

was able to say: "We do not make this full and ample retraction in response to any notice of action for libel or writ for same or lawyer's letter, for we have received none, nor are we aware that Mr. Hossack intended to bring such proceedings against us. On the contrary we are only too happy to publish this retraction as a matter of duty, and in response to Mr. Hossack's request that he be placed right before the public, and that the untrue statements might be publicly withdrawn." This is a strong position to take and we cannot believe that it injures the prestige of the journal a particle. Many newspaper men differ from this view and prefer private explanations if these are absolutely necessary. This may be true in a large city where hungry lawyers lie awake at night preparing to found libel suits on innocent paragraphs in any journal which appears to have a weak backbone and is in the habit of retracting. But a local journal is better known and understood and is not open to the same danger.

COLONIAL PRESS REPRESENTATIVES IN ENGLAND.

THE British authorities have much to learn regarding the treatment of colonial newspaper men. During the Jubilee ceremonies the special representatives of the Canadian papers had much difficulty in obtaining access to places where the colonial Premiers took part in the proceedings. After much trouble a few of the Canadians, among whom was Mr. J. B. MacLean, president of the Canadian Press Association, now in England, carried the grievance to the Colonial Office, and Lord Selborne and Mr. Chamberlain's secretaries showed an obliging spirit in the matter. After much effort the Canadians were given the facilities they required for doing their work. But at first there was, if I am correctly informed, discourtesy and stupidity.

The Australians had the same experience. The Saturday Review has some slashing paragraphs on this episode, which will be read with grim satisfaction by Canadians who have gone through similar experiences. The following is the whole article.

"It would have been indeed a marvellous chance if in this memorable Jubilee year the Imperial Institute had not contrived to make itself ridiculous. Sir Somers Vane, it is true, no longer takes a part in its direction, but Sir Frederic Abel is still at the head of affairs, and he is so heartily seconded by Sir Alfred Jephson, the assistant secretary, that no bungling, however idiotic, and no insolence, however uncalled for, are beyond the accomplishment of the authorities. Of course, the Imperial Institute gave the colonial Premiers their first official welcome to England and their first dinner, but while the Premiers were entertained, the manager of the Australian Press Association was refused an invitation for a reporter. The Australian Press Association represents over a thousand Australian and New Zealand papers, and, in fact, as the manager pointed out to Sir Alfred Jephson, the Australian and New Zealand press depends on the association for all cabled news.

"But Sir Alfred Jephson was equal to the occasion. He left the letter unanswered for sixteen days, and then wrote to the manager that he could not send him an invitation for the dinner, but he offered to admit a representative after the dinner. This kindness the manager was not inclined to accept, and he improved the occasion by drawing Sir Alfred Jephson's attention to the fact that, as 'the Imperial Institute is in part, at least, supported by the grants of the colonies, it would have been but a small recognition of that colonial connection which the Institute desires to strengthen if the favor for which I have

asked had been granted. It seems to me that the conductors of the Institute are making enemies instead of courting friends.' As nothing stings like an unpleasant truth, we perfectly well realize how annoyed Sir Alfred Jephson was when he read this letter; but no annoyance, however intense, should induce an official to pretend to be more stupid than he is, and yet this is just what Sir Alfred Jephson did, inflamed by the desire to administer the snub discourteous.

"This time he answers promptly 'that he has been very much surprised at the tone of Mr. Townend's letter.' And then he goes on to pretend ignorance as a cloak for insult: 'With regard to what you say as to all the Australian and New Zealand papers being entirely dependent on your association, I have now in my hand a letter from Mr. Reeves, the Agent-General for New Zealand, asking for a pass for a friend of his, who, he says, 'represents a number of important newspapers in New Zealand, South Australia, and New South Wales.' His secretary also writes this morning for the same favor for the owner and editor of a New Zealand paper, who is very anxious to be present. The editor of The British Australasian, writes to the same effect, so that I think there must be some mistake as to your association being the only one which deals with those colonies. The manager, of course, replies to this, these invitations were asked for writers, and that 'There is no mistake whatever as to our representation that this association, and nobody else, sends news cablegrams to Australia.'"

"The outcome of the quarrel was that Mr. Townend very properly boycotted the proceedings of the Imperial Institute, and, therefore, the Australian and New Zealand papers had no cabled news of what went on. Furthermore, Mr. Townend sent a copy of the correspondence between himself and Sir Alfred Jephson to the Prince of Wales, and Sir Alfred Jephson, put upon his defence, could only repeat his impertinences. Now, we put it to the Prince of Wales, the Imperial Institute can no longer be conducted as it has been up to the present. Already its 'management' has done His Royal Highness an immense amount of harm. The Institute has been begged for most shamelessly in all parts of the world. It is reputed to have made large sums of money, but no accounts have ever been published. It has been the theatre of unseemly disturbances. This heavy debit account might have been balanced by great services done to the Empire; but the Imperial Institute has never yet rendered any services to any great cause, and now its demerits are increased by the bad manners of its authorities. Popular as the Prince is, he should not allow his loyalty to his favorites to blind him utterly to their faults. This is a sin in a prince comparable to that of cowardice in a soldier."

To keep the various parts of the Empire correctly informed, of what is going on at a time of this kind is the best work any organization supposed to be promoting unity can do. If the British Empire is to last, let us know the truth about the current events which relate to it. Officialdom does not see matters in this light, being engaged chiefly in perpetuating itself. No wonder the Canadian press is slow to pay through the nose for an independent cable service, when, on special correspondents being sent over to England to report an Imperial celebration, they are hampered in the ordinary work of reporting by the crass stupidity and impudence of a few long-eared officials.