

press. I have always held that interviewing, conducted with discretion and a sense of journalistic responsibility, would be a valuable and entertaining feature of English newspaper work.

I am prompted to these remarks by the contents of this chapter. Said Mr. Stephen Fiske, the dramatic editor of *The Spirit of the Times*, and the author of a clever book on England, "I am anxious to have Mr. Irving write a short story for our Christmas number. Wilkie Collins, as you know, is a constant contributor, and we have the assistance of some of the best pens, English and American. Irving has written for several English publications."

"He has a wonderful amount of energy, and can do more mental work in a given time than any man I know; but when he is going to get an opportunity to sit down and write a Christmas story is more than I can tell."

"I only want a personal reminiscence, an anecdote or two," said Fiske; "but I must have him in the Christmas number."

"Why don't you interview him, with Christmas as the pivot of your interrogations?" I asked.

"He has been interviewed almost to death, I should think."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The trouble touching some of the "Interviews" that appeared

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