

THE CANADA PRESBYTERIAN.

\$2.00 PER ANNUM IN ADVANCE.

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OFFICE—NO. 5 JORDAN ST., TORONTO.

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TORONTO, FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 1879.

INTERVIEWING.

THE newest feature in journalism is that which has received the above designation. The interviewer is a sort of Paul Pry, who is deeply interested in everybody's affairs, and who is not easily abashed in the presence of the great ones of the earth. He is supposed to be ubiquitous; and he is really so, if we understand by this term that there is not a square inch of the globe to be considered safe from his approach. He makes his way into the secret chambers of monarchs and presidents. He takes his seat at the counsels of governments. The family circle may be invaded by him at any time. The boudoirs of noble ladies seem to fly open before him. The laboratory of the chemist, the studio of the artist, the consulting-room of the physician, the sanctum of the minister of religion, the lawyer's chamber, the banker's or merchant's office are none of them too sacred for the inroads of our modern reporter. Never was ambassador of kingly courts more self-possessed than this plenipotentiary of the press, the mightiest monarch of the age.

Nor can we say the work which he accomplishes is unimportant, or necessarily despicable. It is true that as a rule his reports are written with dash and spice, and furnish the sort of reading that is well suited to the breakfast table or the railway car. The interviewer has evidently a place amongst the men of letters, though it is by no means the highest. Without his sparkling sentences the newspaper would be wanting in a valuable element. The newest fashions in metropolitan centres could not be read and scanned of a morning by our wives and daughters. The movements of the Queen and her court would not be known beyond the limits of the royal residence. The *personnel* of distinguished persons would not be familiar to any but their immediate friends and attendants. Such as Beaconsfield and Gladstone, Bismarck and Gortschakoff, Thomson and Edison, Carlyle

and George Elliot, Stanley and Spurgeon, Lady Coutts and Florence Nightingale, the generals of armies, the statesmen, the poets, the painters and sculptors, the humorists of the day, seem to be placed upon intimate terms with us, as we read of their sayings and doings, and as we are made acquainted with their every movement. What we know of Edison's wonderful electric light, and his countless discoveries and inventions, is almost entirely the work of the interviewer. Nor should we forget the service rendered to science and the world by the greatest of interviewers, Henry M. Stanley. It was not benevolence pure and simple that sent Stanley in search of Livingstone. There was humanity in it, no doubt; but it was the journal which has exalted interviewing into one of the fine arts, that gave Stanley his commission, and by a free use of the means at its command made it a possible thing to find Livingstone among the wilds of the dark continent. The African missionary interviewed by a daring reporter upon the shores of Tanganika is the sublimest feat to which journalism has yet attained.

The danger that arises from the abuse of interviewing at once suggests itself to every mind. There have been many illustrations of this, which have but recently occurred, and which should teach us not to take for gospel everything that the reporter in search of scandal tells us. To every reader of common sense the interview which was recently reported in an American paper as occurring with the Duke of Edinburgh was an evident tissue of lies. The idea of the princely sailor making, to a conceited imp of the fourth estate, a clean breast of his opinion about the Earl of Beaconsfield and the Berlin treaty was on the face of it sufficiently absurd. Yet it was quoted by nearly every newspaper in the States, and of course it was widely believed. It was too tempting as a tit-bit of news for the Canadian journals to pass over. It crossed the Atlantic and found its way into the English papers. It was a fine thing for the German and French press. What a delightful morsel for the ordinary Russian to read that the son-in-law was so loyal to the sentiments of the Czar! It was enough to arouse the most plethoric Turk from his divan and his pipe, to express himself with but scant courtesy towards the Queen's son.

While with sensible people the denial of the Duke of Edinburgh that such an interview had ever taken place was not needed, it is gratifying that His Highness was able to give it his authoritative denial. There must have been more of humorous contempt than righteous indignation in his answer. But for all this the occurrence is valuable in the interests of journalism. It is suggestive to the reading public, who are too ready to devour all kinds of scandal, not to be such ready dupes as to believe a thing because a newspaper says it. Let readers frown upon all such attempts to give papers a good run by sensational lies. Let the proprietors of journals feel they have to cater to a class of readers who can never approve of the shams and frauds practised by interviewers. The

spirit of journalism should be above anything so low and mean as spicing its columns with vulgarities and falsehoods. There is an *esprit de corps* about newspapers, which, if carefully watched and fostered, will banish from them everything of a merely sensational character. The press should feel that it is a mighty and powerful engine for good or evil, that it is the vehicle of thought for the people, that it is the teacher of manners as well as moralities, that its mission is to elevate society by its pure and truthful teachings, and that while it may amuse by its wit and humor, and by its descriptions of public men and their sayings and doings, it must never do so at the cost of its own veracity, or its moral influence.

There is one thing clear, that the evils of interviewing will work their own cure, and that very quickly. If the names of ladies and gentlemen are to be bandied about like a foot-ball by the players, if the words of men in high position are to be distorted and misrepresented, if the rights of privacy are not to be respected, if interviewing is to be done for the sake of scandal, the sooner all who are likely to be interviewed, resolve upon the course of denying themselves to such impertinent approaches, the better for society at large. In these words we have reference only to such reported interviews as misrepresent and convey false impressions, but not necessarily involving character. But newspaper proprietors should take care not to allow any matter to appear of the nature of defamation of character. Whether it is such directly or indirectly, it should be carefully excluded, as defamation is, if possible, a worse crime than that of murder or arson. But here there should be self-interest observed, for nothing would please those, who have the interests of truth and character at heart, better than to see the newspaper proprietor and editor taken into the courts by such as are suffering from the infliction of interviewers, and to have them heavily mulcted in damages.

A NOBLE MISSION FIELD.

In speaking at a recent Missionary meeting in Montreal, the Rev. Donald Ross, of Lancaster, Ont., Missionary-elect to Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, N. W. T., made reference to the extent and capabilities of the North West, and the noble field for mission effort which it presented, as follows:

Your gratitude is asked for the extent of the field which God in His Providence has given you to cultivate. Is it not magnificent. Is there a church to whom a more glorious heritage is given, a field extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the line of 45° to the healthiest end of the earth, a land of varied capabilities and industries, of broad lakes and mighty rivers, of extensive prairies and boundless forests, a rich soil, a generous climate, peopled with inhabitants who glory in civil and religious liberty, freedom of thought and independence of action. No country in the world affords better scope for Presbyterian principles, none whose genius in the character of its inhabitants is more susceptible to Presbyterian influence and principle than this Dominion. The churches all around are drifting in that direction, and if the day should ever come when to the Dominion there shall be but one Church, fear not, it will be Presbyterian in its polity, purity and principle. With such a field and such a prospect before you, well may you give thanks and take courage and boldly press on to crown and kingdom. Here the speaker related a remark made to him last summer by the late Rev. J. Ryerson of Simcoe, to the effect that if Presbyterians had worked 40 years ago as they do now there would have been very little room for Methodism. "In olden times," said he "you Presbyterians believed in faith,