'Vicious' Circle***

Hence the controversy:

Should the masses be allowed to read what they like; or should they be allowed to read only what is good for them?

Has the newspaper a moral responsibility to its public; or is it just a business, like any business, out to give the public what it wants?

"The popular press is vulgarising the mind of Great Britain," cries the reformer.

"The mind of Great Britain is vulgar," claims Lord Riddell.

"Scare headlines are leading the world to ruin," says the pacifist.

"The people demand excitement", responds the proprietor of the *News of the World*.

And meanwhile the process of vulgarisation and distortion proceeds apace. For the appetite grows by what it feeds on. The more sensational the paper, the more avid for sensation the public; the more avid the public, the more sensational the paper. A truly vicious circle. So much so that men who begin by despising the masses whose vulgarity and stupidity they cater for finish up by sharing their outlook and demanding none other.

### ***“ Utter Solemnity ”***

I told you about the colleague who bemoaned that murders are so common in India as to have no news value, but I did not tell you all. “ Why ”, he would ask petulantly, “ are Indian newspapers so dull? Because ”, he would answer, “ the average Indian is so utterly solemn; he has no sense of humour, no delight in the freakish, no joy in the romantic, no interest in the human side of life. Give him politics ”, he would exclaim almost savagely “ slabs of it, chunks of it. That’s all he wants, that’s all he’s fit for.” So vehement was he that, though I considered his opinion “ utterly ” wrong, I saw it was impossible to change it.

Such was his own inverted standard of values, derived no doubt from his Fleet Street experience, that he was not even content to be like the grocer who gives his customers what they want; on the contrary he did his utmost to “ educate ” the Indian out of his “ utter solemnity ” up to an interest in what he called the “ human ” story, but what others might be inclined to call the “ in-human ” story. He was like the man who started drinking a little to please his friends; and ended by drinking a lot to please himself.

Whether the picture he drew of Indian newspaper readers of to-day is true or false I am not prepared, at this moment, to debate, though, as I have said, my own experience compels me to condemn it as false. But I am not so much interested in them. They are the intelligentsia of India, the ruling class, in so far as India has one. For the time being they can look after themselves. I am thinking of all those millions who, illiterate now, will be the newspaper readers of to-morrow.

“The Board Schools” said Lord Northcliffe at the very outset of his career, “are turning out hundreds of thousands of boys and girls who are anxious to read. They do not care”, he said “for the ordinary newspaper (by which he meant *The Times*). They have no interest in society, but will read anything which is simple and is sufficiently *interesting*”.

And so he gave them *Answers*, the *Daily Mirror*, the *Daily Mail*, and a host of other periodicals, worthy forerunners of the *News of the World*, and, in doing so, found fame and fortune such as few men have possessed.

Will India, too, find her Northcliffe when the Government schools begin to turn out their hundreds and thousands of boys and girls anxious to read? Or will she escape the vicious circle?

**“Let’s Have A Censor”**

“Let us establish a censorship” I have heard thoughtful Indians say, “now, before it is too late”. But censorship is a dangerous thing, a double-edged sword, as those countries that have suffered from it in the past, and are suffering from it now, well know. It is all very well to say “Give the people only what is

good for them". But who is to decide, beyond certain limits, what *is* good for them? No one has yet found a universally acceptable definition of "good," though countless philosophers have tried. And what could be more harmful than a censorship of news in the hands of a Government determined to maintain itself in power? Do we not pity the Russians and Germans for this very thing? If one thing is clear it is that censorship and democracy are a contradiction in terms.

This view was expressed very clearly when Lord Kilmaine denounced the methods of the popular press in the House of Lords about three months ago. I told you what he said in my chapter on sub-editing.

Replying on behalf of Government, the Earl of Lucan said:

"While such examples as the headlines quoted are deplorable and are likely to create a false impression abroad, we rather pride ourselves on having in this country an absolutely free press."

### **"Preaching to the Converted"**

"Very well then", say other Indians, "we will start a *good* newspaper, serious, upright, responsible, impartial, educative. . . ." But suppose, as is not impossible, the new reading public turns out to have the same aversion to politics and interest in crime as the masses of other countries betray. Then they will not read your paper; they will read the paper produced by men who are solely out to make money—there are plenty such in India as everywhere else. You may subsidise your paper to keep it going. But what will be the result? It will be read by the intelligent and cultured few, ignored by the many. You will be preaching, if preaching is your object, to the converted; the unconverted will

remain unmoved and untouched. No subsidised paper will ever succeed in solving the problem ; nor, I should add, will it maintain its existence for long.

There will no doubt always be two or three papers, as there are in England to-day, like the *London Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*, which will manage to reconcile the demands of their shareholders with a high sense of responsibility to the nation. (Though *The Times*, I understand, has actually turned itself into a sort of trust for the nation's benefit.)

But so long as financiers have money to invest in catering for the simple needs of the multitude, and so long as competition is allowed free play, they will not be deterred by the existence of such as these. Competition in the business world has been of great benefit ; competition in the newspaper world has wrought immense harm. But how to allow competition in the one and not in the other would tax the wisest brain.

Well may the outlook, then, seem hopeless. "If we hope for reform", says George Blake, after thirty-six pages of indictment of the popular Press, "the Lord alone knows whence it will come."

### ***Why Blame The Mirror ?***

Certainly "under the strenuous conditions of the modern world" the newspaper must always be, as Lord Riddell said, "a mirror and nothing more". Look at the problem which way you will, there is no getting away from that. He who hopes to reform a mirror, or demands that it should reform itself, may well throw up his hands in despair.

But why look only to the mirror ? Why not look to the things that are reflected ? If anyone is responsible

for sensational newspapers, it is not Lord Northcliffe, not yet Lord Riddell. Surely it is the Board Schools who provided their reading public.

If we hope for reform we do not need the Lord to tell us whence it will come. It will come from schools that educate, not merely teach; that emphasise culture rather than look learning; that train the senses as well as the brain; that turn out individuals, not robots; that go on and on, not stop at twelve or fourteen, when the mind is at its most receptive; that liberate and harness natural desires, not repress them.

It will come from legislators that provide work for the workless and decent conditions for all, that keep square pegs out of round holes, that suit the laws to the people and not the people to the laws.

It will come from doctors that are more interested in preventing illness than in curing it; from lawyers that will consent to arbitrate but not to litigate; from jailers intent on reforming, not on punishing.

“How stupid,” perhaps you are thinking. “The man claims to have a remedy and he is merely repeating Lord Riddell—when the nation is perfect its newspapers will be perfect!”

Not quite! The difference is this. England and America have had some fifty years of Board schools, which were, it is now agreed, bad schools. India has yet to have hers; and she may, if she is wise, make them good ones.

*The future of India is in the hands of the statesmen that control the teachers, and of the teachers that control the children, not of the newspapers that mirror them both.*

### *The Journalist's Part*

That, however, does not absolve the Indian newspaper, which means the Indian journalist, of all responsibility. We can, while there is yet time, stem the flood of vulgarisation which is already, to some extent, seeping in from the West; we can reject the warped mentality that seeks to rob the Indian of his "utter solemnity" and to replace it by a debased "humanity"; we can rejoice, while yet we may, that there is at least one country in the world where politics and philosophy mean more to the average reader than savagery and sweepstakes, if in fact they do mean more.

Nor is that all. However fine your education system, however encouraging your statesmen and inspiring your teachers, you can never hope for a nation of intellectuals. That would be neither natural nor desirable. It takes all sorts to make a nation, as it takes all sorts to make a world. The masses of the people will always be more interested in men and things than in ideas and affairs, in romance than in statistics, in the exotic than in the humdrum.

At an Imperial Press Conference the Australians complained that the London papers did not give enough space to Australian affairs. The reply was that it was too much to expect the Press to publish "bare facts about population, immigration and Tasmanian apples."

The reformer at once pounces on this abhorrence of bare facts as a confession of the inherent weakness of modern newspaper practice. "You see," he says, "journalists do not want to hear about Tasmanian apples. It is the snake in the packing case or the



pencilled message from the lonely fruit-grower that interests them”.

Well, why not, if at the same time they can introduce the essential information by which the reformer rightly sets such great store ?

That is to say, it remains for the Indian journalist to work out a technique, for the sake of the masses and on their behalf, by which the lively description of the attributes of men and things can be made a vehicle for the subtle interpretation of ideas and affairs. He starts, it is true, with a handicap. He has to learn his technique, both of newspaper writing and sub-editing, from the West, where both have reached their highest perfection precisely in those journals which have, from the point of view of content, least need of them. “To the dispassionate eye of the journeyman in newspaper work,” even the reformer is fain to admit, “the *News of the World* is a miracle of skilful sub-editing.”

As reporter the journalist has to learn the art of lively description divorced, as it were, from the “odd Englishman who swallows the soap, goes mad and murders his aunt” (to quote my colleague’s definition of news), from the faked love affairs of publicity-hunting film stars, from soporific inanities and sensational dangerous half-truths, and apply it to make important news interesting.

As sub-editor he has to master the art of make-up with its bold types, its catchy headlines, its artistic display, its simplicity of style and brevity of language, and make what is true and important also attractive and interesting and readable.

As editor he has to work out a means of exploiting the propaganda value of bold type and catchy headlines in the interests of the nation.

### ***The Nation's Interests***

“But what,” you may ask, “*are* the interests of the nation? Is not the country hopelessly divided as to where its true interests lie?” Here I touch at last on controversial ground. Sooner or later it was inevitable. But I think I shall have all right-thinking Indian men and women with me when I say that the path of India's advance, like that of every country, East or West, North or South, without exception, lies broadly in these directions:—

(1) Peace, internal and external. War, foreign and civil, may have paid once. That day is past.

(2) Increasing mastery over nature, the application of science to harness floods and falls for irrigation and electricity, to eradicate dirt and disease, to make life safe and comfortable. If that means goodbye to superstition, so much the worse for superstition. For “inasmuch as no good Moslem or Hindu would fail, through piety, to step out of the path of a mad bull, there is nothing in his logic to prevent his avoiding a microbe.”

(3) Rising standard of public morality in administration and service.

(4) Increasing respect for law and order, both among individuals and groups.

(5) Advancement of the condition of the common people.

(6) Tolerance, religious and political.

### ***Shakespeare and Crime***

That does not mean, of course, that the shady, seamy, sordid, shoddy side of life shall not or ought not or will not be reflected in the newspaper, either of today or of tomorrow. As long as man retains the old Adam, and when he ceases to do so he will no longer be man but God, so long will that side of life exist, so long will the newspaper have to reflect it together with all others.

That it should do so is neither harmful nor immoral in itself. After all, what lifts Shakespearean tragedy out of the realm of melodrama, that is, out of the category of police court news, is not the morality or goodness of his heroes. Vain King Lear casts off his only true daughter; ambitious Macbeth murders his monarch; jealous Othello slays his sweetheart; vengeful Hamlet, inspired by a dream, would take the life of his adulterous uncle.

What raises Shakespeare, his plots and his characters above the criticism of the pure in heart is the quality of his perception, the beauty of his telling, the art of his delineation. These will always inspire reverence; they make people good, not bad. The working journalist can hardly hope to emulate Shakespeare, but he can in his own way seek to convey the "pity and terror" of life in the raw in such a way as to excite kindness and compassion rather than, as so often now, fear and futility. "We needs must love the highest when we see it."

### ***A Synthesis***

I believe it is all a matter of approach, of emphasis, of presentation. I believe it is the cultivation of a

sense of proportion, the synthesis of modern newspaper technique—the art of sub-editing—with love of “truth and beauty, wisdom and tolerance”—the art of living—that is *the* task, the *supreme* task, of modern journalism. In so far as journalism *can* be of help, in the West, perhaps, it is already too late; the vicious circle has operated too long. In India, I believe, it is not yet too late. The Indian journalist of today and tomorrow has a golden opportunity, not only to make a living, but to make an honourable living, which is not quite the same thing.

# APPENDIX

## BIBLIOGRAPHY.

It would obviously be impossible within the limits of a short bibliography to give a detailed account of all the literature about journalism in its various aspects, the volume of which is daily increasing. The following are those works which have been of most direct and recent assistance to me in the writing of this book, and to whose authors I am therefore most indebted.

- "The Newspaper", Dibblee (*Williams and Norgate*).
- "The Press and the Public", George Blake (*Faber and Faber*).
- "The Making of an Editor", W. L. Courtney (*Macmillan*).
- "Law for Journalists", Pilley (*Pitman*).
- "Delane of 'The Times'", Cook (*Constable*).
- "Modern Journalism", Carr and Stevens (*Pitman*).
- "News Writing", Spencer (*Heath*).
- "From the City to Fleet Street", Hall Richardson (*Paul*).
- "Northcliffe", Hamilton Fyfe (*Allen and Unwin*).
- "The Press", Sir Alfred Robbins (*Benn*).
- "The Press in my Time", R. D. Blumenfeld (*Rich and Cowan*).
- "Journalism as a Career", ed. Cranfield (*Pitman*).
- "Sub-Editing", Mansfield (*Pitman*).
- "Short Story Writing and Free-Lance Journalism", Sydney Moseley (*Pitman*).
- "Practical Journalism and Newspaper Law", Baker and Cope (*Pitman*).
- "What is News?", Johnson (*Knopf*).
- "Complete Writing for Profit", Michael Joseph (*Hutchinson*).
- "Newspaper Headlines", Straumann (*George Allen and Unwin*).
- "Le Role Intellectuel de la Presse"—Symposium (*Institut International de Cooperation Intellectuelle*).
- Newspaper World*, London.
- World's Press News*, London.
- The Writers' and Artists' Year Book, 1935.
- The Indian Year Book (*Times of India Press*).

# .INDEX.

	Page
<b>ADVERTISING,</b>	
as a profession .. .. .	37
power of .. .. .	44
Alleged, sub-editors' safeguard .. .. .	84
Anonymity in journalism .. .. .	118-119
Assistant editors, Function of .. .. .	12
Australians, propaganda and .. .. .	148
Bar, and journalists .. .. .	38
<b>BLAKE, GEORGE,</b>	
newspaper reform and .. .. .	146
on sub-editors .. .. .	77
Blobs and penalties .. .. .	20-21
<b>BLUMENFELD, R. D.</b>	
gets a scoop .. .. .	128
on editors .. .. .	126
Thomas Edison, and .. .. .	2
Bright, John, on <i>The Times</i> .. .. .	117
<b>CENSORSHIP,</b>	
in India .. .. .	144
Lord Lucan on .. .. .	145
Champion, Sir Claude, a "follow" story .. .. .	85
Chesterton, G. K., on American Press .. .. .	80
Comedy, news value of .. .. .	52
Competition, in newspaper world .. .. .	146
Crime in India .. .. .	139
Criticism in newspapers .. .. .	10
<i>Daily Mail</i>	
India Act, and .. .. .	113
Lord Salisbury on .. .. .	109
Yadil, and .. .. .	114
<i>Daily Telegraph</i> , and <i>The Times</i> .. .. .	110
Dana, definition of news .. .. .	50
<b>DELANE, W. T.,</b>	
<i>The Times</i> , and .. .. .	109
—'s two and two .. .. .	129

DEMOCRACY,	Page
in India .. .. .	135
journalism, and .. .. .	34
leaders and .. .. .	115
DRAMA, news value of .. .. .	52
Edison, Thomas, on journalists .. .. .	2
EDITOR,	
aims of an .. .. .	150
as a businessman .. .. .	134
as umpire .. .. .	131
feature .. .. .	15
functions of .. .. .	123-125
in Society .. .. .	130
libel, and .. .. .	125, 131
powers, of .. .. .	132-133
qualifications of .. .. .	126
views, and .. .. .	12
EDUCATION,	
Act of 1870 .. .. .	110
Reading public and .. .. .	8
Emerson, on <i>The Times</i> .. .. .	109
<i>Esprit-de-corps</i> , in journalism .. .. .	119
Expansion, of news items .. .. .	84
FEATURES,	
articles .. .. .	14
syndicates .. .. .	14
writers .. .. .	14
FILES,	
importance of .. .. .	85
Kipling on .. .. .	85
Food, news value of .. .. .	101
Foreign correspondents .. .. .	10
FREE-LANCE journalism .. .. .	93 <i>et seq</i>
article length .. .. .	103
difficulties of .. .. .	95
earnings at .. .. .	93
field for .. .. .	12

FREE-LANCE journalism—(contd.)	Page
language for .. .. .	104
market for .. .. .	93
style for .. .. .	102
subjects for .. .. .	98
<b>HEADLINES,</b>	
art of .. .. .	79-81
truth in .. .. .	80
Hearst newspapers (America), definition of news ..	53
Henry, O. .. .. .	106
<i>Hicky's Gazette</i> , founded .. .. .	6
Hoare, Sir Samuel, and Press in India .. .. .	8, 135
Ideas book .. .. .	101, 105
<b>INDIA,</b>	
censorship in .. .. .	144
crime in .. .. .	139
democracy in .. .. .	135
editing in .. .. .	134
English in .. .. .	104
journalism in .. .. .	1, 7-8
leaders in .. .. .	109
news values in .. .. .	101
progress in .. .. .	150
schools in .. .. .	147
Information, in newspapers .. .. .	10
<b>INTERVIEWING,</b>	
candidates for jobs .. .. .	28, 31, 32
for a newspaper .. .. .	68-69
<b>INVESTIGATORS,</b>	
crime .. .. .	10
own .. .. .	10
special .. .. .	10
Itch to write .. .. .	2, 3
Jones, Kennedy, on free-lancing .. .. .	96
<b>JOURNALISM,</b>	
books on .. .. .	ii, 33
chances in .. .. .	5
conditions .. .. .	6



JOURNALISM—(contd.)	Page
courses in .. .. .	33
defined .. .. .	3
democracy and .. .. .	34
<i>esprit-de-corps</i> in .. .. .	119
exams in .. .. .	23
experience in .. .. .	35
future of, in India .. .. .	8
joys of .. .. .	21
knowledge for .. .. .	102
language and .. .. .	24-25
mental qualifications for .. .. .	21
new technique in .. .. .	149
open profession, an .. .. .	1
qualifications for .. .. .	18-30
specialisation in .. .. .	35
success in .. .. .	22
trade .. .. .	37
training in .. .. .	30 <i>et seq</i>
universities and .. .. .	25-28, 31, 105
<b>JOURNALIST,</b>	
as a trader .. .. .	45
Bar, and the .. .. .	38
born or made ? .. .. .	33, 34
secretarial work, and .. .. .	38
society, and .. .. .	34
Kilmaine, Lord, on headlines .. .. .	81
Kipling, Rudyard, on files .. .. .	85
<b>KNOWLEDGE,</b>	
general, among students .. .. .	31
kind of, for journalism .. .. .	23, 25
<b>LANGUAGE,</b>	
journalism, and .. .. .	24-25
in India .. .. .	104
leaders and .. .. .	118
newspaper .. .. .	26-27
<b>LEADERS,</b>	
democracy, and .. .. .	115
lawyers, and .. .. .	113

LEADERS—(contd.)	Page
leads, and .. .. .	59
in Britain .. .. .	109
in <i>The Times</i> .. .. .	109
limitations of .. .. .	112
style of .. .. .	115
writers of .. .. .	13
Leads, in articles .. .. .	102
Legal pitfalls .. .. .	82
editors, and .. .. .	125
Literature, in newspapers .. .. .	10
Local correspondents .. .. .	10
Lords, House of, and British press .. .. .	81
Magazine, section in newspaper .. .. .	9
<i>Manchester Guardian</i> , position of .. .. .	146
Marie, Empress of Russia, assassination of .. .. .	127
Melodrama in Shakespeare .. .. .	151
Meredith, George, on leadership .. .. .	109
Money, news value of .. .. .	52, 101
MONTAGUE, C. E.,	
on editors .. .. .	123-125
on leaders .. .. .	112
Mussolini and the League .. .. .	81
Mystery, news value of .. .. .	52
NEWS,	
absolute in .. .. .	48
aims of .. .. .	149
collection of .. .. .	60
definition of .. .. .	47
dressing up .. .. .	11
in America .. .. .	53
in India .. .. .	53
Northcliffe on .. .. .	49
nose for .. .. .	61
personal element in .. .. .	51
place element in .. .. .	51
presentation of .. .. .	12
reader, and .. .. .	48
time element in .. .. .	50
values in .. .. .	52

NEWS—(contd.)	Page
writing of .. .. .	61-65
News agency, functions of .. .. .	11
<i>News of the World,</i>	
analysed .. .. .	141
circulation of .. .. .	141
sub-editing in .. .. .	149
NEWSPAPER,	
aims of .. .. .	58
choice of .. .. .	45
defined .. .. .	41
in India .. .. .	139
organisation .. .. .	9-15
public taste and .. .. .	44
space in .. .. .	83
touch .. .. .	96-97
universal appeal .. .. .	44
wares .. .. .	43
window-dressing in .. .. .	75 <i>et seq</i>
Northbrook, Lord, and <i>The Times</i> .. .. .	129
NORTHCLIFFE,	
new readers .. .. .	6
on Board Schools .. .. .	144
on "talking points" .. .. .	114
on "what is news," .. .. .	49
on seeing ahead .. .. .	7
Personalities, news value of .. .. .	52
POLITICS,	
in India .. .. .	148
news value of .. .. .	52
weathercock .. .. .	117
Pornography, and newspaper readers .. .. .	139
PRESS, THE	
British .. .. .	116
power and influence of .. .. .	113
public and .. .. .	139 <i>et seq</i>
Propaganda, Australians and .. .. .	148
Publicity as a profession .. .. .	37
Public taste .. .. .	44

READERS,	Page
in India .. .. .	143
views .. .. .	130
Reeve, Henry, on career with <i>The Times</i> .. .. .	119
Reference libraries .. .. .	86
free-lances and .. .. .	101
Religion, news value of .. .. .	52
 REPORTING,	
conditions .. .. .	19-29, 62
district .. .. .	70-71
essentials of .. .. .	61-67
increasing importance of .. .. .	58
mental detachment in .. .. .	70
prospects in .. .. .	71-72
revolution in .. .. .	57
stenography, and .. .. .	57
Responsibility of journalists .. .. .	148, 149
Reviews, writers of .. .. .	13
 RIDDELL, LORD,	
on journalists .. .. .	78
on newspapers .. .. .	142, 146
Salisbury, Lord, on <i>Daily Mail</i> .. .. .	109
 SCHOOLS,	
in India .. .. .	147
of journalism .. .. .	33
Science, news value of .. .. .	52
 SCOOPS,	
R. D. Blumenfeld on .. .. .	128
Scope in India for .. .. .	129
Sensationalism in headlines .. .. .	81
Sex, news value of .. .. .	52, 101
Shakespeare and crime .. .. .	151
Sinecure, journalism not a .. .. .	21
Sirur, G. V., entrance into journalism .. .. .	5
Special correspondent .. .. .	10
Sport, news value of .. .. .	52
Stamp tax and newspapers .. .. .	110

SUB-EDITING,	Page
aims of .. .. .	149
conditions .. .. .	20, 88, 89
functions of .. .. .	11, 12, 76
headlines .. .. .	79-81
modern creation .. .. .	76
pivot of the paper .. .. .	77
propaganda, and .. .. .	78
prospects in .. .. .	90
qualifications for .. .. .	87, 88
Synthesis, in journalistic technique .. .. .	151
Technique, new, of journalism .. .. .	149
<i>Times, The</i>	
fifty years ago .. .. .	49, 50
influence of .. .. .	131
John Bright, and .. .. .	117
policy, and .. .. .	111
position of .. .. .	146
under Delane .. .. .	109
<i>Times of India, The</i> , payment for contributions .. .. .	93
UNIVERSITIES,	
English in .. .. .	105
journalism and .. .. .	25, 31
Vanderbilt, on reporters .. .. .	2
VIEWS,	
editorial .. .. .	12
readers' .. .. .	131, 132
Vote and reading public .. .. .	7
Vulgarisation in newspapers .. .. .	143