

HINTS TO YOUNG WRITERS

REPORTERS should be popular, polite and universally liked. To be this, sociability and a pleasant address are essential. Make friends. Get on the right side of all the prominent men you are required to write about. "Stand in" with them. Do not be over-polite. Do not make your familiarity offensive. Never betray a confidence. It is always better to get the consent of the interviewed before you publish an important statement coming from him. Do not misrepresent him in an effort trying to make the article sensational and spicy. It will not pay you to do it, considering the question on the grounds of policy, not mentioning the moral side. You may enjoy a transitory brilliancy in a misrepresented, flashy exclusive article and may be able to give your readers some very startling statements, but rest assured such honors falsely won will not long continue. Publish a garbled statement or extravagant account concerning some prominent man whom you have been fortunate enough to have unburden himself, and you may expect nothing but contempt and snubs from that individual the next time you approach him for an interview. False and extravagant statements discount the reliability of a paper. Truth forces itself sooner or later to the front, and readers will accuse a paper addicted to publishing garbled statements and fakes with being unreliable and the accuracy of its news items not to be depended on. Such a paper will soon lose its reputation, which costs years to build up, but which a single untrue item may sometimes destroy.

Do not attempt to be poetic in writing a news item of an everyday occurrence. This is an error which not a few reporters commit. They are so anxious to throw an "individuality" into the write-up of an item. And this "individuality" is often of the merest nonsense and veritable rot. In these days of progressive newspaperdom there is little space to spare to beautiful and often meaningless phrases and grand rhetorical flights. Avoid going into raptures over the loveliness of a bride who is the acme of homeliness. Write the wedding up in the choicest language you know how, but over-complimenting is distasteful to the subject of the article and offensive to the reader. If an unusually sad death occurs (all deaths are sad, remember), and concerns some prominent or good man, then a dash of pathos here and there run in among the news of the article will lend an additional attraction and interest.

Avoid the use of too many adjectives. Call things by their proper names. Avoid fulsome praise and flattery in your art or theatrical criticisms. Do not rest satisfied with one person's account of, for instance, an accident. Interview as many conversant with it as your time will permit. Four men may be

in a railway wreck and yet each will give an entirely different account of the casualty. Sift down your data. Pick out what is best, and use only the choicest bits. Write it up in graphic and attractive style and you need not fear that the reporter on your rival paper will have the better account.—Leslie C. Beard.

FEMALE JOURNALISTS

WOMEN are gradually creeping into journalism and making for themselves a reputation and a decent salary. In Toronto there are several women attached to the newspaper staffs, who do good work of a special character, but as yet none have commenced on reportorial work, the dredging of that department being too severe or unpleasant for them. The *Chicago Post* recently referred as follows to Miss Mary Pollock Nimmo, well-known to many of the correspondents who attended the Dominion Parliament a few years ago:—

"Miss Nimmo was assigned to the mining department of the *New York Mail and Express*. It was wholly unexpected and at first she was appalled. However, she was not born in Ayrshire, Scotland, without inheriting Scotch pluck, which in this instance stood her in good stead. She procured a list of the New Yorkers interested in mines, and then proceeded to go through the mining exchanges, and the same afternoon there appeared in the paper a few quotations of outputs and prices, together with half a column of mining intelligence. At the time the *Commercial Advertiser* was the only New York paper besides the *Mail and Express* that maintained a similar department, and it was with fear and trembling that Miss Nimmo the next day scanned its mining column, expecting to see all that she had said contradicted, when to her relief she found most of her half column reprinted. Miss Nimmo has done a great variety of newspaper work, and in whatever she has undertaken she has been successful. At one time she was associate editor of the *Tribune*, of Hamilton, Ontario, and devoted herself to writing editorials on foreign politics. She was the first woman to be given a seat in the reporters' gallery of the House of Parliament. Miss Nimmo now resides in a pretty home on McPherson Square, Washington, left her by her mother, and is engaged in special service for the *Washington Post* and Cincinnati *Enquirer*. She is a beautiful and most agreeable woman, and during the years of her journalistic career has, by invariably adhering to her rule never to speak ill of any one, and at the same time adroitly and energetically covering news fields, become one of the most popular women in her profession."

The *Public Ledger*, Philadelphia, recently sent to its subscribers a *fac-simile* copy of its first issue, published "Friday Morning, March 25th, 1836."