

there. The journals of Edinburgh have that unpractical provincial tone which is discoverable every where save in the London press. Their editors indulge in a little personal fighting occasionally, and make reference to each other's peculiarities. This has lately been the case to a considerable extent, editorial pugnacity having for some reason been aggravated. The cause of all this doubtless is, that the chief London journals are absorbed by the great questions of the day, and cannot condescend to petty squabbles; while the country paper, whose judgment of those weightier matters is superseded by that of its metropolitan contemporaries, can only command interest by getting up a storm in its own local pond. Place of publication is not the sole cause of the difference; for journals like the *City Press* and the *Clerkenwell News*, devoted to the interests of a certain London quarter, are just as trivial in their scope and style as the most insignificant of the country newspapers. They are, in fact, designed to supply what London heretofore allowed to pass unnoticed—the mere local gossip of the town or parish or district which they represent. We have no proof that an alderman of the City is a superior being to an alderman of Lancaster or Norwich, or feels less pleasure in seeing the announcement that “Mr. Alderman—and his lady entertained a select and distinguished party at dinner yesterday.” And there are little parochial squabbles in Clerkenwell and St. Pancras which would never be thoroughly fought out unless there were newspapers to do it. The same provincialism is noted in the colonies. A copy of any colonial journal always astonishes a London reader by the crudeness of its style, the pugnacity about trifles which it shows, its tendency to ignore great questions. The *Melbourne Argus*, for example, the *Times* of Australia, might be expected to take a higher tone; but it is entirely devoid of all the qualities which distinguish a first-class London journal. As to the Indian papers, the hot climate seems to make their editors more irritable and bellicose than any others of the species; and a few numbers of two opposition journals completely exhaust the uncomplimentary epithets of the English language. Remoteness from the heart of the Empire appears to lessen men's interest in important questions, and to quicken their irritability about trifles. The editors of Indian journals are generally English literary men of some standing, so that more might be expected from them; but the Australian and Canadian newspapers read as if they were conducted by self-taught geniuses, similar in kind to those who edit the journals published in the smaller towns of England. Coleridge used to say that men seemed to take to journalism because they had failed in shoemaking or some similar trade. This, in his day, was true of even London papers, and is still true of many which are published in the country and the colonies.