

will be felt at his being given any annoyance by the thoughtless recital of these foundationless stories. This journal will take it as a favor if any newspaper editor who noticed the story in the last issue will give equal prominence to this disclaimer.

Sir Henry Irving's remark in Toronto the other day, that "personality goes for nothing, as far as a newspaper man is concerned," has led to some discussion. The Hamilton Herald takes a contrary view, contending that the personality which lends a characteristic style to one's writing is a vital element in success. Such examples as Don and Mack, in Saturday Night; Kit, in The Mail; Gardner and Cameron, in The Times and Spectator; Pirie, in The Banner, and the philosopher of Bobcaygeon, are cited to prove the truth of the argument. The Herald is correct. There is not a successful newspaper writer in Canada whose personality fails to impress itself on the Constant Reader and the Old Subscriber. Mr. Nichol, of The Hamilton Herald, is himself as good an illustration of the principle as any. The Herald is a live local journal, but the editorial page is pre-eminently its outstanding feature.

It seems both absurd and unfortunate that professional rivalry and political controversy should be carried into the personal relations of newspaper men. At a small social gathering the other evening, where journalists predominated, it is related that six of the latter were not on speaking terms!

Mr. Donly records the fact that since making the slight alteration in the name of his paper involved in changing it from The Norfolk Reformer to The Simcoe Reformer he has found some staunch old readers who have a partiality for the time-honored title. These will soon be reconciled to the change, for The Reformer is one of the best country papers in Canada, whatever its first name is.

One of the few newspaper men from "this side" who have gone into English journalism and scored a marked success there is a Canadian. His name is Thomas B. Fielders, a Nova Scotian, who did some good work on several United States papers along the line of reportorial feats requiring pluck, enterprise, and a taste for the adventurous side of journalistic life. He went to London in 1889 as a member of the staff of The New York Herald's English edition. That venture did not take, and was discontinued. But Fielders stayed in London, and has developed his talent for light, humorous, descriptive writing. He is now connected with The Pall Mall Gazette as a special assignment man, at the beck and call of the editor and outside the news staff. For ordinary reporting the English public will not stand the rather flippant style encouraged in the United States. But Mr. Fielders' work being descriptive and imaginative, his American training is no drawback. The Pall Mall has been noted for bright writing, and there are plenty of Canadian pens besides Mr. Fielders' which reach the required London standard.

Why should one newspaper be at pains to publish the libel suits of another? Every time a libel action is begun you see a flaming announcement of it in all the local papers but the one proceeded against. These actions are usually the veriest "bluff."

They are taken in order to make notoriety for some person, or to provide occupation for a briefless barrister. Half, yes, two-thirds, of them never come to trial. If the grievance hunters who manufacture them found that the press ignored the whole affair until it really became serious by going into court, a large proportion of them would drop out of the business. They would betake themselves to some other branch of the blackmailing industry. Why can't we stand by one another in this matter? Unless a threat of action is part of some large sensation, or is of public importance, it might properly be ignored in its initial stages.

A quiet thrust at typesetting machines has been given from one or two influential quarters this month. The Hamilton Herald, for example, fears that they will drive the editors to drink or death. The machines distort sentences with fiendish ingenuity, and when corrections are gently insisted on, the last state of the paragraph is worse than the first. But really it is the inexpert operator and not the machine that does execution. We all remember, a few years ago, when The Ottawa Citizen was inconvenienced by a strike and was able to tide over the difficulty by using the Rogers typographs. For a few days, until the operators became expert, which they soon did, some articles in the paper resembled a page of Josh Billings. This sort of thing was liable to occur: "Michae lBrow n, for rbiing trunkd and ldisordderrlly, was ffinned \$1." But this stage was quickly passed, and the whole episode was a great triumph for the machines.

It is complained that by ignoring accents, italics, etc., they give a mechanical appearance to the best editorial effusions. An able and experienced journalist, who is a stickler for style, formulated this charge in a letter to PRINTER AND PUBLISHER last week. He was promptly invited to state his case in detail. But he declined in these sorrowful words: "I don't think I could draft anything that would be quite suitable. My opinions are good old conservative views, but I fear they are behind the times. The machine has, no doubt, come to stay, like the bicycle and the bloomers, and there is no use opposing it." That man is a true philosopher.

The Truthseeker, a New York journal of "free thought and reform," has been prohibited from circulating in Canada. A marked copy of the paper, however, duly reached this office, containing an angry editorial on the Postmaster-General's action. The editor, E. M. Macdonald, writes:

"We ask you to reflect hard and long upon the Postmaster-General's statement that there is no appeal from his decision in such postal matters as this to which we call your attention, and upon his attitude which as plainly says that if he does not like the character of the contents of a paper he will exclude it from the Canadian mails. In other words, he can ruin all Canadian editors and publishers who offend him, and there is no appeal from his decision as to the character of the contents of their journals!"

It is customary to hold up The Eatonswill Gazette in "Pickwick" as the example of what a newspaper ought not to be. But the Newfoundland papers are very nearly as bad. To an outsider they make almost as piquant reading as the imaginary Arizona Kicker. The St. John's papers are the worst