THE ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NEWSPAPER

by

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Foreword

To delve into the story of the modern daily press in search of its opportunities and obligations, its successes, its ambitions, and its short-comings, is to find enlightenment and interest of the most absorbing kind, and to come to a greater realization of the enormous part played by the American press in the life of this country.

Upon the basis of such a quest rests the purpose of this thesis which is to describe and define the ethical aspect of journalism by presenting the subject in four general phases, each of which comprises a chapter of the thesis.

The first chapter takes up for consideration the most outstanding criticisms constantly hurled at the press, and what defense, if any, it has to make.

The second enumerates and discusses the problems, involving ethics, which, in the opinion of some one hundred seventy-five editors in all parts of the country, are the most perplexing ones an editor must meet. This chapter also directs attention to the newspaper's right to hold the public ethically responsible for its press.
Chapter three points out the efforts which the press, awakening to its responsibility, is putting forth to meet its obligations to the public; this includes codes of ethics adopted by state press associations, and codes, written and unwritten, now in use by individual newspapers.

The fourth chapter indicates further opportunities for the press in this direction; it points out some of the ethical principles which the public may reasonably and rightfully expect the press to maintain; and presents a model code governed in its scope by the criticisms, the "perplexing problems", and the adopted codes.

Throughout the thesis, the discussion is limited to the editorial side of newspaper practice almost entirely. Advertising is considered only in a general way, that is, only as its accuracy, and the domination of the advertiser, affect the public welfare. No attempt, whatever, is made to enter the field of the ethics of advertising.

If a study of the ethical responsibilities of any profession might in some way seem to need justification, the constant, wide-spread, and immediate contact of the
newspaper with society, individually and collectively, would certainly be the justification for such a study of the newspaper field in the profession of journalism. Generally regarded as the dominating factor in the creating and stimulating of public opinion, the American press, and its methods of operation, loom large on the horizon of our democracy. Indeed, Mr. Walter Lippman declares that the basic problem of democracy lies in "the protection of the sources of its public opinion" — those sources being the newspapers. If this is the case, then certainly any study, which might help toward this protection cannot be amiss.

K.T.A.
THE ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NEWSPAPER
Chapter I

The Criticisms of the Press

Small, suspected, harshly censored, the newspaper made its impudent debut in this country 232 years ago, to be exact, when Benjamin Harris launched "Pubblick Occurrences" on September 25, 1690. Although the editor's painful frankness and officialdom's extreme sensitiveness brought the paper to an unnatural death within twenty-four hours, others soon appeared, and the press promptly began scrapping, saucing, and partly earning, its bumpy way down the years to the present.

It now holds, however, questionably, a practically unchallenged position as the most powerful and far-reaching influence in nearly every phase of American life. It has so thoroughly embedded itself in the routine of living, that to tear it suddenly away would be to utterly confuse business and government, and it has become so much of a household commodity that it is read by practically every literate person in the country. Small wonder, indeed, that a professor
in one of our largest universities should declare it was not going too far to say that the aims and ambitions and modes of thought and expression of the younger generation are largely moulded by the contents of the daily newspaper, that not even the scriptures can now compete with it.¹

Such an institution must necessarily be the object of much praise and admiration, but unfortunately, more so, of blame and bitter criticisms. It seems, then, to one undertaking to determine the ethical responsibilities of the newspaper profession, that it is highly appropriate, even imperative, first to give attention to the more important points of condemnation, and try to discover whether or not the press offers any refutation or defense.

After a more or less detailed survey of the field of criticisms which have been graciously dedicated to the press as its peculiar property, it appears that they may be divided, very roughly, into four groups, scrutiny of which, by the way, points out most clearly the obligation of the newspaper to answer, not ignore. These groups, in turn, must be designated by rather general terms, which doubtless serve the purpose as

¹-Prof. Fred Newton Scott; U. of Mich.; The Undefended Gate, p 3.
well as any. Taken from the process of news handling, the classification naturally resolves itself into criticisms directed at, first, the gathering of the news; second, the selection of the news; and, third, the presenting of the news. The fourth division comprises the alleged active evil influence of the press.

CRITICISMS: THE GATHERING OF THE NEWS

Inaccurate Reporting.— Perhaps the most common count against the machinery of the press for news gathering is that indicated as "an amazing and often criminal lack of accuracy in reporting". For this, newspaper men have two replies. One of the first laws of the business is "accuracy"; a second is "speed". Theoretically these two stand on an absolute par with each other in the modern newspaper office and constant effort is made to drill them into reporters until they cannot think of one without the other -- at least, until they cannot think of "accuracy" without "speed". Without doubt, "speed" usually makes the stronger impression, and for this the public, or the world, must take a very great deal of the blame. The rate at which we

live requires swift action at every turn. People must have the news at least twice a day; in the cities they must have it several times a day -- and they buy the paper that can get to them first! This, of course, involves competition which is not a competition of days as in the merchandising business, or of service-quality as in the professions, but a competition of hours, even minutes, with the greatest degree of accuracy reasonably possible under the circumstances.

In the very great majority of cases, inaccuracy of reporting is due, not to rank carelessness or to intention, but to the high pressure under which the reporter must work or be "scooped." Newspaper people recognize the fact, however, that many mistakes are due to the carelessness of some reporter who has failed to appreciate what even the smallest error may mean of injustice to the victim or of cold cash to the paper, and herein lies their second defense. Since the beginning of the institution of the press, the public quite generally has considered that any fool could be a newspaper man, not excepting the editor himself, and many editors have taken it for granted that anyone who failed at everything else would probably do as a reporter. Both are

3-With particular reference to special sales and the like.
beginning to see their folly and as a result, college or otherwise efficiently trained reporters are forming an increasingly large part of the great cardinal body of news gatherers. This will undoubtedly materially promote the cause of accuracy. Mr. Melville E. Stone, Counselor of the Associated Press, expresses his sentiments on this point as follows: "I think it is as reporters and not as advisers or as entertainers that we rise to our highest stature. And to be a good reporter requires a great education. There is nothing more pitiable than the attempt of an ignoramus to write an abstract of an intelligent speech or to interpret an intelligent man's ideas in an interview. An intelligent reporter is far more valuable than an intelligent editor."\(^4\)

The personal bias of newspaper reporters as well as speed, ignorance, or carelessness plays an important part also in much of the inaccuracy of the news columns. For instance, one reporter at a political meeting hears "thunders of applause", while another attending the same meeting declares that "the speaker's message was received with only occasional light applause". This is just an amusing example of the way in which reporters

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4-The Editor and Publisher, November 29, 1913.
may color their stories, but similar inaccuracies sometimes prove much more serious. The newspapers recognize this weakness in their organization. Training, no doubt, could do much toward improving it, for many reporters willfully allow their prejudices full play in the handling of their news stories, when drilling to the contrary in the newspaper office might effect a change in their attitude. The editor has two other alternatives. He may discharge the persistently inaccurate reporter and try to replace him with one more careful, or he may try always to send the best-balanced reporter on his staff for those stories in which personal bias is likely to influence the account in any important way. The most practical solution to this problem is yet to be found. The increasing number of students of journalism in the colleges and universities of the country offers the schools an unusual opportunity to help the editor on this point, for students may be effectively taught to recognize and consciously ignore many of their prejudices, and to approach news sources with an open mind.

*Invading Rights of Privacy.*— Invasion of the rights of privacy is an accusation which strikes at the press from two points of view. In the case of gathering
news, it condemns the reporter for frightening, hoodooing, or threatening from people, who through inexperience, are not on their guard against the tricks of reporters, facts which are not only unnecessary to the completeness of a story, but which may be actually harmful or humiliating to the giver of the news. Such a practice, of course, has no justification, and, although admitting that it is in vogue in some newspaper offices, few newspaper people with any ethics at all ever try to defend it. They do protest, though, that to imply a universal application of that criticism, is to be not only unjust, but absolutely erroneous; that it is only the comparatively few scapegraces in the profession who follow the practice. The statement of a southern editor expresses the attitude of the most of the profession:

"Our reporters do not obtain news or photographs by trickery or deceit. They are instructed to say 'I am a representative of the Houston Post'. After that it is purely a question of definite reportorial ability whether we get the story. (Note: we generally get it.)"

Reporters as Detectives.— Of this group of

5-John J. Wallace, Managing Editor, The Houston (Texas) Post.
criticisms dealing with the gathering of the news, the last important one is perhaps the most interesting for it frowns upon the habit which some newspapers have of converting reporters into detectives. Some reporters purposely make detectives of themselves either at the instance of their chief, or upon their own initiative. Sometimes one of the variety of news sources, open to a newspaper reporter, unexpectedly and unconsciously rewards his industry with a clue to the solution of some crime mystery which may or may not be related to the particular story he is after. In either case the public opinion of newspaperdom itself, regardless of the outside critic, is hopelessly divided as to the proper policy to be followed. Editors which do not believe that a detective agency is a legitimate part of the equipment of a proper newspaper concern express themselves in some such manner as the Kansas editors have in their code:

"The practice of reporters making detectives and spies of themselves in their endeavors to investigate the guilt or innocence of those under suspicion. Reporters should not enter the domain of law in the apprehension of criminals. They should not become
a detective or sweating agency for the purpose of furnishing excitement to the readers." Other papers would do either of two things or both, call the officers' attention to the clue or have the reporter follow it to its source. In full sympathy with the latter group, The Philadelphia North American has this to say:

"The newspaper must not only warn and advise, but if need be, must perform the duties which derelict or indolent officers fail to perform. It must, if necessary, gather evidence and initiate prosecution; raise large sums of money to check the schemes of powerful combinations. --- A journal which preaches justice and righteousness, and does no actual work to advance them, discredits itself though it be ever so eloquent!"

Since both views of this question have staunch supporters among the most eminent and successful newspapers of the country it is likely that a decision one way or the other will not soon be reached and the critic, therefore, not soon satisfied.

6- Kansas Code : News, Injustice (1).
7- The Confession of a Newspaper; The North American; Philadelphia ; 1909; page 12.
The criticisms which seem to group themselves most logically and conveniently in the category of news selection necessitate a very comprehensive interpretation of the term because of their great variety and the facility with which some of them might be assigned to the third group under the head of news presentation. However, agreeing that "selection of the news" embraces every decision as to what shall and what shall not be run, and confining the definition of "presenting of the news" to the position and to the presentation, this second division seems more correctly classified than at first thought, perhaps.

Commercialism. — The American press is commercialized: this is the accusation which doubtless slips most easily from the glibly critical tongue, and often wanders about in a rather indefinite haze of uncertain purport. Since "commercialism" is a word which lends itself to consideration much better if given definite significance, it will prove more useful in its application to the press if its particular meanings there are revealed. These are three: first, that very commonly there is a virtual control of the
advertising or advertisers over the news and editorial departments; second, that newspapers in large numbers are controlled by "the interests"; and third, that the press stresses material gains disproportionately more than spiritual realities, that it gives preference to possessions above character.

A-The Advertiser's Influence........When the advertiser's influence is mentioned, it refers largely to one important charge, that the press suppresses news at the advertiser's request, which is supposedly accompanied by a threat to withdraw his advertising should the editor refuse to conform to his wishes. Such news may be entirely of a business nature, such as the story of an elevator accident in a department store or of a saleswoman fainting from too strenuous conditions of work; on the other hand, the news may involve personal escapades of the advertiser or some member of his family, for which he wants no publicity. Some critics go farther and declare that the advertiser has a finger in the editorial pie as well.

On this point, Mr. Richard Hooker, expressed the sentiment of scores of his colleagues in a address delivered at Yale University in April, 1921, when he said:
"It has been alleged that the press, both in its expression of editorial views and in its printing of the news, is dominated by advertisers. No many of elementary honesty who knows the facts will make that charge against the American press as a whole. The papers against which such a suspicion cannot for a moment be entertained are many. Upon the other hand, it is unfortunately true that a wholesale and universal acquittal can by no means be asked."

Many editors do not acknowledge at all any discomfort occasioned by an advertiser's demand; some very honest editors will admit under pressure that the advertiser now and then seriously threatens their self respect as independent American citizens; and, a few who have had particularly annoying experiences of the kind, boil over with this cynical observation:

"A newspaper is a contrivance which meets its payroll by selling space to advertisers; renders it therefore agreeable to those who make its existence possible. The ultimate editor of a small newspaper is the advertiser."

8-The Springfield Weekly Republican, May 19, 1921
9-Paracelsus: Confessions of a Provincial Editor, in Bleyer's The Profession of Journalism, p 141.
It is only logical and truthful, of course, to concede that there have been, and are, some cases, perhaps even many, in which the advertiser definitely influences the news and editorial content of newspapers. The mere fact that human nature, of necessity, has some weak links in its chain makes that concession unavoidable, and it is in these comparatively few instances of editors' yielding that the accusation finds its basis. But it is becoming the policy of the profession as a whole to fight down more and more what hold the advertiser has ever had on the newspaper. Advertising has become so general and so necessary, if the public is to know the manufacturer's goods or the local merchant's offerings, that they must advertise whether they wish or not, and the newspaper can, and in many cases is, according to the codes, asserting its privilege and its duty to print the news that's fit to print. This new attitude is indicated by the following statement from Mr. Milo M. Thompson of the Idaho Statesman:

"The Statesman has an unwritten code of ethics based, like the British constitution, on long practice. It maintains a strict separation between editorial comment, news and advertising, permitting neither the opinions of its editors nor the wishes of its advertising friends to
Many papers have so successfully battled that their editors declare no advertisers think of making requests for news suppression now, no matter how much they may have done so previously. Among these is Mr. Charles Grasty, a man of wide newspaper experience, who tells this story of advertisers attempting to bring pressure to bear upon him and the outcome of it all. In a comparison of British and American newspapers on several points, — among them the influences of the advertiser — Mr. Grasty says:

"We have gone through with it on this side of the water, and newspapers have become freer and freer of anything like advertising domination. It is frankly admitted that in the cities newspapers are dependent for their profit on the business of a few big department stores. It would seem to be a perilous position. It is an inverted pyramid, but it has been kept right side up.


11- Mr. Grasty was formerly managing editor of the Kansas City Times, later controlling owner of the Pioneer Press and Dispatch in St. Paul, and the Evening News and the Sun in Baltimore, for some years a director of the Associated Press, and latterly an officer and correspondent of the New York Times.
I am of the opinion that extra-journalistic domination from any other quarter is impossible, but the advertiser can get at the newspaper, especially one that has not yet reached the goal of success, in most convenient ways. I can give an instance from my own personal experience. In 1905, after I had had the Baltimore News for thirteen years and success seemed to be sure, one fine afternoon all the department-store advertising which had been in the paper in bulk for some years suddenly disappeared. The management had always been rather cold hearted toward the advertising in view of its conviction that independence of all outside influence was necessary in the conduct of the paper; and the raising of the advertising rate had furnished to our customers and excuse for an organized movement to discipline us. Their meetings were secret and we were able to obtain but little information. Such as we could obtain we published, and we made a candid but moderate statement of the position in which we found ourselves. If an organization of this kind could be formed and maintained, it meant that any paper could be destroyed by its large local advertisers.

"Some of my conservative friends from other cities,
in a spirit of kindness, came to Baltimore and urged me not to keep up a fight of this kinds, but to try to come to terms in private. I believed in the other method and was anxious to demonstrate the soundness of independence as a newspaper policy and the stability of newspaper property. At the end of a few weeks the merchants who were boycotting us were themselves boycotted by their customers to such an extent that they voluntarily surrendered. The only thing that we did to protect ourselves was to publish the facts, and this in no intemperate spirit. We did not work up any counter boycott by private means. It convinced me, and I think a good many others, that, if a newspaper were on the right terms with its public, no movement by advertisers could prevail against it.

"I believe this to be an advantage that is very generally enjoyed by daily newspapers in America. Our best papers stand in a firm and sound relationship to the people."¹²

B Control by "the Interests"........... The second charge of commercialism against the press, that of control by "the interests" — meaning large aggregations

of capital — is one involving much more than the pressure brought to bear by advertisers for mere suppression of news. It implies as well, coloring of a great deal of news, and the publishing of many very biased editorials, even to the extent of actually creating public opinion on any question touching the welfare of "the interests". One need only to read Upton Sinclair's "The Brass Check" for specific examples of this thing. These indictments most editors neither deny nor confirm openly; for the most part they simply ignore it so far as public recognition is concerned. Some of them keep in their offices for ready reference a list of "sacred cows". There are so many subtle and far-reaching means of domination which may be called into action by "the interests" that many papers cannot withstand the pressure, and there is no use in denying, nor profit in acknowledging the fact.

Meanwhile the indictment extends to include the assertion that this powerful influence fosters a positive opposition by the press to the interest of the masses, the one redeeming feature of which is the fact that

13-Upton Sinclair: The Brass Check, Pasadena, Calif.
14-Persons or institutions of which the newspaper will never speak unfavorably.
where such opposition occurs it is almost always an
unwilling one. The wish of editors all over the country
as indirectly indicated by their responses to inquiries
of other significance is to free their papers from arbi-
trary power and coercion and to make of them the agents
for service to the general public that the press could
and rightfully ought to be. Some say that they already
enjoy this independence. For instance, Mr. E. Lansing
Ray, President of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat declares:
"Nothing is suppressed unless distinctly detrimental to
the public welfare. No influences, whether party or
business, affect us."

Mr. H. J. Wright, Editor of the New York Globe, says:
"We serve nothing but the public interest as we see it,
and the community we have to deal with is so well convinced
of our purpose or so correct in its understanding of a
newspaper's right functions as to leave us unembarrassed
by attempts to sway us from the straight line of our duty."

"The Principles that guide the (Seattle) Star", reads:
"It is our journalistic religion that no man or institu-
tion is powerful enough to swerve this paper from a

15- Answer to Perplexing Problems questionnaire, Jan. 9, 1922.
16- Answer to Perplexing Problems questionnaire, Jan. 12, 1922.
course it believes to be in the interests of the whole public". 17

Mr. Marcellus E. Foster, President of the Houston Chronicle, in an article published in the twentieth Anniversary issue of the Chronicle, writes: "The Chronicle has never during the twenty years advocated any policy that was not for the best interest of Houston, or of Texas and of our great country. It has gone through many severe battles, fighting for what it believed to be the right.

"Our hearts were with the masses. We fought their battles on every occasion. --- Whenever any great public matter needed publicity we gave it. The public soon learned that the Chronicle printed the news, no matter who or what might be hurt thereby. Nothing that the public ought to know or had the right to know was suppressed.

"No ring or selfish interests dictated to the paper. No man or set of men had the power to swerve us from our purpose. We fought many a battle when we knew that temporarily we could not succeed. This policy has given us the loyalty, the confidence and respect of our readers." 18


18-Houston Chronicle, October 16, 1921, p 2.
"'We have edited this paper behind the typewriter. We can, and if need be we will, edit this paper behind the typewriter and the gun.'"

"That was the message printed on the first page of the Tulsa, Okla., Tribune by Editor Richard Loyd Jones, in answer to threats made against the paper by mail and in person. Mr. Jones had been repeatedly accosted on the streets and threatened by men who have figured in recent controversies in Tulsa.

"Mr. Jones' declaration is to the effect that the Tribune had won too high a position in its city to be turned aside from what it believes to be its public duty.

"The editorial implied that the threats are being made and the stories circulated because the Tribune has been opposing some of the acts of city officials and others in office".19

When this independence may be won by newspapers in general, is impossible to say, but there is justification in the assumption that it will come about before many years, because the members of the profession of journalism are waking rapidly to their responsibilities.

19-In The Fourth Estate, April 8, 1922, p 6.
and their power, as their newly adopted codes indicate. How this freedom is to be attained is another question but it seems reasonable and very probable that the policy of the Philadelphia North American may be the answer. Its plan of giving full publicity seems to have proved itself such a success that it may fairly be expected to stand out a beacon light in the struggle of the press to throw off the shackles of unwelcome slavery to financial interests. Pointing out the actual good which may be accomplished in any community by a paper with a policy like that of the North American, its editor declares one of the functions of such a paper to be corrective, and details the accomplishments possible in that field; referring to specific examples in its own record, he says:

"It (a paper with the North American's policy) can uncover the designs of predatory interests, informing the people as to where and how their prosperity is endangered through influences which would control the public wealth, and carrying the fight for justice into the very halls of Congress.-----It can stand as the guardian of the people's treasury against designing greed, and insure at least that stealing shall be done
in the full light of publicity."²⁰

Following this same ideal, the Kansas City Star has done much toward breaking the power of local interests which have been reaching out like the many-armed octopus and strangling every move for the better welfare of the City. By "boxing" the salient points of its crusades against graft and injustice, varying or emphasizing the points from day to day, and placing them always on the front page, the Star manages to wake the people to a realization of a good many evils in the course of each year and to induce them to bring about reform. The general virility of the paper, and the vigor of its attacks against anti-social influences mark it as one more of the country's journals which enjoy a great deal of freedom as far as "the interests" are concerned. With two thriving examples of independence such as the North American and the Kansas City Star to encourage them, newspapers everywhere must certainly do well to give serious consideration to the policy-of-publicity for interests that insist upon being a nuisance.

C- Stress the Material More Than the Spiritual.....

Having accused the newspaper of obediently responding

²⁰-The Confessions of a Newspaper; The North American; Philadelphia; 1909, p 11.
to the every beck and call of great outside "interests", the critic adds by way of good measure another charge, that of stressing the material things of life more than the spiritual. This, newspaper people can hardly refute, but can answer, in part at least, with some degree of confidence. In the words of Chester S. Lord:

"We are living in a commercial age, a money-making age, and people are thinking as never before of money accumulation and business expansion. The journalistic tendency of the hour is to exalt the practical and minimize the sentimental. War has made us money-mad. We note a growing fascination for articles of the practical, the details of how great success has been achieved never have failed to fascinate mankind. The tales of great gambling in Wall Street, of Card conquests at Monte Carlo, of three-card monte on shipboard, of new gold discoveries of money made in real estate speculations, of gigantic swindling operations, of big winnings on the racing track, of mental smartness in money getting, of big success in any quest for cash—you cannot give the public too much of this kind of stuff in you wish to sell your sheet."21

This is one reason for the stressing of material

21-The Young Man in Journalism; Saturday Evening Post; Sept. 17, 1921.
gains more than spiritual realities. Since the public is money-mad and wants all the thrills attending financial adventures, money getting and money spending, and, since many must get these thrills second hand, the newspaper is the agency to which they look for the supply. But at the same time that the press seems to offer nothing but the coldly material side of life for observation, it is beginning to recognize the fact that this is only a superficial appetite of the public to be satisfied, and that in their infrequent moods of thoughtfulness people crave the spiritual, the humane, the beautiful. In an effort to meet these desires, the Dakota County Tribune at Farmington, Minnesota, "is granting to the clergymen of the city space for short sermonettes—about 800 words—selecting any topic they may desire. The messages are set 12 ems wide and run in a double column space with light border and wide space between columns and along the edge. This sets it off to good advantage and gives the clergyman an opportunity to speak each week to a much larger audience than usually greets him on a Sunday morning. Each pastor in the city takes his turn, as in a weekly publication but one sermonette a week can be run to advantage. The plan could be continued indefinitely in any community by inducing
laymen to take up the pen and consult the scriptures for inspiration."

Similarly the Topeka Daily Capital, prints in every Monday issue, two or three sermons, having wide interest, preached by Topeka ministers on the previous Sunday.

It Does Not Give the News. — One of the popular reasons given by newspaper people for omitting some of the stories they do, and for printing some of the stories they do, is that they must "give the public what it wants". The newspaper critic, however, feels differently about it. He says that for all its pretensions, many a newspaper is not giving the public what it wants, because it does not give the news. This, of course, has related primarily to the charge of suppressing news at the behest of "the interests" which has already been discussed, but its scope has of late been enlarged to include two other criminations: that of deliberately falsifying the news which is once accepted as fit to print, and, that of carelessly or purposely failing to make corrections.


A - Falsifying the News

In the words of Professor Fred Newton Scott of the University of Michigan, "telling the facts is one thing and telling the truth is another. Facts, like figures, can be made to lie. The same set of facts may, under the manipulation of two different writers, present in one case a true and graphic picture of the event, in the other case a distorted, biased, and misleading picture." The soundness of Professor Scott's statements no one can question, and the guilt of many newspapers in this respect cannot be denied. Over-emphasis of certain details is one of the easiest means of accomplishing this misinterpretation. Two motives may actuate the practice: a selfish, inconsiderate one, or a well-meaning though questionable one.

When selfishness prompts any editor to intentionally endow facts with other than their true significance or to arbitrarily pervert or misrepresent the statements of any person, there is absolutely no defense and few editors attempt to offer it. Neither does any honest editor try to deny the fact that some of his colleagues are guilty. The editor's selfishness may range in degree all the way from the mere wish to make an interesting story for his paper to a greedy determination.
to put through big financial enterprises whether by fair means or foul. An interesting example of the milder form of disregard of other person's interests is found among several cited by Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, President of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, as having occurred during her campaign for national woman's suffrage. The instance clearly illustrates the real injustice that may be done by any deviation at all from truth and how easily it may grow worse and worse. It was at the time of a presidential campaign some twenty years ago, that a reporter was sent to Mrs. Catt to learn what the women were going to do. After laboring for two hours with the man who she described as "an exceedingly stupid and ignorant reporter", she was finally asked if she thought a woman would ever be president. She replied with the conservative statement that if women made as rapid progress in the next hundred years as in the past hundred, that a woman might possibly be president, but that no woman would ever be a President until the country thought the woman more capable at that moment for National leadership than any man.

"Imagine my surprise", said Mrs. Catt,"when I
found the interview headed 'Mrs. Catt wants a woman President'. The Associated Press spied a sensation and sent it out over the country under that head adding 'A woman will probably be nominated'. Later another news agency picked it up and set it out again under the head 'Mrs. Catt will run for President'. At that time I was president of the National Association. The harm done to our movement in consequence of these stories was impossible to estimate. Friends of the cause all over the country wrote to say that they thought I was going too far."

This incident Mrs. Catt relates as having taken place twenty years ago. As an example of modern practice she adds this story:

"At a luncheon just held in New York City, Miss Hay, Second Vice-President of the Association, said that during a drive for members extending over two weeks, the married women might have to neglect their husbands and homes a little. This was said facetiously and in a proper setting. The Associated Press sent that report throughout the country, and it was headlined thus, 'Miss Hay Urges all Women to Neglect their Husbands and Homes in order to Serve the League of Women Voters.'"
This sort of thing was continuous throughout the suffrage campaign, according to Mrs. Catt. Indicative of her fair-minded attitude toward the entire situation, are the comments with which Mrs. Catt preceded these examples of ill-treatment:

"The suffrage movement reached a final triumph through the aid of journalism extending over three generations. We could never have won without the thousands of columns of news and comment that were made upon our movement.

"On the other hand the final triumph was much delayed, no one could estimate how long, but I should think it would be safe to say some years, by the unethical treatment given our cause even by semi-friendly papers. Unethical, is a very mild term." 25

With this last observation all reasonable people must needs agree. Unfortunately, however, many reasonable persons fail to reason or to think, instead blithely hurry their way through life's business with none too much care where they step. In this, many newspaper people, all the way from cub reporter to editor-in-chief, have been guilty, whether purposely or inadvertently, and the profession admits the fact.

25- From a letter written by Mrs. Catt to Ruth Armstrong, Feb. 24, 1922.
Tradition is perhaps most of all responsible for it. Through the years of the development of journalism there grew up the attitude that any twist or turn which would make a "good story" out of any ordinary one or none at all was justifiable as long as it was not libelous. This has quite generally been considered one of the tricks of the trade, and a legitimate one. There is, though, a slowly but surely rising sentiment among editors of recent years that conscious breach of faith with individuals or with the public is unwarranted, that careless breach is practically unpardonable, and an effort is being made to change the old policy. That this new view of things is beginning to crystallize is evidenced by the inclusion in codes of ethics being adopted all over the country, such statements as this from the Oregon code:

"We will aim to protect, within reason, the rights of individuals mentioned in public documents, regardless of the effect on 'good stories' or upon editorial policy."26

George Edward Graham voices the idea in still more emphatic terms when he states, as one of two

golden rules for every newspaper man, this canon: never deliberately pervert or misrepresent facts.27

There is yet another phase to this subject of deliberately falsifying the news, which is inevitably bound up with the second motive described above as "well-meaning, though questionable". One of the commonest illustrations of it is found in the practice of many editors during any worthy financial drive such as the annual campaign of the Red Cross or a campaign for subscriptions to some strictly local project. The editor, in all public-spirited desire to help his city "go over the top", daily systematically cuts the figures which represent the actual amount pledged, his reason being that this will prevent a feeling of over-confidence among the citizens which might result in a retardation of the subscriptions. Generally, of course, he does this with the consent, or at least the knowledge, of those in charge of the drive. The interesting thing about it is the fact that many editors who do this would not even think of such a thing as misrepresenting their circulation figures. The opinion of editors and of public officials in general varies a great deal as to the ethics of the

27-Ohio State University Bulletin, Feb. 18, 1922, p 31. The other rule is: never betray a confidence.
procedure, most of those following it believing that the end justifies the means. But, whether or not the motive, which is admirable in itself, is justifiable, the mere fact of the frequent practice leaves the newspaper subject to the indictment of falsifying the news, and it remains to be seen what action, if any will be taken by newspapers generally regarding this particular kind of it.

Sometimes an editor does this entirely unconscious of the fact because he is himself deceived by officials of the drive. In that case, of course he is guiltless.

A reason other than selfish or doubtful motive which sometimes leads editors to falsify the news is clearly set forth by Mrs. Catt as learned through her experiences with the press:

"The newspapers had a way of combining all the news that was related to a subject in one article for the purpose of saving space, and infinite harm was done our case by this system for the editor who performed the combination usually had a very muddled idea of the whole thing and frequently the combined information was
quite contrary to the facts." 28

The only excuse which can be offered for this is that already suggested: the limitations of space in the newspaper. That, however, does not warrant the cutting or combining of news stories in so careless a manner as to entirely change their import. It would seem to behoove all newspaper people, therefore, to guard in every way possible against at least this one method of falsifying news when it is so easily within their power to do so.

While the individual newspapers are greatly to blame for all these charges of falsifying news, they are not wholly so, according to Mrs. Catt, who declares news agencies to be "utterly irresponsible". Since Mrs. Catt twice mentions the Associated Press as an offender, it is interesting to note what Mr. Melville E. Stone, former President and present Counselor of the Associated Press, has to say about its accuracy and veracity:

28-From a letter written by Mrs. Catt to Ruth Armstrong February 24, 1922.

Without explanation, the frequent quotation of Mrs. Catt's comments may serve to put her in a wrong light which she does not deserve. Taken collectively they sound as if she had very little of good to say for the press; on the contrary the tone of her letter was entirely fair and friendly to the press, as indicated by the one short paragraph to that effect quoted on page 29. Mrs. Catt wrote these instances in direct response to my inquiries regarding any experiences she might have had with unethical journalistic methods.
"--------Every telegram of the Associated Press is subjected to such a degree of censorship as to make untruthful or biased reports practically impossible.

"Everyone familiar with our work knows that it is utterly impossible for any one in the service, from the general manager to the least important agent at the most remote point, to send out an untruthful dispatch and escape detection. You may write a biased or inaccurate statement for a newspaper and "get away with it," but you cannot do it with the argus-eyed millions who read the dispatches of the Associated Press. Obviously then, the very magnitude of the Associated Press work tends to make truthfulness and impartiality in the service imperative. It cannot be used for private aims, to serve any special interest, or to help any political party or faction or propaganda. I am not laying claim to any great virtue. I am saying that, under its system of operation and in view of the millions of critics passing upon its work, the Associated Press is automatically truthful and fair.

"As one evidence of the truthfulness of our reports, I direct your attention to the fact that during the life of the present organization we have never paid a
dollar damages in an action for libel, no have we compromised any case.

"Thus do we aim to keep in mind our obligation, 'Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required. '"29

In accordance with its plan of organization by which some nine hundred or more newspapers of the country are banded together for the purpose of sharing news, any newspaper, belonging to the Associated Press, having news of interest outside its immediate territory starts the story over the wire to the other member of the Association. The story cannot go far without passing through an inspection office such as is located in large cities like Chicago and New York. When the accuracy or probability of any story is questioned by an editor or in the inspection office, investigation is made and corrections immediately sent back over the wire to those papers which have already received the story.

Likewise, the United Press, which is not co-operative, maintains division offices in large cities at which the news is inspected and censored. All news which is gathered by correspondents, passes over the

United Press trunk line between New York and San Francisco, from which each office received the news, edits and sends it out to customers over branch wires.

These are the precautions taken in the cause of truth and accuracy by the two largest and best-known news agencies in the country. Whether such instances as those cited by Mrs. Catt are the result of neglect, oversight, or purpose, they happen -- that must be admitted: they are becoming less frequent, however, as the machinery of each organization increases in efficiency. Severe reprimands for careless operators work toward that end, and are unhesitatingly administered by both agencies.

B- Corrections........As indicated above there are at least three outstanding charges against the press of failing to give the news. The first was suppression in favor of "the interests", and the second, falsifying the news. The third charge has been both conservatively and radically put: first, as "the newspaper's reluctance to make suitable apology to those to whom it has by accident or by carelessness done an injury"; and second, as "the persistent

30- Prof. Fred Newton Scott, U. of Michigan: The Undefended Gate, p 5.
refusal to right a wrong done editorially". That this criticism has no been without plenty of foundation all newspaper people must admit. And the explanation which seems most probable, uncomplimentary as it is to both the press and the public, is that offered by Dr. Washington Gladden:

"It is all the direct result, you see, of the prevailing estimate of news -- that whatever reflects discredit upon a fellow being is news, and whatever tends to remove that discredit is not news."  

This obviously applies to instances of actual injury done.

Where mistakes have been made which caused no humiliation or other definite harm, but merely "spoiled the story" for the persons involved, the reason for lack of corrections was probably that it would be too much trouble. However, newspaper people are beginning to see the light on this question and are making radical changes in their policies regarding it -- which is their chief defense against the criticism. A splendid example of the new attitude toward even the small

31-Oswald Garrison Villard: Some Weaknesses of Modern Journalism, in Thorpe's The Coming Newspaper, 58.

32-Dr. Gladden: Tainted Journalism, in Thorpe's The Coming Newspaper, p 49.
errors that do no more damage than to disappoint those concerned was that which appeared in the Topeka (Kansas) Daily Capital some weeks ago. In a Sunday feature section of the paper was carried a story on a local organization at Washburn College becoming a "national". Accompanying the story were the photographs of three Washburn girls, who had been prominent in the starting of the chapter, and all of whose names begin with "Mc". The story had called them "The Three Macs". In the course of their journey through the newspaper plant, the names and the cuts had been mixed, and were published that way. On Monday, the Capital reprinted the pictures and in a spirit of absolute good-nature explained exactly how the mistake had occurred, further calling attention to the activities of the girls.

Another encouraging sign of the times in this particular, and on a much bigger scale, is the Bureau of Accuracy and Fair Play first established by the New York World on July 7, 1913, and later reproduced by many other papers, such as the Philadelphia Public Ledger, the Buffalo Courier, the Findlay (Ohio) Morning Republican, and others, while many more are rapidly manifesting an active interest in the idea. The World's
Bureau has for its purposes the promotion of accuracy and fair play, the correction of carelessness, and the stamping out of fakes and fakers. Whether noticed in the office or called attention to by the injured, each mistake is promptly and carefully investigated, and where the World has been at fault the Bureau seeks to make amends by publishing corrections and giving the same prominence that was given the matter in which the mistake was made. A copy of the paper containing the correction is sent in every case to the person for whom the correction was made, with a note, and a printed card stating the purposes of the Bureau. The response of the public to this method of handling newspaper mistakes is evidenced by the letters of hearty appreciation received by the World. The alacrity with which other newspapers are following suit would seem to point toward a new and not-distant era of accuracy and fair play when the disparaging critic will be definitely silenced on the subject.

Invading the Rights of Privacy and the Home.—One of the accusations not infrequently voiced against the press is that it rushes in where angels fear to

read, indiscriminately trampling upon all the rights of privacy and of the home; that it makes "indefensible attacks upon public men coupled with shocking invasions of privacy of both public and private individuals from which not even women are exempt".\textsuperscript{34}; that it often publishes truths that hurt innocent persons without accomplishing any justifiable end.

The libel law permits fair criticism of public men, limiting that criticism to their public acts, forbidding attacks on their private lives, under penalty. This, of course, does not deter some editors from printing facts which they know and have not the right to print, if they are reasonably sure of not being taken to task because the facts are true. The sentiment of editors as a whole, however, are appropriately illustrated in the code of ethics adopted in January (1922) by the Oregon State Editorial Association:

"We will not make 'privileged utterance' a cloak for unjust attack, or spiteful venting, or carelessness in investigation, in the cases of parties or persons."\textsuperscript{35}

Most editors are charitable! Many of them are sincerely trying to prevent, in every case possible,

\textsuperscript{34} Oswald Garrison Villard: Some Weaknesses of Modern Journalism, in Thorpe's The Coming Newspaper, p 58.

\textsuperscript{35} Oregon State Editorial Association: Code of Ethics, III, 11.
the publication of facts that injure innocent persons without accomplishing any justifiable end, but it must be admitted that not enough of them are doing so. However, a questionnaire on the subject of perplexing problems of ethics which was sent to editors in every state of the Union reveals the fact that one of the questions troubling editors the most, and to which they declare themselves to be only too anxious to give a fair answer, is that which asks: will publication of this story do more of harm to innocent persons than of good as a deterrent to delinquents, or visa versa? The fact that so many editors mentioned this as one of their hardest problems indicates that, at least, they are wakening to the wrongs so often done by publication of news which might have been suppressed with a clear conscience. Editors who feel their responsibility as agents of publicity for the deterring of crime want to do their full duty; at the same time, judging from their letters and codes, the humanity in them rises up to protect from suffering those who are innocent and defenseless. They do not deny that many times they fall short, but in justice to them, it must be recognized that apparently they are right now, trying to find the happy
medium of publicity which will best serve both purposes.

The common practice of the press of constantly invading the privacy of prominent persons, such as high national officials, movie stars, and society leaders, just because stories (not derogatory) of their private life make good reading for subscribers is no doubt irritating to the victims almost beyond endurance many times. Whether or not the practice is actually unethical and the critic is justified in reproaching the newspaper on this score, is a debatable question. Publicity seems to be one of the penalties of success, and it is more than likely that these stories will continue in vogue unless there is a definite uprising of the exploited against them.

A Selective Publicity. — Following closely upon the criticism of invading private rights is that denominated as "a selective publicity". In other words, the press is accused, where a question of disgrace is involved, of giving publicity to some and of shielding others. Usually this presupposes wealth to be the determining factor. Without doubt, it has played an enormous part in the suppression of crime news. However, editors are expressing resentment at the assumption
that wealth can buy its way in everything, and some of them declare they are ignoring its rewards. The comments of two or three editors on the subject are fairly good indications of how the profession as a whole feels about it.

Explaining that only strict news facts pertaining to any local divorce are ever printed in the Emporia Gazette, William Allen White indicates his policy with regard to the drinker, as follows:

"Now about the drunk: The man who fills up with whisky and goes about making a fool of himself becomes a public nuisance. If permitted to continue it, he becomes a public charge. The public has an interest in him. Publicity is one of the things that keeps him straight. His first offense is ignored in The Gazette, but his second offense is recorded when he is arrested, and no matter how high or how low he is, his name goes in. We have printed this warning to drinkers time and again; so when they come around asking us to think of their wives and children, or their sick mothers or poor old fathers, we always tell them to remember that they had fair warning, and if their fathers and mothers and wives and children are nothing to them before taking, they are nothing to us after taking."
"The bum and the divorce are treated always from the standpoint of the community interest."36

"In the ethical conduct of a newspaper", says a Southern editor, "the most difficult thing is not to be too easy and too good-natured.---Almost any editor, if a man came to him offering a bribe, would kick the man out of his office or try to do so."37

"The old days of bribing newspapers to suppress news are of course past. That simply isn't done any more," declares Mr. J. E. Rockwell, Editor, The Fargo, N. D., Forum.38

It is not usually wealth, then, which leads editors to suppress news sometimes and to print similar news other times, thereby laying themselves open to the criticism of favoritism. Rather according to the editors, it is when the old firned of the paper or the editor comes to beg the favor of news suppression, or when one black sheep brings distress to an unusually fine family which has done much for the community: it is then that the editor is sorely tempted to suppress what he should

36 - In The Ohio State University Bulletin, Feb. 18, 1922, p30
37 - This editor requested that his name be withheld.
38 - Answer to questionnaire, January 20, 1922.
print perhaps if he were to adhere to a hard and fast rule. In reply to the "perplexing problems" questionnaire mentioned above, many editors indicated this as one of their most difficult problems. Although some editors say "print all the news all the time", the majority feel that to have no fixed rule and to judge each case on its own merits is the only just, humane policy. The position of the editor in this phase of his business is aptly put by Mr. J. L. Dobell, Managing Editor of the Butte (Mont) Miner, when he says:

"Every newspaper man, I believe, has an instinctive aversion to suppressing anything which the public appears to have a right to know. Yet it will happen once in a while that the publication of some story will do far more harm than good, and when this happens the great problem that confronts the editor is careful weighing of the case and deciding it in the manner that his conscience dictates."39

But even a conscience needs some guidance, and the Oregon code,40 seconded by papers in other parts of

39- Answer to questionnaire, Jan. 14, 1922
40- Repeated quotations are made from this code because it is one of the very latest codes and therefore up-to-the-minute on developments in newspaper ethics.
the country, sets this down as a first principle:

"We will deal by all persons alike so far as is humanly possible, not varying from the procedure of any part of this code because of the wealth, influence, or personal situations of the persons concerned, except as hereinafter provided."

The provision runs like this:

"It shall be one of our canons that mercy and kindliness are legitimate considerations in any phase of journalism; and that if the public or social interest seems to be best conserved by suppression, we may suppress; but the motive in such instances must always be the public or social interest, and not the personal or commercial interest." 42

A second aid to conscience is offered by the Richmond News Leader, whose policy is this:

"Minor news of first offenses is always to be "played down" and is to be kept out for good cause shown at any time.---- The question to ask is: Has this particular case any relation to the public welfare?"

41-Richmond (Va) News Leader; St. Louis Globe-Democrat; Reno (Nev.) Gazette; Cincinnati Post; Fargo (N.D.) Forum; New York Globe; Emporia Gazette; Kansas City Post; Cheyenne (Wyo) Tribune; Seattle Star; and many others.

If it has print it; if it has not, why give some young fool or some person who slipped a handicap for life? Public curiosity and public welfare are not synonymous." 43

An interesting addition to these two policies which further indicates many of the sincere efforts of the press to do the right thing in giving publicity may be found among those adhered to by the Buffalo Courier:

"It is the policy of the Courier not to over-display or sensationalize either telegraph or local stories pertaining to the clergy of any sect who have erred or fallen from grace in the eyes of their parishioners, on the ground that the fact of a man's being an ordained minister is no fair reason for exploiting his mis-steps or mistakes, which same mistakes in a layman would be given no undue notice." 44 Similarly, the Philadelphia Record includes this in its code:

"Don't stress the fact that the villain of your story is a negro, or an Italian, or a Methodist, unless that fact is essential. It is injurious to the interests of the paper to indict a race, or a nationality, or a religion, for the misdoing of an individual. Don't couple with "negro" adjectives which you would not use in precisely

43 - From a letter written by Mr. D. S. Freeman, Editor, the News Leader, to R. A., Feb. 5, 1922.

44 - Answer to questionnaire, Jan. 11, 1922.
the same circumstances in writing of a white man."^5

Admitting some weaknesses in its standards of publication, the press offers these policies in its defense thereby calling attention to the real reasons which prompt it to publicity in some cases and suppression in others.

**Propaganda.** — Very closely related to the accusation laid upon the newspaper of a selective publicity, indeed what is merely another phase of that charge, is the criticism reproaching the press as an agency of propaganda. This is one of the problems with which the editor must deal almost daily and one upon which he finds it difficult to draw the line. Representatives of every conceivable proposition torment the newspaper man with requests for free publicity, and every one of them is absolutely sure that his cause is so worthy that for the editor to hesitate is rank heresy. Perhaps the small town newspaper man feels this the most and finds it the hardest to resist, but even if he yields he doesn't approve of it nor does his big brother in the city. Both are breaking away rapidly from outside pressure and from personal inclination to puff or to advertise with matter that should be paid for as regular advertising. Witness the following from the Policy of the
Allegheny County (N.Y.) Publishers' Association:

"The publishers of Allegheny County will refuse to print all propaganda, puffs and free publicity of every worth, whether furnished in copy or plate form."46

Not quite so relentless, as the New Yorkers but nevertheless wary, the Oregonians have included in their code this decree: "We will not permit, unless in exceptional cases, the publishing of news and editorial matter not prepared by ourselves or our staffs, believing that original matter is the best answer to the peril of propaganda."47

Commenting upon the ethical problems that editors must meet one newspaper man lists as one of them: "the temptation to flatter particular individuals, organizations or religious denominations by prominent display, and vise versa," to which he adds his policy on the subject: "A newspaper that plays favorites never is either a newspaper or a favorite. The same rules of publicity must be applied to all readers of the paper."48

46 - In section: "Propaganda, Puffs, Advertising Disguised as 'news', etc".


48 - D. S. Freeman, Editor, Richmond News Leader, answer to questionnaire, Feb. 5. 1922.
Unreliable Advertising. — Although this discussion is to deal with the editorial side of journalism only, the carrying of unreliable advertising seems so closely associated with the news and editorial content of the newspaper that it must be worthy of some small attention at least. For the press to deny the fact of guilt with respect to unreliable advertising, both past and present, would be utter folly. It has accepted questionable advertising since its beginning and some newspapers still do so, much to their discredit. Included within the scope of this kind of advertising are those advertisements which are designed to advance the schemes of "gold brick" stock companies, unreliable patent medicine concerns, houses of ill fame, irresponsible employment agencies and other similar concerns. The practice of carrying such advertisements has been of such a traditional character that newspapers have found it hard to throw them out and thereby lose the enormous advertising profits which they represented.

Although the press has not cleaned up its advertising columns as thoroughly as might be wished, it has awakened to the responsibility and is doing increasingly more toward banishing the unreliable and misleading.
Mrs. Helen Robinson, director of the Protective Bureau of the New York Probation and Protective Association, cites, for instance, the case of a girl answering an advertisement which offered employment and being accepted for the position. After a short stay during which she learned that her employer was not interested in her work but in her presence in his office, she left and the case was reported to the Probation Association. The newspaper which had carried the advertisement was informed of the man's schemes; after making an investigation, the Advertising Manager placed the man on their black list, stating that they would accept no more advertising of any character from him. According to Mrs. Robinson, this has happened repeatedly. The occurrence indicates a willingness on the part of some newspapers at least to throw out what advertising has been proved bad. 49

Merely to do this is not enough, however, and some papers are establishing the policy of investigating advertising before it is accepted at all, even placing their own guarantee, behind the advertisements they do carry. Among the papers doing this now, are the New

49 - From a letter to R. A., March 13, 1922.
York Tribune, the Bridgeport (Conn) Herald, the Lynden (Wash) Tribune, the Bridgeport (Conn) Standard, and the Chicago Tribune.

Many newspapers, whether actually guaranteeing the advertisements or not, are coming to follow the policy expressed by Mr. William Allen White, Editor of the Emporia Gazette:

"Generally speaking, I do not print any advertising in the Gazette which I could not personally guarantee. That means that I cut out all patent medicines, traveling doctors, unregistered oil stock or any other unregistered stock, traveling fire sales and all sorts of traveling merchandisers, and I refuse to print any advertisements which seem to lure girls to the city for employment. We also refuse matrimonial agencies, and all that sort of thing."

In 1900, Mr. James Schermerhorn, began a twenty-one year experiment with his newspaper the Detroit Times. By virtue of that experiment the purpose of

52 - Answer to questionnaire, Dec. 27, 1921.
which was to test the practicability of the Beatitudes as applied to newspaper publishing. The Detroit Times was one of the first to drop liquor and cigarette advertising, all wild-cat mining, piano puzzle copy and racing tips.  

The Kansas code, which was adopted in 1912, includes this paragraph: "We condemn as against moral decency the publication of any advertisement which will obviously lead to any form of retrogression, such as private medical personals, indecent massage parlor advertisements, private matrimonial advertisements, physician's or hospital's advertisement for the care of private diseases, which carry in them any descriptive or suggestive matter, of the same."

The Oregon code declares: "We will discourage and bar from our columns advertising which in our belief is intended to deceive the reader in his estimate of what is advertised. (This clause is intended to cover the many phases of fraud, and unfair competition, and the advertising of articles that seem likely to be harmful to the purchaser's morals and health)."  

54 - Pamphlet, Testing the Beatitudes, by Mr. Schermerhorn, p 4.  
55 - Oregon code, VII , 30.
The code which has been adopted by both the Washington State Press Association, the Texas State Editorial Association, and the South Florida Press Association makes the following rule "obligatory to every member of the Association": "To investigate all questionable advertising and refuse space to misleading and illegitimate advertisements."

That the spirit of responsibility toward a public, which of necessity cannot investigate the reliability of advertising is growing, is an important thing. The critic and his audience may look both for the rapid improvement of newspaper advertising, and for a much healthier press in consequence.

CRITICISMS: THE PRESENTING OF THE NEWS

There is an old established truth that there are all kinds of ways of saying things and of doing things. The newspapers have proved it beyond a doubt, and in consequence many of their methods of presenting facts have been condemned. Of the criticisms to which the press has fallen heir on that score, three stand out as most common. The first has to do with the coloring of headlines particularly, but of the text as well;
the second objects to sensationalizing the news; and, the third takes exception to the presenting of antisocial news by playing up its sordid and revolting details, and laments its over-emphasis.

**Coloring the News.** — When one stops to consider the percentage of newspaper readers who merely scan the headlines for the day's news and dash off about their business supposing that whatever impressions they have so acquired are correct, he begins to realize the importance of the headline and the importance of the charge against the press of coloring those headlines. A California newspaper sought through a questionnaire to learn from its readers how much of the sheet they actually read. It summarized the eighteen hundred replies. Seventy-five percent attested that the reader looked at the headlines and rarely finished the article.56 Since there is no reason to believe that California newspaper readers differ radically in their reading habits from those in other parts of the country, the results of this questionnaire may be taken as fairly indicative of the

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56 - Chester S. Lord: The Young Man in Journalism, in Saturday Evening Post, Sept. 17, 1921, p 97.
circumstances of newspaper reading everywhere in the united States.

**News**, which includes the content of both heads and text, may be colored by several different methods such as editorializing, exaggeration, innuendo, overemphasis. That it is accomplished by one means or another many times is a certainty; that it is accomplished altogether too many times is just as certain. Strange to note, the codes of ethics of the state press associations have practically nothing to say on the subject of colored news. The Missouri Code adopted in May 1921 makes this brief reference to it:

"We declare as a fundamental principle that truth is the basis of all correct journalism. To go beyond the truth, either in headline or text, is subversive of good journalism." 57

The South Dakota Code, adopted in February 1922 and the latest, declares that,

"News should be uncolored report of all the vital facts accurately stated, insofar as possible to arrive at them."58

57 - Missouri Code : First paragraph of section labeled "Editorial".

58.- South Dakota Code: Second paragraph of section labeled "Truth and Honesty".
The reason for the failure of other codes to mention this point may be that the other associations interpreted the declarations regarding accuracy, which were all very definite, to include the policy of accuracy in the presentation as well as in the gathering of facts. Another possible explanation lies in the fact of difference of opinion on this score, which may have made the taking of a definite position as a whole association regarding it, impossible.

If the latter is the case and some editors still hold that theirs is the right to be one-sided in presentation of the news, they have plenty of opposition, for many of their colleagues feel decidedly otherwise. Mr. D. S. Freeman, Editor, the Richmond News Leader declares that: "An editorial slant in the headlines is adulteration of the news and takes unfair advantage of the reader. It must be eliminated even if it destroys the effectivemess of a headline."59

The Editor of the Kansas City Post, Mr. Dick Smith, says: "It seems to me that if there is one primary ethical principle in news presentation, it is to keep the news columns free from editorial coloring.

59 - Answer to questionnaire, Feb. 5, 1922
A paper is taking a mean advantage of the public when it prostitutes its news columns with editorial policy.  

The Detroit Journal's letter of policy issued to its staff informs them on the point of colored news with these remarks: "We prohibit the editorializing of news. We believe that both sides of every honest question are entitled to fair and complete statements in our news columns. Our policy will be made clear on our editorial page. The direct introduction of policy in the news columns must be done by way of articles which bear signatures."

President Harding's Code for the Marion Star which is one of long standing instructs his news gatherers in no uncertain terms as to their procedure: "In reporting a political gathering, give the facts, tell the story as it is, not as you would like to have it. Treat all parties alike. If there are politics to be played, we will play them in our editorial columns."

With such representative papers as these stepping to the front with firm declarations on the side of straight news in headline and in text, and abetted by many others, the prospects for uncolored news are

60 - Answer to questionnaire, Jan. 9, 1922.
not so dark after all in spite of the seeming silence of the state codes, and the fact that practice does not always immediately follow declaration.

_Sensationalizing the News._ — One criticism which will doubtless always remain with the newspaper is that it is sensational. The reason? Because there will be for years to come, at least, a decided difference of opinion as to the propriety of this method of presenting news. Many critics who constantly bewail the sensationalism of the press fail to distinguish between yellow journalism and sensational journalism. Because of this fact, it may be worthwhile to determine just what the difference between these two debatable forms of journalism is.

"The sensational press turns a somersault if necessary to get attention and then by mechanical devices and rhetorical appliances strives not only to convince its readers that certain conditions are wrong, but to urge them to set about — and at once— to right them." Examples of this type of paper are the New York Herald and the Chicago News. In 1869, after a two-year silence of David Livingston, the

African missionar and explorer, James Gordon Bennet, owner of the New York Herald, dispatched Henry Morton Stanley to find him, which he did in 1871. It was under the direction of Melville E. Stone, that the Chicago News introduced to newspaperdom the idea of detective work as within the field of the press; and, during the course of its existence it has run down a number of criminals whose cases the police had given up. And, it sometimes renders service to the public which the conservative press either does not think of, or does not want to undertake.

Yellow journalism represents all that is bad in journalism, and it "is a rank offshoot of sensational journalism. Its handling of crime does not deter, but suggests. It screams, attract a crowd, ---and has nothing constructive to offer. Its account of folly in high life is not ridicule but a pander. It appeals to hate only for hate's sake. It attempts to unearth scandal, but its methods do not show it to be concerned in preventing a repetition of that scandal. The malicious coloring, faking, cruel and pitiless publicity, all are stock in trade of the "Yellows." The characteristic which they have in common with the sensational

papers is the big display type; because of it the two are frequently confused.

With this distinction between sensational and yellow journalism in mind, it may reasonably be admitted that sensational journalism probably has a place in the life of the American people. If the sanction of illustrious journalists has anything to do with it, then sensational journalism must indeed have considerable justification, for two of the country's most successful newspaper men give it their support. In an address before the Pulitzer School of Journalism at Columbia University in 1913, Mr. Melville E. Stone, present Counselor of the Associated Press, declared himself on the subject of sensational journalism:

"I believe in sensational journalism!" said Mr. Stone, "To be news at all a thing must be sensational. I used the word sensation with what I conceive to be its correct meaning. It is the unusual, the startling quality of any information which makes it news. A Methodist minister may rise in his pulpit every morning for forty years and preach the gospel in conformity with the tenets of his church and it will not
be news at all, but if he rises one morning and preaches heresy, it becomes news." 63

Mr. Wm. Randolph Hearst has so championed the cause of sensational journalism, by practice, that he has been called the high priest of sensational journalism.

Both these men, brilliant stars in the journalistic sky, sanction sensational journalism, but supposedly not yellow journalism. To his commendation of sensational journalism, Mr. Stone adds these words:

"Much may be said and fairly, in criticism of our journalism, of a lack of perspective on the part of our journalists, of the pushing to the front of inconsequential things, of exaggeration and inaccuracy, but I think it is fair to say, after all, that with rare exceptions American newspaper men are generally striving for a common end --for an honest, truthful, and dignified history of the day's doings -- which shall be helpful and uplifting."

The tactics of yellow journalism would seem to get no sympathy from Mr. Hearst, according to his code. The Los Angeles Examiner's copy of "Mr. Heart's Instruction to His Editors" reads as follows:

63 - Editor and Publisher, Nov. 29, 1913.
"Omit things that will offend nice people. Avoid coarseness and slang and a low tone. The most sensational news can be told if it is written properly.

"Thieves' slang and slang of all kinds must not appear in the Examiner. Member of the staff will be held strictly accountable for any infraction of this rule.

"The Examiner is to talk as a gentleman should.

"The Examiner must be reliable in all things as well as entertaining, amiable and well written.

"The Examiner is to contain no exaggeration of facts. Care must be taken to state accurately the truth. If an $800,000 transaction is described, do not call it a million dollar transaction. If someone dies leaving two million, do not say he left ten million.

"Make the paper helpful and kindly. Don't scold and forever complain and attack in your news columns. Leave that to the editorial page."

Certainly a model code! But, its sincerity, that is the sincerity of its author, is greatly doubted by a very large percentage of newspaper people. Indeed, Mr. R. G. Marshall of the Minneapolis Journal has declared that newspaper men do not consider Mr. Hearst
a real newspaper man, but a charlatan. Although Mr. Hearst's papers were originally merely sensational, during which time, doubtless, he composed his code, they are now generally regarded as belonging to the yellow class.

It is important, then, for one criticizing the newspaper on the point of sensationalism to make sure of the class to which he refers. The big type is probably the greatest fault of the purely sensational press, because it undoubtedly contributes to a sense of excitability and exaggeration which is all too characteristic of our mode of living, as it is. However, commenting on the spectacular typography, though mild reading matter of Mr. Joseph Pulitzer's papers, Chester S. Lord remarks: "Typographical eccentricity alone does little harm; it's a question of taste." At any rate it may be said, with reasonable safety, that yellow journals are those at whom criticism for sensationalism is generally aimed. Among the critics are all worthy newspaper men themselves, who by preaching and by practice are endeavoring to blot out as rapidly as possible the unwholesome,

64 - In a personal conversation.

dangerous upstart whose only influence is one which induces an excitable and distorted view of life. According to William Allen White they are succeeding for he firmly declares that newspapers are increasingly more accurate than they were a few years ago, that they indulge in much less faking, and that there is much less salacious criminal and divorce court news.66

Over-emphasis and Sordid Presentation of Anti-Social News.—To the charge of over-emphasizing anti-social news the press has at least two rejoinders. In the first place, the amount of crime and scandal actually occurring has never before been equalled; in the second place, one of the primary functions of the newspaper is to give the news. A third answer is indicated by the following newspaper article which gives Mr. Lee White's version of the situation:

"Chicago, Feb. 3. — The reason there is a prevalent belief that newspapers print a great quantity of crime items is the way in which the average newspaper reads a newspaper, Lee A. White, editorial executive of the Detroit News, said last night in an address before the Medill School of Journalism.

66 - In an address before journalism classes at the University of Kansas, May 5, 1922.
This is the way, according to Mr. White:

"Column 1, disarmament conference. The reader, 'Disarmament conference. Um, um, um, Japan, um. Hughes, um. Shantung, um! Finished."

"Column 2, Stillman case. No ums. Close attention. Occasional murmur of 'Can you beat that?' One reader says he must scan the column because the case is a 'sociological document.' Another merely says it is 'hot stuff.' Both skip nary a word.

"Column 3, the farmer bloc in congress; they read. 'Um, um. Well, I know what I think of farmers.' Finished.

"Column 4, murder. The reader, 'Say, here's mystery in real life. Why, it's as good as a novel.' No further sound from him for twelve minutes. Finished.

"Column 5, orchestra deficit. Orchestra must be saved. They read: 'Is that so? Well, let somebody save it, then.' Finished."

By that time, Mr. White said, the reader turns hurriedly to the sport page and, after having earned his rest, sleeps, his slumbers disturbed, however, by the thought of the crime the newspapers print."67

67- From the Kansas City Star, February 4, 1922.
Mr. White is the Editor of the Detroit News.
Social workers and other public leaders agree that to suppress any very great deal of anti-social news, crime news in particular, would mean not only great physical danger to the public, but an enormous impetus to moral and social degradation as well. Editors acknowledge the fact that publication is one of the most powerful deterrents of crime and according to their own declarations feel obligated to print the amount that they do. 68

That there is too much, however, the newspaper men agree. In the fall of 1921, the Spectator of Portland, Oregon, "took the following crack at an all-too-general estimate of news values: 'Arbuckle, Brumfield, Gardner, Mahoney, Southard -- with two-thirds of the newspaper space devoted to the stories of their crimes, there is little hope that the next generation will be any better than this.' " 69

Amount, however, is not the only means of emphasis on crime news, for it may be over-emphasized by the position is granted in the newspaper, and, by the use of large display type. To deny that both of these methods are frequently used in the handling of objectionable news is to shut one's eyes, both physical and

68 - Answers to "perplexing Problems" questionnaire.
69 - Oregon Exchanges, October, 1921, p 6.
mental. They are used constantly by some papers, and to some extent by nearly all. The yellow press gives prominent front-page position and makes use of the scare-head streamer, as well, to call all attention possible to crime news. Incidentally this type of newspaper is the one that feasts its readers on all the sordid and salacious details it can obtain. Incidentally this type of newspaper is the one that feasts its readers on all the sordid and salacious details it can obtain. Incidentally again, it has neither the respect nor the approval of self-respecting members of the profession.

The sensational paper as distinguished from the yellow also plays up this undesirable kind of news more than should be done. Generally, however, it does not include disgusting details more than it can help. The greatest harm done by its treatment of such news lies in the fact of keeping the idea of crime and moral wrong-doing before the minds of its readers unnecessarily, and it is therefore open to vital improvement.

Conservative newspaper, which include the really great majority of American newspaper, cannot justly be severely criticized on this score. If the critic
who makes the sweeping indictment of over-emphasis of crime news will but stop to notice, he will find that it is largely the story which involves persons of great prominence or is of a shockingly startling nature that gets more than a minor headline or bottom-page position. Only very occasionally does the ordinary newspaper enlarge type for anti-social news, or use a bolder-face than is its custom.

With respect to the details, most papers can look the critic squarely in the eye on the class which may be termed salacious. Both by declaration in codes of ethics or in rule books and by practice, editors are breaking away from the suggestive and disgusting. They are coming to the conclusion that news does not imply filth. A recent outburst occurred in the editorial columns of the Waterville, (Me), Sentinel under the head "We're Done". It follows in part:

"We're done! The Sentinel proposes to do a little censoring all its own. Other papers and readers who do not like it can go to the devil.

70 - Oregon code, VI, 25; Kansas code; Tamp, Fla., Times, President Harding's code for the Marion Star, and others)
"We are blessed with a pretty strong stomach. We swear, we smoke, we go to prize fights, and we do a lot of other things that might be questionable, but we've got enough of this Arbuckle case. ----We're done. We'll give you the results, but the details make us sick and we want no more of 'em. Like it or lump it just as you please.

"We are not particularly finical about news. ---Stories of crime and criminal trial have their place. We all love mystery stories and most sensational crimes are mysterious. But they can be handled without being all gummed up with filth.

" ----We can't see how this case can be handled without a wealth of further revolting details. There have been enough already. ----So we're done! "71

On the question of sordid details, such as methods of murder or details of store-breaking which are obviously detrimental food for immature minds, there is room for improvement beyond any doubt. However, some editors hold that to eliminate all such details would do more harm than good for two reasons, one, that it is often just as well not too leave too much room for

71 - Editor and Publisher, October 1, 1921.
speculation by anti-socially-inclined minds, the other, that it would keep many people in the dark as to proper means of protection or precaution. At any rate, editors are well aware of the need for careful handling of anti-social news and are industriously working toward the goal of the best presentation of such news from the standpoint of the social good: their codes and answers to the "Perplexing Problems" questionnaire point to that fact.

CRITICISMS: THE INFLUENCE OF THE PRESS

No person can move through this world without exerting an influence whether he wills or not. His acts and his thought, even his disposition affect both himself and those with whom he is associated, and work for good or ill. Because of its vital, incessant contact with humanity the influence of the press is incalculable, and seems not to have escaped criticism any more than have its methods of doing business.

Pessimistic View of Life. — The press takes a pessimistic view of human character and conduct, by fastening the public gaze upon the evil that men do, say the critics. But, if the press did not print the news of most of that evil, it would be criticised for
suppressing news. If then, the public gets a pessimistic impression from the accounts found in the news columns, the press is helpless to prevent.

The code or policy of either individual papers or press associations, of course, governs the editorial columns. These do not indicate a pessimistic attitude. Observe this, for instance from President Harding's code for the Marion Star:

"Boost -- don't knock. There's good in everybody. Bring out the good and never needlessly hurt the feelings of anybody."

Mr. Robert B. Yale, Sunday Editor of the Philadelphia North American, declares that if he were to give an estimate of that paper, he would say that "it is like a strong, courageous, hearty man with an abiding faith in the people of this land ----"?

The Detroit Journal's letter of Policy to its staff informs them that "One of the purposes of this newspaper is to earn a reputation for good nature, a sunny disposition and a large heart. ----- It is to SMILE, both in the news and in editorial policy."

72 - Answer to questionnaire, Feb. 8, 1922.
The New York Globe's characterization of itself includes the cognomen, "An optimistic newspaper".

Commenting on the Christian Science Monitor, Chester S. Lord says: "It reflects the true balance of the world's work and refuses to see only the evil and morbid happenings in it and let it appear that they are the preponderant forces of the world's efforts. Thus it emphasizes the decent things, the heroic things, the things worth while."

A very great many of the most progressive and successful newspapers have for one of their rules, never to fear or fail to attack any man or institution when the welfare of society is concerned. That, of course, involves calling attention to the mischief-making of men. And it doubtless serves to engender suspicion and fear and hate among a people who should by every line of reasoning be thinking well of each other. But, should the press do otherwise? It has the opportunity to learn the truth and to pass it on to the people as no other agency can. The truth shall make us free. Only through it

73 - Chester S. Lord: The Young Man in Journalism, in Saturday Evening Post, Sept. 17, 1921.

can the darkness of ignorance of conditions be dispelled, the oppression of greed and selfishness be lifted. But, to do this, to "fasten the public gaze upon the evil that men do" is not necessarily to take a pessimistic view of life. Without doubt, the majority of editors regret this part of their professional practice and are anxiously forging ahead to the day when theirs may be a "sunlight" journalism with a minimum of "searchlight" journalism.

Encourages the Emotional. — Many are they who accuse the newspaper of encouraging the emotional in human nature, of contributing to the popular tendency of exaggeration and extravagant speech, and of over-emphasizing trivialities. This charge, the press admits has merits. It has been guilty and is guilty still, in some degree. In the course of a day, many opportunities for extravagant and excited accounts of events, are inevitable. In the heat of a campaign, no one doubts that any amount of emotionalism may be employed to good effect, and its use is probably legitimate and justifiable to a certain point. Newspapers would be dull and lifeless chroniclers indeed if they employed neither of these irresistible stimulants — emotionalism and triviality. However, coming to a realization of the fact that there are such
things as over-doses, newspaper people are beginning to include "moderation" clauses in their codes and policies. The Tampa (Fla.) Times, for example, has arrived at the conclusion that one way of making the Times "a great and good newspaper" is by "refusing to create sensations out of trivialities, or allow motives of any kind to inspire over-playing of the news." 75

The Oregon code carries with it this statement: "We will in all respects in our writing and publishing endeavor to observe moderation and steadiness." 76

The Philadelphia Public Ledger's code of ethics makes this command: "Never add fuel to the fire of popular excitement."

CONCLUSION

The press stands accused on many points. Doubtless the critic has even more indictments which he might readily set forth, and which have not been considered here, but these are the charges most frequently made. In some cases, the newspaper offers good defense, but in others it cannot account for itself so well. It has, however, one big, all-embracing response to make, which is exceedingly important. It is, that

76 - Oregon code, IV, 20.
its great awakening has begun; it is realizing its responsibilities; it is increasingly, even if yet only partially, willing and anxious to assume them.

American journalism has arrived at its present status in much the same way that Topsy reached womanhood, it "just growed." It had no precedents, no guiding influences. It has come through a succession of mental attitudes which have had everything to do with its development. Starting as it did under opposition and persecution, its first experiences threw it into a belligerent attitude. As newspapers increased, the vigorous spirit of the times inspired the editors to can, gun, and work battles with each other, and originated and crystallized what we know as personal journalism. Then, with the growing importance and power of the press, financial interests had their curiosity aroused and began to take a hand, which resulted in a capitalistic and selfish control. Under that regime, the newspaper has developed the greater number of the policies, criticisms of which it is compelled to face today.
Now, there is a new spirit in the air. Editors are waking up to the fact that the practice of their profession has become indispensable in human affairs. They are beginning to see the enormous opportunities for good which they have within their grasp, the untold power which is theirs, and the duties and responsibilities which it entails. Letters from them in all parts of the country prove this fact, and the codes of ethics which they have adopted in rapid succession during the past three or four years would seem to demonstrate their sincerity.

Among these newly-alert newspaper people are numbered many of the country's most representative minds, which are in closest possible touch with the life of the nation. Theirs is not an easy task. There are many obstacles to be surmounted, many problems to be solved, and it is to those difficulties that this discussion next directs attention.
The Newspaper Editor's Problems

Every question has two sides. While viewing the panorama of the faults found which the exterior of the press presents to public observation, fairness to that institution requires a consideration of the problems which face the man on the inside of the undertaking to give the world its own news in acceptable and concrete form. His is no small undertaking, and because the solution to many of his problems are so exceedingly important, his mistakes seem much greater in number and in magnitude than those of almost any other business or professional person.

A questionnaire, sent to some one hundred seventy-five editors all over the country, asking for a statement of one or two of the most perplexing ethical problems that confronted them, netted replies from ninety per cent of those editors. Since the selection of the names of those to whom the questionnaire was sent, included every state in the Union, and was based upon either the editor's personal prominence, or the
paper's circulation, the responses may be taken as fairly representative of the profession as a whole. The problems these editors are required to meet necessarily include those which any editor faces; the circulations varied from four to almost seven figures, which means that whether city daily or small country journal the problems of all are represented.

Although the only profitable method for consideration of those problems is to give separate attention to each, it is interesting to note that they might be summed up into one -- the problem of the public. The public, whose spokesman is so often a disparaging critic, is inclined to feel that it frequently does not get a square deal from the editor, and often it does not; it feels abused, and often it is. But, after all, the editor is one person as against thousands of the public in any given community, and the public has his life as an editor and the life of his paper in its hands; if he becomes intolerable he can be quickly and easily quelled. On the other hand, the editor must listen to all the pleas, requests, and commands of the innumerable and frequently unreasonable public; no matter how vexatious,
he must listen, at least; then, because he is generally a person who appreciates the responsibility that is his to decide on way or the other regarding those overtures, he often errs in his anxiety to do the right thing, the merciful thing, the humane thing, the just thing.

The public is the editor's great problem. One editor, speaking at the Fourth Annual Newspaper Institute at the University of Washington, on the subject of The Unethical Public, made these remarks:

"Were I asked to make a list, I would place at the head of the unethical public the man who believes that money enters into every policy, interest, and act of a publisher. Every time any newspaper in any community takes a stand on any moot question, this man's first effort is to discount the influence of the publication by whispered insinuation that the action is the result of pay. If a paper sides with a public utility corporation on any question he is quick to insinuate that the corporation controls the publication. If it takes the opposite view, then its action is because the corporation would not agree to pay the price of support. Price, that's it. Price is the
first and last word he knows."

That this is true of many people must be admitted, for one of the easiest attitudes to take toward any institution is that of suspicion. Such an attitude upon the part of the public is discouraging, to say the least, and certainly not conducive to any great improvement, if human nature only is to be considered. However, the codes to be later quoted seem to prove that editors are trying to rise above any natural feeling that they "might as well live up to a bad reputation". It is not the purpose of this chapter either to resent criticism of the press or to excuse the editor, it is to try to make clear some of the reasons why he does some of the things for which he is criticized, by presenting his side of the newspaper business.

**News Suppression.** — Judging by the replies to the "ethical problems questionnaire" mentioned above, there are some six or eight problems upon which most editors agree as the most perplexing. Of those, the one which seems to cause most grief for the editor is that of the suppression of news. The critic roundly

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2 - See pages 123 - 157
condemns the press for suppression at the behest of "the interests". That phase of the problem seems not to disturb editors a great deal. If pressure is brought to bear by "the interests" they either determine to withstand it, or to yield and "grin and bear it", and that settles it. Most of them resent it, of course, but they decide on a policy one way or the other and follow it. There is another aspect, however, that does puzzle the editors, that even distresses them a very great many times; and, because of it the editors are often accused of favoritism and of accepting bribes. The easiest way to learn what that problem is and the viewpoints of the editors regarding it is to get it in their own words. Mr. Charles M. Day of the Sioux Falls (S. D.) Argus-Leader says:

"My own personal view is that the hardest problem which comes before me as an editor, and I have been one for 35 years, is the answer to give to appeals to suppress news. If one man is protected and another is 'written up', the charge of favoritism is made. Sometimes, however, it is possible to do a great good by the suppression of what might be a legitimate news article. Should an editor consider the feelings and
welfare of innocent persons, the prospect of doing good by the suppression of a news story, should he consider old time friendships which are valuable to him, should he keep in mind the good name of communities or families, or should he dedicate himself to the task of publishing all the news as it develops, no matter whom it hits or where? —— This question is one that comes up daily in a newspaper office. —— Personally, I have no fixed rule. I handle each case as it comes up, following a certain 'woman's instinct' as to what is the right thing to do in a given case. —— I am beginning to think that the policy I follow is the wise one for communities like this. A newspaper man may be very cruel sometimes, if he permits his business to crush out all the native sympathies and friendships of life."3

Another editor says: "Almost any editor, if a man came to him offering a bribe, would kick the man out of his office or try to do so. But when an old friend of the newspaper or of the editor gets into trouble and comes to the editor begging him 'not to put it in

3 - Answer to questionnaire, January 20, 1922. The success of the Argus-Leader leads Mr. Day to feel that he is right. He says: "The Argus-Leader has grown from 700 circulation when I went on to the paper in 1886 to a circulation of better than 20,000 now, and from a daily expense of $50 then to $1,000 now." Certainly he has no lost by his policy.
the paper', Roman virtues are needed."^4

Mr. A. T. Stott, Managing Editor of the Portland (Ore.) Telegram, makes this answer: "I would say one of the hardest problems of newspaper ethics is one that arises almost daily: -- will the publication of this story do more good than harm. Will it point to a moral and will it keep others from falling into the same pit? How far has the public the right to be informed on the sensational developments of the day? If we err, I hope it is on the side of justice, tempered with much mercy."^5

A Nevada editor declares: "There is only one ethical problem in this business, but it presents itself in a thousand different ways. It is fundamentally, what NOT to print. Where does the public's right to know stop? If you leave everything out that might harm or humiliate a fellow creature, your paper will not be read and soon it will have the reputation, deadly for its success, of suppressing news. And yet an editor who permits true, right feeling to govern his decisions, will seldom err in his judgment. As for

4 - This editor asked that his name be withheld.
5 - Answer to questionnaire, January 21, 1922
myself, I will say that I would rather lose the few dollars to be gained by 'enterprise' that is based upon the suffering of the family of one who has gone wrong than to have the reputation for publishing rough-shod 'scoops'. Financially as well as humanly this policy has proved profitable in the thirty-five years that I have been editing newspapers."

Although most editors, such as those quoted feel that it is better to save the feelings of those who would suffer deep humiliation with the publication of some news, there are some who feel that their responsibility as purveyors of the news and as deterrents to evil-doing has the greater claim upon them, although they are deeply regretful that that responsibility entails mental suffering for many. Of these is Mr. E. G. Burkam of the Dayton (Ohio) Morning Journal and President of the Burkam-Herrick Publishing Company. In answer to the questionnaire, Mr. Burkam says: "I should say that the chief difficulty that confronts all newspapers is the necessity for printing all the news without fear or favor. In presenting a complete and accurate history of everything that takes place,

6 - This editor asked that his name be withheld.
which every newspaper should do, a great many people have their pride and feelings injured, and possibly a great many business interests are hurt, through no fault of the publication. They never stop to think that they themselves originated the act or cause which finally came out in the newspapers. And the publication of them is the most unpleasant duty which every honest newspaper owes to its public. --- I have quite come to the conclusion, after twenty-five years in the newspaper business, that the directing editorial chief of the newspaper must make up his mind to have very few friends. The fewer he has the better it is for the newspaper and the more independent he becomes."  

In direct line with Mr. Burkam's suggestion that the public fails to remember wherein it has been at fault, are some observations by Mr. James Melvin Lee before the Kansas State Editorial Association in 1912. Addressing that body on "Ethics for Newspaper Men", Mr. Lee remarked: "Ed Howe, of the Atchison Globe, suggests: 'The Wages of sin are publicity.' Delane, regarded by some as the greatest editor the London

7 - Answer to questionnaire, Jan. 31, 1922.
Times ever had, is reported to have said when criticized for the publication of a certain item in his paper, "You forget, sir, that my business is publicity." And Mr. Lee added: "If academic and pedantic critics would remember this fact, it would help the reading public to judge more accurately the acts of editors and publishers."  

It would indeed help the public to judge more accurately the acts of editors and publishers when those acts consisted in printing news that sometimes seems very harsh and severe, as well as in the suppression of news. An actual case which one editor is having to wrestle with just now is that cited by him as follows:

"A youngster, one of three brothers, is arrested for the theft of an automobile, convicted, and sentenced to six months in jail. He had been arrested before for bootlegging, and minor offenses, and had been suspected by police of serious crimes such as oil station robberies, etc. Only black sheep in family. Other boys doing well, and industrious. All three served during the war, one in the navy, the others in a

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8 - Mr. Lee's address in Thorpe's The Coming Newspaper, pp 182-3.
regiment that saw long service in France. Two had
good records, but one always was in trouble. So much
is known of his record.

"The boy's father is a judge in the local courts,
of good standing and long service in his community as
a lawyer. He is a man of about 70 years, as fine as
can be found. The trouble his son has gotten into has
almost caused a breakdown for the father, who considers
resigning his place if the story is printed. Father
only moderately well-to-do and needs his salary to
support himself and wife.

"The boy's mother is an invalid, whose life is
tied up with her children. Knows nothing of the young­
est boy's troubles, and is kept in ignorance by the
family. Situation terribly anxious one for father, who
protects his wife from all possible ways of learning
of boy's wrong doing. News of her son's disgrace
would probably cause mother's death, and undoubtedly
would result in the father's breakdown. Mother reads
the newspapers daily.

"One of the other two newspapers in the city
agrees not to print the item if you don't. The other
is noncommittal." 9

9 - The editor asked that his name be withheld.
A "case" questionnaire sent to editors in all parts of the country revealed the fact that this is not an isolated, and therefore uniquely difficult problem to solve. It is typical of many that confront the editor. If in this instance, the editor should determine to suppress all news of this boy's dereliction, the mere fact of the father's being a judge would be quite sufficient to call forth from many critics the accusation of bribery, or favoritism because of position, against the editor. The problem is peculiarly difficult; neither of the two possible solutions is altogether right. Just what should this editor do--print the news and endanger the lives of both father and mother, or suppress it and take the consequences in criticism? That is often the problem, and that is the reason why many editors stay safely on the side of humanity and suppress the story. It behooves the critical public, indeed, to think twice before judging the editor-- once for the persons involved in the news story, and once for the great personal strain under which the editor must decide what is the just thing to do.

Another phase of the problem of news suppression that constantly presents itself to the editor is that
which necessitates a decision as to treatment of news of crime and scandal. Editors are perfectly well aware of the importance of this question because of the terrific power of suggestion over the minds of children and defectives. One of the most recent examples of the results which may follow the publication of crime news was the series of suicides by hanging of boys from thirteen to fifteen years of age which occurred during the fall of 1921; in several instances the stories included statements by parents that the boys had been reading of certain other boys who had done the same thing. Editors realize this and they find it a serious problem to know just how much to run in their news columns. Mr. Roy D. Pinkerton, Editor of the Seattle Star, says:

I think the ethical question with which, as an editor, I have wrestled the hardest is the one concerning the publication of news of crime, divorce, scandal and similar entanglements in which individuals become involved. What should be printed, what omitted, how strongly should the story be 'played'; these are some of the angles of what I regard as my worst ethical puzzler."10

10 - Answer to questionnaire, Feb. 9, 1922.
Many other editors echo these words with some other suggestions. A comprehensive statement of the situation in which the editor finds himself when crime news is to be handled is made by Dr. Willard G. Bleyer, Professor of Journalism at the University of Wisconsin:

"To give sufficient publicity to news of crime and scandal in order to provide the necessary deterrent effect, to furnish readers with the information to which they are entitled, and at the same time to present such news so that it will not give offense or encourage morally weak readers to emulate the criminal and the vicious."\(^{11}\)

No doubt it would be interesting to editors to watch their critics solve that puzzle, but since that is impossible, they must do it themselves as best they can regardless the critics—a thing, in itself, not so simple as it might seem, according to some editors.

**Standing for Conviction in Face of Public Opposition.**

Many editors who appreciate the opportunity afforded them by their unique position to address daily audiences of thousands of people,—a thing which no other class or profession is privileged to do—find it often very difficult to speak their true sentiments even when they

\(^{11}\) Dr. Willard G. Bleyer: The Profession of Journalism, Introduction, p XVII.
feel that they should. The Editor of the Boston Transcript declares that "the greatest strain on an editor's morale is to speak his honest convictions when they are unpopular in the community." 12 In this Mr. H. V. Jones, Editor of the Minneapolis Journal, joins with this observation: "The greatest problem I have had to meet as an editor is whether we shall stand for what we believe to be right, knowing that the public might be against us. We have adopted the policy of standing for what we believe to be right." 13

Mr. Harvey Ingham, Editor of the Des Moines Register, presents a slightly different angle when he observes: "The most perplexing problem for the editor is when and how to tell the truth effectively. The truth can be told on an unseemly and untimely way. ——The masses of people do not want the truth. They want to have their own views adroitly presented. The great problem of the newspaper is the art of truth telling, the art of making what is true seem true to the average man on the street." 14

12 - Answer to questionnaire, February 6, 1922.
13 - Answer to questionnaire, January 10, 1922.
14 - Answer to questionnaire, December 30, 1921.
These are much bigger problems than may at first appear. There is hardly a person who, if he will stop to think, has not had to face the question at least once during his career, and generally oftener, of whether to stand up for his convictions among a group of perhaps a dozen, more or less, when all the others in that group advocated what he could not honestly sanction. He found it hard when he had only a few persons to face with his stand on the issue in question, — then what of the editor, who must risk the displeasure of subscribers or advertisers or else be false to himself?

Attacking Men in Public Office. — More or less closely related to the last mentioned problem is that of giving unwelcome publicity to the man in public office. According to the editors there are two important phases of that problem, one of which is very clearly put by Mr. Arthur M. Howe of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle when he says:

"I do not know any more perplexing ethical problem than that of attacking men in public life for whom I have a warm personal esteem but whose political policies I feel compelled to combat. In such cases it is always difficult to deal with individuals as drastically
as they ought to be dealt with." 15

It may be interesting to compare notes with those editors who find this problem a difficult one. Organizations thrive in every community, and each one has a president who serves for a year. Once in a while, if mental notes are reliable, there is elected a presiding officer who is "a fine fellow" or "a very sweet woman" socially, but when he steps into the highest executive office some of their policies grate on the nerves. It is not always so easy to wait for the year to elapse, and it is not much easier to express opinions that will inevitably cause friction even though they ought to be voiced.

The other aspect of this problem of bombarding the unethical holder of public office is the question of when and how often to do it. As explained in the light of his experience by Mr. E. K. Gaylard, editor of the Daily Oklahoman and President of the Oklahoma Publishing Company, the problem looks something like this:

"We take quite an independent attitude", says Mr. Gaylord, "toward political parties, so that we criticize democratic and republican office holders with equal impunity. Perhaps the greatest difficulty we
have to solve is to decide how many acts of public officials we should attack and criticize. Most offices are held by politicians who are actuated by expediency and not by principle. If we were to take up and criticize every little questionable act our papers would become common scolds and would see no good in any government official.

"A paper adopting such an attitude, to my mind, would soon lose its influence with the public. We aim therefore to pick out all the larger and more glaring defects or unworthy acts of public officials and bring them fairly before the public. We believe that if our criticisms are always on matter of grave importance the public will believe in us and in our crusades for any sort of reform.

"The smaller acts which might be criticized we aim to publish merely as news, leaving the public to form their own conclusions from the statement of the bare facts themselves."

If one stops to realize that the editor, through his reporters, actually gets knowledge of the inside facts relating to practically every act, official and

16 - Answer to questionnaire, February 5, 1922.
unofficial, of the man in public office, then this problem of publicity must become evident. Much of such information comes to the editor unsought, by the mere fact that the intimacy of contact between the newspaper and any source of news necessarily brings it to light. To what extent, then, does his opportunity to turn on the searchlight entail responsibility to do so.

The Newspaper Staff. — Governor Henry J. Allen of Kansas, former editor and present owner of the Wichita Beacon, sees the editor's problem in a slightly different light from those already indicated. In his estimation, newspapers are of two general classes, the clean, honest journal, and the unreliable, yellow paper. Editors of newspapers in the first class, he regards as essentially ethical; those of the second, as essentially unethical. Editors of newspapers in the first class, he regards as essentially ethical; those of the second, as essentially unethical. An editor of the latter class, then, has no ethical problems, because he has no ethics," according to Governor Allen, "but the man who has definite ethics has one problem to deal with — that is the question that bothers the editor.

The problem of getting together a staff that will interpret his ideas...
"there is no reason says the governor why a newspaper should not be just as truthful in its intention as an honest individual is. It is perfectly obvious, of course, that no matter how truthful and high the ethical standard of the editor may be, he is going to fall down very often through the failure of his staff to function perfectly, and so, after all, this is the problem. It is not of ethics -- it is of efficiency."

Although the public is the factor which runs like a thread through the most of the problems which have just been presented, there are four or five others in which the public figures in no uncertain terms, all of which have direct relation with some of the most frequent criticisms of the press gratuitously offered by the public.

To Get the Facts. — The newspaper, for instance, is constantly condemned as inaccurate. There are two stages in the handling of news at which inaccuracy may occur, that of gathering it, and that of presenting it. A reporter is expected to take every precaution in the cause of accuracy when he gathers the facts about which he must build the typical news "story", but just there

17 - Answer to questionnaire, Dec. 29, 1921.
is where the newspaper has its grievance against the public. In the words of Mr. Richard Lloyd Jones, Editor of the Tulsa Tribune, "The most difficult ethical problem every newspaper man or woman faces is to get the facts, the true facts undistorted,--------and it is surprising how difficult it is for some people to tell the truth, or recognize it when they see it."18 Excitement, embarrassment, or unadultered carelessness leads many of the very people who criticize the press most severely on the score of inaccuracy to be, themselves, the most inaccurate sources of news that the newspaper has. They, and all the rest of the public, will do well to consider their own responsibility in this ever-present question.

Propagandists. — If the press has been criticized once, it has been criticized thousands of times, as being an agent of propaganda. The newspaper admits that it has been, and is, more or less a slave to propaganda, but as indicated in the first chapter, it is taking radical steps toward breaking that bondage, in which effort it is seriously retarded by the very public that criticizes it. The circumstances in which the press finds itself with regard to propaganda are
set forth by Mr. Richard Hooker in a lecture entitled "Some of the Conditions and the Responsibilities of Journalism, delivered at Yale University in April, 1921:

"During the war," say Mr. Hooker, "the press of each of the participating nations was to some degree diverted from its normal function. ---Long before our entry into the war the press had found itself at the vortex of conflicting aims and emotions. Propaganda had come to have a new meaning and significance. ---In all countries the power of the press was demonstrated in stirring patriotic emotions for the prosecution of the war, in unifying national ambitions, in aiding recruiting and in promoting subscriptions to war loans and to funds for the comfort and relief of those under arms. That exhibition, the world over, has been in a sense a new temptation to selfish interests of every sort to seek to make that power serve special and unrevealed purposes." 19

Couching this same problem in somewhat different words, Mr. George Carter, Editor of the Wilmington (Del.) Journal declares: "The most perplexing ethical problem I have had to meet as an editor has been that of preventing men and women who have professed to be

19 - Mr. Hooker's address printed in Springfield Weekly Republican, May 19, 1921
exceedingly solicitous for the welfare of the public putting over matter which really was aimed to injure the public."20

Giving the problem a more specific aspect, Mr. C. B. Blethen, Editor and Publisher of the Seattle Times, makes this assertion: "The ethical problem that has troubled me the most in all my editorial experience is to know just when to stop believing people who come to newspapers wearing religious cloaks. This class includes clergymen as well as laymen."21

Human nature prompts every man who wants to promulgate some personal scheme to get all the publicity in the newspapers that he possibly can without paying for it; slim treasuries encourage publicity committees to adopt programs of strict economy. Hear, again, Mr. A. R. Fenwick, Editor of the Everett (Wash.) Tribune, when he says:

"As a fact, it is the politician who is the most persistent beggar of free publicity and the man who least appreciates when you do help him in his ambition. As a law-maker he'll support any law that will put

20 - Answer to questionnaire, January 7, 1922.
21 - Answer to questionnaire, January 7, 1922.
extra crimp in you or your business, and return smilingly in the next campaign asking for more favors. Societies of various characters, clubs and kindred organizations, seem unable to differentiate between news and advertising. They fail to see that when a dance or other entertainment is given for profit, announcement of such affairs becomes advertising."22

Greatly complicated by the activities of the press agents of "the interests", and other organizations the question of propaganda has become a real problem to the editor. Indeed, to publish a paper wholly free from that objectionable feature, means a constant vigilance. The public which so thoroughly disapproves of the paper that carries propaganda might find some change if it should be considerate enough to do its share by refraining from asking the editor to use its own particular publicity stories.

Communications. — More or less similar in its relation to the public is that problem concernign which one Southern editor has this to say:

"the most difficult questions, I think, that I have, is to decide what latitude to extend to correspondents in controversy. Many laymen do not know how

to curb their expressions. They lose their tempers, they do not understand that the newspaper cannot avoid responsibility for their utterances whether signed or unsigned, and when the newspaper refuses to insert their articles, they charge it with partiality. Every writer of a "hot letter" has to be tactfully informed that his signature to it does not relieve the newspaper of responsibility.

Mr. Tom Finty, Editor of the Dallas Journal, says also: "The greatest ethical problem we have arises over communications. So many of our contributors are intolerant that we are constantly confronted with the problem of what to do with their copy and still give a chance for the expression of public thought. A very great number of our contributors seem to be utterly unmindful of the fact that there is such a thing as the libel law, and more greatly unmindful of the fact that others have rights. If we print a communication expressing opinions with which they do not agree, they immediately excoriate us, and want, through our columns, to denounce the writer personally. And, they do not

23 - Answer to questionnaire, January 20, 1922. Name withheld.
24 - From a later letter, February 4, 1922.
want to stop with facts or opinions, but they want to set forth their suspicions and deductions as facts. This makes life one grand, sweet song for the editor."

Many other newspaper men find this one of their most difficult problems, and for it the blame must largely rest upon the public. Only considerate, second-thought, reasonable comments through the medium of the newspaper columns carry weight in any case, and it is strictly necessary for the public to write communications only after "cooling off" if those communications are either to find a place in the newspaper or to accomplish the results wished for. For those who are too insistent upon publication, it is interesting to note the little scheme which the Cadiz (Ohio) Republican has worked out. That paper sometimes offers to make the desired publication if the persons insisting upon it will sign up and indemnifying bond to fully reimburse the paper in case a damage suit should be instituted.

What the Public Wants. — "The thing always forgotten by the closest critics of the newspapers is that the newspapers must be measurably what their readers

25 - Answer to questionnaire, February 6, 1922.

26 - Article: "People Still Insist Upon Hiding Behind Editors", in Fourth Estate, April 8, 1922, p 21.
This opinion expressed by Whitelaw Reid, who succeeded Greeley as editor of the New York Tribune, has been pretty generally shared by most newspaper people. And, judging by the connotation very often given by editors to the phrase "giving the public what it wants", most of them feel that what the public wants is too many times something that is not good for it, such as crime news, scandal, stories with low moral tone, gossip, violent attacks, and word battles. The fact that the public taste so often does call for a yielding from highest ethical standards has made this a real problem for the ethical editor.

Mr. M. A. Rose, Managing Editor of the Buffalo Evening News, makes this answer to the "perplexing problems" questionnaire; "The most perplexing ethical problem that can confront any newspaper nowadays is: To what extent are concessions to lower tastes justifiable? Shall the newspaper be published to satisfy the higher ideals of its editor, and be satisfied with the few readers that such a 'high brow' product will attract or shall it make concessions and attract the mob? In which way can it do most good for the community -- With 5,000 select and presumably wealthy readers or with 50,000 readers not well enough educated to like the

27 - Chester S. Lord : The Young Man in Journalism, Saturday Evening Post, Sept. 17, 1921, p 11.
best. And if the editor begins to make bids for popularity, where shall he draw the line? Ponder that problem well, for it is one which every newspaper has to answer sooner or later."28

Mr. Rose's statement of this problem is typical of those by other editors. And right in point, is Mr. Lord's comment on the subject in his Saturday Evening Post articles last year:

"Every editor knows that the more details of sin, vice, and crime he crams into his newspaper the more copies of that newspaper will be sold; and every editor, knows that the most subtle temptation that besets him is the temptation to print the things that should not be printed; and that temptation is the more acute because he knows that the people want to read them. Ay, there's the rub! The people want the sensational stuff. The highly sensational sheets sell three or four times as many copies as do the conservative ones. ---Joseph Addison, of long-ago literary fame, recognized the public liking for sensation. He says in The Spectator:

'At the same time I am very sensible that nothing spreads a paper like private calumny and defamation.'

28 - Answer to questionnaire, January 21, 1922.
"The popular taste that demands this sort of newspaper stimulant attracted the attention of Lafcadio Hearn, who remarks: 'Everywhere there is a public of this kind to whom lachrymose emotion and mawkish sentiment give the same kind of pleasure that black, red and blazing yellow give to the eyes of little children and savages.' 29

Putting these same thoughts in a different and a striking manner, Mr. Vervant Older, editor of the San Francisco Call, says: "I have been most perplexed and baffled in attempting through a series of years to awaken an interest among a professedly Christian people in the simple doctrine of Jesus Christ." 30

Surely these are severe indictments of the public! One wonders what answer it might have to give if it could speak as one person. Either the editors have misjudged it, or it is composed of rank hypocrites. The first conclusion would hardly seem the logical one, for the great majority of the profession surely could not be fooled when it has the hard facts of finances to meet under the various conditions that may prevail.

29 - Chester S. Lord: The Young Man in Journalism, in Saturday Evening Post, September 17, 1921, p 10.

30 - Answer to questionnaire, Dec. 30, 1921
in different parts of the country. At any rate, the press points with no uncertain finger at the public for a large measure of the responsibility for an ethical, conservative press. Since the public has the power of life and death over the press, it has not only the opportunity, but the obligation, to use that power to encourage the paper that is pushing on toward a higher goal and to discipline the paper that tries to hold back. The public has this power because without its subscriptions and its advertising, the newspaper cannot live.

The public says it wants clean, sane newspapers, but Mr. James Schermerhorn of Detroit is inclined to doubt that. Beginning in 1900, Mr. Schermerhorn conducted the Detroit Times for twenty-one years according to the policies which the Sermon on the Mount indicated as nearly as he could interpret them. In his pamphlet account of the venture, entitled "Testing the Beatitudes", Mr. Schermerhorn says:

"My prospectus announced that we would put out a compact, carefully-edited newspaper, with terse news and large type, for toilful people, which would be sold for one cent. ——Being the product of practical
newspaper men throughout, we said we would serve no interest, institution, individual or ism, but the common good, and we meant it. We dedicated the paper to the average man. ——We declared that we would break a column to chronicle the millennium, but we would keep down all other news. We promised to have no friends to reward nor foes to punish; no puff's in exchange for passes; to publish all the news and an opinion or two no matter whom it helped or hurt; to say little about ourselves and nothing at all about our contemporaries; to publish no pictures or scareheads; no anonymous interviews, no offensive medical advertisements, and no Sunday edition." 31

Mr. Schermerhorn gave the public twenty-one years to prove the sincerity of its cry for moral newspapers, and at the end of that time, having finished his experiment and disposed of the paper, he makes this declaration:

"Ethical journalism lacks a constituency. We probably came as near as anyone ever did to making a newspaper of character pay, but the insurmountable difficulty was that the good people who clamored for

clean journalism could not be induced to subscribe or advertise pending the upbuilding of circulation.\textsuperscript{32}---
---The reason why there are not more publishers using the fifth chapter of Matthew as a salutatory is because they are referred too often to the Kingdom of Heaven -- the Sweet coming Sometime -- for their reward."\textsuperscript{33}

The fact of having had to deal with just the circumstances mentioned by Mr. Schermerhorn is responsible for the press' turning upon a critical pessimistic public and forcing it to face its own accountability. Mr. Rollo Ogden, Editor of the New York Evening Post has reached the point of declaring that "the basest and most demoralizing journal that lives, lives by public approval or tolerance."\textsuperscript{34} That, indeed, is a challenge put to the public in no mincing terms. What is it doing, or will it do about it?

The rather unique idea of formulating, for the press, a code of ethics, has been hit upon by the

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34 - Rollo Ogden: Some Aspects of Journalism, in Bleyers The Profession of Journalism, p 5.
Citizens' Protective League of Denver. The idea is the outgrowth of a new interest which civic leagues over the country are evincing in the standards of the press and the code is offered in a spirit of cooperation with the purpose in mind of helping the press formulate definite policies and standards. Whether or not newspaper men would take this seriously or take kindly to the idea at all might be a question. It is interesting, however, to read the code at least, since it is being run in advertisements by the League in Denver newspapers. It runs as follows:

1. That no news story, editorial, or advertisement be published which is unfit for fifteen-year-old boy or girl to read.

2. That fake stories, misrepresentations, and exaggerations of all kinds be eliminated.

3. That stories of divorce, murder, suicide, and other forms of crime and immorality be kept in the background.

4. That the petty quarrels and constant warfare between the newspapers be permanently discontinued.

5. That stories which, though having some basis of fact, might be hurtful to Colorado or to any city in Colorado, should not be exploited in a sensational manner.

6. That malicious or unwarranted statements injurious to Colorado, or to any legitimate industry of Colorado be barred from publication.
Through its criticisms, the public has made its challenge to the press. The press has been slow to respond, but is at last awakening and beginning to meet that challenge with new standards of conduct. The number of ethical codes adopted within the last eighteen months are unmistakable evidence of that fact. It is to those new policies that Chapter Three directs attention.
Chapter III

Codes of Ethics in Journalism

The discussion of the criticisms and of the problems of the newspaper press has brought out most clearly the unusually intricate inter-relationships of the newspaper and the life of the nation, both individually and collectively. It has pointed out the enormous possibilities of influence upon that life and the attendant and equally enormous responsibility.

Of all the professions, journalism has been one of the slowest to assume its responsibilities and to formulate a code or codes of ethics by which its individual members may guide their professional lives in an orderly, socially ethical manner. That may be partly explained perhaps by two facts, one that journalism is the newest of all the professions, and the second, that the tendency, as indicated by the older professions themselves with the possible exceptions of medicine and teaching, is for ethics to be intra-professional first, and social after-
ward. Emphasis on the social is, of course, much the more important because it is absolutely necessary to the broadest and best functioning of any profession, since the professions imply service and guardianship of the public welfare — service in a sense that service in the commercial world can hardly share.

The earliest professional code is probably that of medicine, which runs back as far as Hypocrates, the Greek physician, upon whose code the modern one is modelled. The fact that it is in the form of an oath which is required of each physician, makes the code uniform. There is an addition which really becomes a part of the general code, and which deals with intra-professional ethics. Besides pledging reverence and care for the one who taught him medicine, and respect for the persons and secrets of patients, the doctor vows that he will diligently devote himself to the doing of good, that he will obey the laws of the land, practice sobriety, deal justly toward all, and be truthful.

The lawyer's code which has been adopted by the American Bar Association and by some of the state associations as well, among them Kansas, is quite lengthy and undertakes to define the ethics of certain definite rela-
tionships under such topic heads as The Duty of the Lawyer to the Courts; Attempts to Exert Personal Influence on the Court; When Counsel for an Indigent Prisoner; The Defense or Prosecution of Those Accused of Crime; Adverse Influences and Conflicting Interests; How Far a Lawyer May Go in Supporting a Client's Cause; Punctuality and Expedition; Attitude Toward Jury; Taking Technical Advantages of Opposite Counsel; Stirring Up Litigation, Directly or Through Agents; and many others. The detail of this code, although not pretending to cover anything approaching all of the relationships of the lawyer, would seem to make it a particularly helpful one to any lawyer, novice or veteran, because it takes a definite stand on certain issues at least, and leaves no doubt in the mind as to the proper method of procedure.

While the teaching profession is distinctly a socialized profession, one which of itself implies leadership and responsibility for the welfare of the public, a special socializing section found a place in the code drawn up in April 1919 under the auspices of the Uni-
versity of Pennsylvania:

"A teacher should at all times give first consideration to his obligations as a member of his profession, and his best efforts should be put into his professional work, making personal reward and financial gain a subordinate consideration, and remembering that the prime object of a profession is the service it can render to humanity." 1

In order that the obligations and responsibilities to the public which lie in the architectural profession may be thoroughly fixed in the minds of American architects, Dean Colin Dyment of Oregon University writes in a paper, that "the editor of one of the great architectural trade publications goes about personally telling institutes, guilds of workmen, and students in architecture, the proper relation of architecture to the public. He preaches the gospel of architecture for society, and not for architecture merely. His is the gospel of art and beauty and hygiene without excessive expensiveness. His ideas of architectural ethics are not restricted to injunctions against the acceptance of side commissions from building contractors. He aims to show how the level

of human happiness can be raised through his especial profession, and he teaches the duty of the individual architect toward the public."^2

These are not all the professional codes, for even the engineer has come to recognize in his profession certain obligations to the public and the welfare of society at large. In his code which was adopted by the American Association of Engineers, not long ago, one finds the following:

"----- The engineer's obligation to serve is not limited to the duties for which he is paid; he owes it to his equals in service, to his subordinates, and to the public at large.----- To the public at large he owes good citizenship. With every other citizen he shares responsibility for government: civic, state, and national, and his effort should be to make government good.

Moreover an engineer owes a professional obligation to the public by reason of his especial training along technical lines. Therefore, he should use his knowledge and experience to promote the general welfare by every means in his power. He should stand against the individ-

ual or group of individuals who try to exploit for their own profit or advantage forces of nature which belong to the nation, the state, or the municipality, without making a just return therefor to the rightful owners of the potentiality." 3

If these professions which do not, because they cannot, have the superlatively intimate contact with public life that the press has, yet find codes of social ethics profitable, certainly it is proper to expect as much of the journalistic profession which by all points of logic should lead in such procedure.

Contrary to the general practice of the other professions of following a more or less uniform code, generally adopted by a national association for the entire profession, newspaper people have adopted such codes as they now possess by state associations. The National Editorial Association apparently is inclined to let each state association organize its own ethical principles for adoption, and has not yet taken steps to adopt one general code. Sentiment among newspaper people as

to the necessity for codes of ethics at all has been somewhat divided, which may help to account for the long disinclination to adopt them. The attitude of those who do not recognize any practical, moral, or psychological good in setting down in black and white one's ethical standards, is well expressed by a Cincinnati editor who says, with reference to his paper, "The tries to be on the level with itself and with its readers and we have not yet found it necessary to issue placards to prove our good intentions." A secretary of a state association of business managers writes that he is, of course, not in a position to write of the ethics which should govern an editor, but that —

"The modern ethics which do govern are formulated in the business office of each daily, and the editor, to draw his salary, conforms to the business ethics of the daily he works for. The day of dream editors long since gave place to the business manager's financial dreams to make the ghost walk Saturday nights. I am not saying that I do not regret it, but it seems the fairest answer to you because editorial ethics will never get

4 - This editor asks that his name be withheld.
It is worthy of note that the man here quoted presumed to voice similar sentiments to a state editorial association of another state, and was not only "called down" for it by one of that association's members, but written up in the state bulletin. Evidently, not all editors agree with him.

That holders of these attitudes are rapidly diminishing is evidenced by the expressions of editors in answer to the questionnaire relating to "perplexing problems" discussed in Chapter II. The great majority of editors are decidedly in favor of the practical and moral support to be gained by formulating and adopting definite standards, or they are at least friendly toward the idea. They recognize, of course, the fact that codes are never strictly lived up to by any profession as a whole, nor by the individual practitioners, for two reasons, the first that ideals are always higher than practice,

5 - This business manager's name is withheld.

6 - This editor's name is withheld.
and should be else there could be no progress, and second, because there are always human failings and black sheep to prevent the making of a perfect record.

Most editors who are at all favorable to the principle of the code of ethics, agree that there is a great deal of moral and psychological gain to be had in the feeling that there is a definite ideal or recognized standard of practice. Whether they generally live up to a code is another question, and one upon which there is much disagreement. One doubting Thomas, for example, writes in a humorous mood, the following:

"I should say that it (ethics in journalism) is a beautiful theory of the individual members that the simple formula laid down in the well known Golden Rule is enough, and at meetings this simple standard is delightfully elaborated. Thereupon the bell rings, the members scatter to their respective homes, and proceed to soak the public and cut each other's throats to the limit of their abilities and opportunities, until the next annual meeting, when they dust off their harps, put on their white robes, and again assemble to tell each other how they serve the public and how much they love
their brother newspaper men." 7

Another editor of more faith, observes: "Journalists, as a class, have always had in mind the public good, and no profession obeys its code, written or otherwise, as we do." 8

Codes at least serve to crystallize sentiment upon certain details of conduct in any profession, and thereby enhance their value and justify in part their existence. There are no ifs nor ands nor buts about the fact that editors are feeling for a tangible expression or approved standard of practice which will help them to assume their stupendous responsibilities toward the public, to the magnitude of which they are just awakening. The subject rarely escapes discussion in conventions of state editorial associations, and in a number of cases actual codes are provided for. Several have been adopted within the past two years, and in other instances committees have been appointed to draw up codes which are to be presented at the subsequent state meeting.

7 - A.B. Rotch, publisher, The Milford (N.H.) Cabinet, in Answer to Questionnaire, December 28, 1921

8 - Fred L. Boalt, editor, The Portland (Ore.) News, in an editorial, enclosed in Answer to questionnaire, Jan. 21, 1922
A questionnaire directed within the past nine months to the secretary of every editorial association, state or district or county, reveals that the following are the associations which have formally adopted codes: The Kansas State Editorial Association, the Missouri State Press Association, the Oregon State Editorial Association, the South Dakota State Press Association, the Washington State Press Association, the Texas State Press Association, the South Florida Press Association, and the Pennsylvania Weekly Newspaper Association. The Allegany County (N.Y.) Publishers' Association has adopted a code with regard to free publicity. The Nebraska State Press Association has formulated a code which is being considered individually by the members and will be acted upon at the next meeting.

Many individual newspapers have printed codes of their own as well, which will be quoted later in the chapter. Since it was impossible to get into touch with every newspaper in the country, only those codes are quoted which have come to hand through a questionnaire directed to some one hundred seventy-five editors all
over the country, and through the Compilation of Codes recently issued by Mr. Joseph Myers of the Ohio State University. 9

The present purpose of the remainder of this chapter is to quote or tabulate those policies which have been adopted by newspaper people for the purpose of better meeting their obligations to the public and its welfare. This tabulation is made with a view to specifically determining what obligations have been assumed by editors, and how nearly they approach what may rightfully be demanded of them. A classification is used which bears no intimate connection with those of the codes, but which is intended to best present the variety of standards defined or advocated in them all.

The Missouri State Press Association and the Pennsylvania Weekly Newspapers Association have adopted the same code, which will be indicated in the tabulation as "Missouri and Pennsylvania Weekly."

The Washington State Press Association, the Texas State Press Association, and the South Florida Press Association follow the same code, which will be indicated

9 - Ohio State University Bulletin, February 18, 1922)
in the tabulation as "Washington, Texas, and South Florida."

SERVICE

Build your business upon service. Let your patrons know that you can take as good or better care of them as anyone else in your line. Let them know that you give a dollar's worth for every dollar they spend with you.

--Nebraska

The profession of journalism occupies the place of an essential service in its relations to the public. Its implied contract with the reader invites trust and accepts the responsibility of dependence. To merit this mutuality of interests the newspaper owes and must give adherence to high standards and these recognized ideals of motive, heart and conduct.

--South Dakota

To be of service. To defend public rights. To maintain American traditions. To foster wholesome international relations. To increase the opportunities of the poor while recognizing the rights of the rich. To be helpful in the upbuilding of the Pacific Northwest. To join in every movement that will make this a better community in which to make a home. To lead in any such movement, when deep conviction and a feeling of fitness for that particular task prompts us to lead. If we censure a man or an institution, it is solely because we believe such censure will result in public good. We prefer to praise rather than to condemn. We would rather help a good cause than to hinder a bad cause.

--Seattle Star

The third expression of our code is our cooperation with the business interests of our community. This cooperation is intended to and does promote the moral, spiritual, business and political welfare of our community.

--Seattle Times
Make the paper helpful and kindly. Don't scold and forever complain and attack in your news columns. Leave that to the editorial page.

-- Los Angeles Examiner (Hearst)

Service is the basic purpose and principle of a good newspaper. It should seek to give constant service to the public over and beyond the furnishing of news and opinions. It should be a clearing house of information. It should lead in projects for community and state and national betterments. The Journal serves.

-- Detroit Journal

TRUTH, SINCERITY, HONESTY

To go beyond the truth, either in headline or text, is subversive of good journalism.

-- Missouri

We condemn as against truth:

(1) The publication of fake illustrations of men and events of news interest, however marked their similarity, without an accompanying statement that they are not real pictures of the event or person, but only suggestive imitations.

(2) The publication of fake interviews made up of the assumed views of an individual, without his consent.

(3) The publication of interviews in quotations unless the exact, approved language of the interviewed be used. When an interview is not an exact quotation it should be obvious in the reading that only the thought and impression of the interviewer is being reported.

(4) The issuance of fake news dispatches, whether the same have for their purpose the influencing of stock quotations, elections, or the sale of securities or merchandise. Some of the greatest advertising in the world has been stolen through the news columns in the form of dispatches from unscrupulous press agents. Millions have been made on the rise and fall of stock quotations caused by newspaper lies, sent out by designing reporters.

-- Kansas
The foundation stone of the profession of journalism is truth. Unwavering adherence to "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest," must be the constant aim of men and women who publish newspapers.

---South Dakota

Be truthful.

---Marion Star

The most valuable asset of any paper is its reputation for telling the truth; the only way to have that reputation is to tell the truth. Untruth, due to carelessness, or excessive imagination, injures the paper as much as though intentional.

---Detroit News.

The foundation of ethical journalism is sincerity. The sincere journalist will be honest alike in his purposes and in his writings. To the best of his capacity to ascertain truth, he will always be truthful. It is his attitude toward truth that distinguishes the ethical from the unethical writer. It is naturally not possible that all writing can be without error; but it can always be without deliberate error. There is no place in journalism for the dissembler; the distorter; the prevaricator; the suppressor; or the dishonest thinker.

---Oregon

Sincerity of purpose as well as of writing characterizes the ethical journalist. Honest convictions inspire his written words. Back of them is the sincerity of desire that actuates all high intent.

With full realization of this the members of the South Dakota Press association accept our responsibility in truthfully reporting, in directing the thoughts and shaping the conduct of society. In all sincerity and to the utmost extent that is right and reasonable in our respective communities, we pledge our efforts to this end.

---South Dakota
ACCURACY, COLORING

We will put accuracy above all other considerations in the written word, whether editorial, advertisement, article, or news story.

We will interpret accuracy not merely as the absence of actual misstatement, but as the presence of whatever is necessary to prevent the reader from making a false deduction.

We will regard accuracy and completeness as more vital than our being the first to print.

-- Oregon

News should be uncolored report of all the vital facts accurately stated, insofar as possible to arrive at them.

The profession of journalism is the greatest factor in influencing human judgment. It is of first importance therefore, that judgments be formed after a fair presentation of all facts accurately stated. This accuracy is not only to be an absence of misstatement but the orderly presence of all the pertinent truths.

In accuracy partisanship or the taint of propaganda has no part and cannot be present in fair journalism.

-- South Dakota

We consider accuracy the prime requisite of the journalistic profession, and that justice and fairness should be so promoted by our publications as to increase the confidence of the reading public.

-- Ohio City Editors
To be honest. That means to make accuracy a prime consideration in every news story.

-- Seattle Star

Be brief, accurate, clear and thorough.
Get the facts of all angles of a story.
Verify your alleged facts before you write your story.

-- Manchester Union and Leader

Please be accurate. Compare statements in your paper with those in other papers, and find out which is correct. Discharge reporters and copy-readers who persistently inaccurate.

-- Los Angeles Examiner

Get the facts. Mistakes are inevitable, but strive for accuracy. I would rather have one story exactly right than a hundred half wrong.

In reporting a political gathering, get the facts; tell the story as it is, not as you would like to have it.

-- Marion Star

The three essential of all news stories are; Accuracy! Accuracy!! Accuracy!!!

-- Commercial Appeal

To eliminate errors.

-- Kansas City Kansan

Accurate as far as human effort can obtain accuracy.

-- Detroit News

A complete, accurate, dependable newspaper.

-- New York Globe
The Bee demands from all its writers accuracy before anything else. Better lose an item than make a splurge one day and correct it next.

Equally with that, it demands absolute fairness in the treatment of news. Reports must not be colored to please a friend or wrong and enemy.

—Sacramento Bee

Do not say you know when you have only heard.

Never proceed on mere hearsay. Rumor is only an index to be followed by inquiry.

Take care to be right. Better be right than quickest with "the news" which is often false. It is bad to be late, but worse to be wrong.

Go to first-hand and original sources for information; if you cannot, then get as near as you can.

—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

The first canon of criticism for any news item manifestly is its general truth; the next canon is the detailed accuracy of the story. If a newspaper has a conservative story of any event that has an air of probability, and an extravagant story that seems improbable, the former should be put first and the head built on it. Where publication is given a story the editor believes is not correct, the reader should be warned that the paper does not vouch for it.

—Richmond News Leader

On July 7, 1913, the New York World established a Bureau of Accuracy and Fair Play. Its objects, as set forth by Ralph Pulitzer in the order creating it, are: To promote accuracy and fair play, to correct carelessness and to stamp out fakes and fakers.

—New York World

You will strive to be accurate and fair in your statements, that The Union may print the truth without bias.

—Springfield Union (Mass)
EDITORIALIZING

We prohibit the editorializing of news. We believe that both sides of every honest question are entitled to fair and complete statements in our news columns. Our policy will be made clear on our editorial page. The direct introduction of policy in the news columns must be done only by way of articles which bear signatures.

-- Detroit Journal

The American people want to know, to learn, to get information. To quote a writer: 'Your opinion is worth no more than your information.' Given them your information and let them draw their own conclusions. Comment should be more along the line of enlightenment by well-marchalled facts, and by telling the readers what relation and act of today has to an act of yesterday. Let them come to their own conclusions as far as possible.

-- Detroit News

Don't editorialize in the news columns. An accurate report is its own best editorial.

-- Sacramento Bee

It is the reporter's office to chronicle events, to collect facts; comments on the facts are reserved for the editor.

-- Public Ledger

An editorial slant in the headlines is adulteration of the news and takes unfair advantage of the reader: It must be eliminated even if it destroys the effectiveness of a headline.

-- Richmond News Leader.
CONSERVATISM, PROPORTION, MODERATION.

We will not overplay news or editorial for the sake of effect when such procedure may lead to false deductions in readers' minds.

We will try to observe due proportion in the display of news to the end that inconsequential matter may not seem to take precedence in social importance over news of public significance.

We will in all respects in our writing and publishing endeavor to observe moderation and steadiness.

Recognizing that the kaleidoscopic changes in news tend to keep the public processes of mind at a superficial level, we will try to maintain a news and an editorial policy that will be less ephemeral in its influence upon social thought.

-- Oregon

You will seek to get news of real public interest, and getting it give to it the space that it is actually worth, with a heading that will indicate its relative importance.

You will not dwell on human frailties, or try to make sensations out of things that are not sensational. If you cry "wolf" when there is no wolf, the public will not believe you when the wolf comes. Public confidence is the best asset a newspaper can have, and it is your best asset also.

-- Springfield (Mass) Union

Interesting, but not Sensational

-- Detroit News.

To act from reason rather than from rule.

-- Kansas City Kansan

Refusing to create sensations out of trivialities, or allow motive of any kind to inspire overplaying of the news.

-- Tampa (Fla) Times.
As a rule display what is valuable, complimentary, useful to our city, our business men, our general interests as a whole. Similarly obscure as much as can be done consistently what may tend in the other direction.

Ordinary municipal court matters, petty thieving, assaults, squabbles, etc., are of little interest to the general public. Space can be better devoted to something else.

-- Portland (Me) Express

THE SOCIAL WELFARE

We will keep our writings and our publications free from unrefinement, except so far as we may sincerely believe publication of sordid details to be for the social good.

We will consider all that we write or publish for public consumption in the light of its effect upon social policy, refraining from writing or from publishing if we believe our material to be socially detrimental.

We will regard our privilege of writing for publication or publishing for public consumption as an enterprise that is social as well as commercial in character, and therefore will at all times have an eye against doing anything counter to social interest.

-- Oregon

In dealing with the offenses against private morality, we should refuse to print any record of the matter, however true, until the warrant has been filed or the arrest made, and even then our report should contain only an epitome of the charges by the plaintiff and the answers by the defendant, preferably secured from their respective attorneys.

No society gossips or scandals, however true, should ever be published concerning such cases.
However prominent the principals, offenses against private morality should never receive first-page position and their details should be eliminated as much as possible.

Certain crimes against private morality which are revolting to our finer sensibilities should be ignored entirely; however, in the event of their having become public with harmful exaggerations, we may make an elementary statement, couched in the least suggestive language.

In no case should the reckless daring of the suspect be lionized.

— Kansas

Guaranteed the freedom of its press, the profession of journalism recognizes that liberty is not license. It therefore, reserves to itself the right of decision in what shall be printed and what shall be omitted.

This is done to safeguard our publications from unrefinement, to protect within reason the rights and reputations of individuals and to free our papers from sordidness, except as we sincerely believe publication to be for the good of society.

We deem suppression to be a righteous function of ethical journalism to enforce omission of undue matter based upon an honorable intent to serve public good and not selfish purpose.

— South Dakota

Remember that young girls read the Times.

— Seattle Times

Omit things that will offend nice people. Avoid coarseness and slander and a low tone. The most sensational news can be told if it is written properly.

Thieves’ slang and slang of all kinds must not appear in the Examiner. Members of the staff will be held strictly accountable for any infraction of this rule.

— Hearst
And, above all, be clean. Never let a dirty word or suggestive story get into type.

I want this paper so conducted that it can go into any home without destroying the innocence of any child.

-- Marion Starr

Keep the paper clean in language and thought. Profane or suggestive words are not necessary. When in doubt, think of a 13-year-old girl reading what you are writing.

-- Detroit News

This newspaper must first of all be clean.

-- Dayton Journal

Handling sex crime, and revolting details of all kinds, so as to offend good taste as little as we may, in the knowledge that many of our readers are pure-minded girls and women, and that an intentional appeal to the salacious is indecent journalism.

-- Tampa Times

Do not print news, editorials or advertisements that are not fit for your wife, mother or children to read.

-- Durant (Okla) News.

Our course with reference to the crime of lynching is that of opposition and reprobation.

-- New Orleans Item

You will avoid all that is yellow in journalism, at the same time emulating the enterprise that characterizes the yellow journalist.

-- Springfield (Mass) Union.
PROPAGANDA

We will not permit, unless in exceptional cases, the publishing of news and editorial matter not prepared by ourselves or our staffs, believing that original matter is the best answer to the peril of propaganda.

-- Oregon

The publishers of Allegany County will refuse to print all propaganda, puffs and free publicity of every sort, whether furnished in copy or plate form. This includes all articles concerning Liberty Bonds, federal and state income tax, announcements of civil service examinations, automobile notices, Anti-Saloon League and similar propaganda, or anything intended to advertise or promote the interests of an organization or individual, whether the advertising is open and above board or disguised as "news." Since these individuals and organizations pay for all other service, they should pay for their publicity service. This, of course, shall not interfere with any publisher making any editorial comment he may see fit either in favor of or against any organization or undertaking, or printing actual and bona-fide news items concerning them.

-- Allegany Co. Pub. Assoc. (N.Y.)

Avoiding anything that is suggestive of special propaganda or support of any merely personal or evidently selfish enterprises or purposes, it will readily lend its editorial columns, and the conduct of its news department to the aid of well considered movements and efforts for improvement and progress in any of the ramifications of community concerns.

-- Portland (Me) Express.
ADVERTISING

We will cooperate with those social interests whose business it is to raise the ethical standard of advertising.

We will discourage and bar from our columns advertising which in our belief is intended to deceive the reader in his estimate of what is advertised. (This clause is intended to cover the many phases of fraud, and unfair competition, and the advertising of articles that seem likely to be harmful to the purchaser's morals or health.)

We will not make our printing facilities available for the production of advertising which we believe to be socially harmful or fraudulent in its intent.

-- Oregon

It is not good ethics nor good business to accept advertisements that are dishonest, deceptive, or misleading. Concerns or individuals who want to use our columns to sell questionable stocks or anything else which promises great returns for small investment, should always be investigated. Our readers should be protected from advertising sharks. Rates should be fixed at a figure which will yield a profit and never cut. The reader deserves a square deal and the advertiser the same kind of treatment.

Advertising disguised as news or editorial should not be accepted. Political advertising especially should show at a glance that it is advertising. It is just as bad to be bribed by the promise of political patronage as to be bribed by political cash.

-- Missouri

We condemn as against moral decency the publication of any advertisement which will obviously lead to any form of retrogression, such as private medical personals, indecent massage parlor advertisements, private matrimonial advertisements, physician's or hospital's advertisement for the care of private diseases, which carry
in them any descriptive or suggestive matter, of the same.

-- Kansas

To investigate all questionable advertising and refuse space to misleading and illegitimate advertisements.

-- Washington, Texas, and South Florida

Advertising should be decent and honest in its selling intent and free from misleading or untrue statement.

Advertising which is indecent in world or motive, the aim of which is to defraud, or which serves no useful purpose, has no part in the publications of the sincere member of the profession.

-- South Dakota

If copy seems to be indirect advertising it should be referred to the publisher or his direct representative and not inserted without his O. K.

-- Richmond News Leader

INDEPENDENCE OF OUTSIDE CONTROL

We will resist outside control in every phase of our practice, believing that the best interests of society require intellectual freedom in journalism.

-- Oregon

Editorial comment should always be fair and just, and not controlled by business or political experiences.

Control of news or comment for business considerations is not worthy of a newspaper. The news should be covered, written, and interpreted wholly and at all times in the interest of the public. Advertisers have
no claims on newspaper favor except in their capacity as readers and as members of the community.

—Missouri

We should avoid permitting large institutions or persons to own stock in or make loans to our publishing business if we have reasonable grounds to believe that their interests would be seriously affected by any other than a true presentation of all news and free willingness to present every possible point of view under signature or interview.

—Kansas

It is our journalistic religion that no man or institution is powerful enough to swerve this paper from a course it believes to be in the interests of the whole public.

—Seattle Star

Americanism—government "of the people, by the people" for the good of the greatest number, which means cooperation by the majority to prevent domination of this country by any class.

—Seattle Times.

The Express-Advertiser is a Republican paper and will generally support Republican platforms, and candidates. But it will be free to criticise where criticism is called for without regard to the politics of the criticised.

—Portland (Me) Express

An institution that should always fight for progress and reform, never tolerate injustice or corruption, always fight demagogues of all parties, never belong to any party, always oppose privileged classes and public plunderers, never be satisfied with merely printing news, always be drastically independent, never be afraid to attack wrong, whether by predatory plutocracy or predatory poverty.

—Pulitzer.
A fearless and independent newspaper.

An uncontrolled newspaper.

A successful and prosperous newspaper beyond temptation.

-- New York Globe

Do not give away a half column reader to get a quarter page advertisement. Your own advertisers would not give you some goods to encourage you to buy more.

Be fair to the public. Do not let the heavy advertisers prejudice news and editorial matter. They'll respect you less and use you all the more.

-- Durant (Okla) News.

OUTSIDE AFFILIATIONS

No person who controls the policy of a newspaper should at the same time hold office or have affiliations, the duties of which conflict with the public service that his newspaper should render.

-- Missouri

No person connected with the paper can hold office, run for office, or cherish political ambitions or be financially interested in any corporation or enterprise the paper may be called upon to attack or to defend.

-- Richmond News Leader

I have come to the conclusion that an editor's place is in his office, and that those who fall by the wayside for a period everywhere and anywhere and are attempting to enjoy some brief period of personal public pleasure of his fellow citizens, will sooner or later have his usefulness as an editor very seriously restricted.

-- Dayton Journal
PARTISANSHIP

We will rise above party and other partisanship in writing and publishing, supporting parties and issues only so far as we sincerely believed them to be in the public interest.

-- Oregon

Treat all parties alike. If there's any politics to be played, we will play it in our editorial columns.

-- Marion Star

This newspaper is independent-Republican. We shall support national Republican administrations only so long as, in our opinion, they continue to devote themselves to serious efforts for good government. We shall support Republican state candidates and Republican state officers only so long as they continue to serve properly and well. We shall be non-partisan in city elections.

-- Detroit Journal

Never belong to any party.

-- Pulitzer

The public welfare has higher claims than any party cry

--Public Ledger

PERSONAL ENDS

The honor of the profession is above the publication of an untruth upon an unworthy motive or upon a biased discussion based upon the false premise of a half truth entered upon for personal gain or party advancement.

--South Dakota
Never use your paper as a club for the accomplishment of private ends. If necessary to attack an evil do so boldly and fearlessly, for the public good and not for your own benefit.

-- Nebraska

The news columns are not to be used for the promotion of the interests or views or the personal friendships or enmities of any one connected with the paper, without special permission first asked and received from the President, or Vice President. Propaganda of any kind, business, social, religious, or personal, is to be excluded.

-- Portland (Me) Express

OUTLOOK ON LIFE

One of the purposes of this newspaper is to earn a reputation for good nature, a sunny disposition and a large heart. We shall endeavor never to be vicious, nasty or small in our attacks. When we attack we shall bombard in whole-souled fashion. When we praise we shall praise freely. The Journal must not whine or scold. It is to SMILE, both in the news and in editorial policy.

-- Detroit Journal

Looking for the Uplifting rather than the Depraved things of Life.

-- Detroit news

In our determination to make the Times a great and good newspaper, let us be animated by a spirit of charity toward the weaknesses and shortcomings of our fellow-men so long as their actions are more injurious to themselves than to the public welfare.

-- Tampa Times
Numerous as bad men may be, remember they are but few compared with the millions of the people.

-- Public Ledger

The Star tries to be, not the product of an institution, but the expression of a being bigger, better, broader-minded and more intelligent than any member of its staff -- wiser and finer than the whole composite group which issues it. We people of the Star staff try to keep always before our minds the thought that we must not permit the Star to say anything mean or unworthy of such a heroic-statured personality, yet we strive to impart to the Star an abiding sense of humor; a tenderness for the humble and the weak; a scorn for the snob, the tyrant, and the tory; an indulgence for the whims and foibles of others, close understanding of the aspirations of the public; a sincere sympathy with distress; a healthy spirit of progressiveness and a standard of clean-mindedness and decency.

-- Seattle Star

Boost -- don't knock. There is good in everybody. Bring out the good in everybody, and never needlessly hurt the feelings of anybody.

-- Marion Star

JUSTICE, IMPARTIALITY, CORRECTIONS

We will not make "privileged utterance" a cloak for unjust attack, or spiteful venting, or carelessness in investigation, in the cases of parties or persons.

We will endeavor to avoid the injustice that springs from hasty conclusion in editorial or reportorial or interpretative practice.

-- Oregon
No suspect should have his hope of a just liberty foiled through the great prejudice which the public has formed against him because of the press verdict slyly couched in the news report, even before the arrest.

We should not even by insinuation interpret as facts our conclusions, unless by signature we become personally responsible for them. Exposition, explanation, and interpretation should be left to the field of the expert or specialist with a full consciousness of his personal responsibility.

The publication of the rumors and common gossips or the assumption of a reporter relative to a suspect pending his arrest or the final culmination of his trial, we condemn as against justice. A staff of reporters is not a detective agency, and the right of a suspect to a fair and impartial trial is often confounded by a reporter's practice of printing every ill-founded report of which he gets wind.

In dealing with the suspicions against public officials or trustees we urge that only facts put in their true relations and records be used in the news reports.

No presumption or conclusion of the reporter should be allowed to enter even though it has all the elements of a correct conclusion.

Conclusions and presumptions should be placed in interviews with the identity of their author easily apparent.

If an editor desires to draw a conclusion on the case, let him sign it. Do not hide behind the impersonality of the paper with your personal opinions.

In dealing with suspicions against agents or private institutions, facts alone, put in their true relations should again be used.
But in this class of stories suspicions and conclusions should be confined to those of the parties directly interested, and no statement of one party to the affair reflecting upon another should be published without at the same time publishing a statement of the accused relative thereto.

The comment of those not directly involved should not be published previous to the arrest or pending the trial.

-- Kansas

To be honest.—— It means to print all sides of every controverted point which is of public interest.

To be fair. To state fully and ungrudgingly views on public questions that are contrary to the paper's own views, as well as our own. To correct errors in our columns whenever we discover them or others call them to our attention. To apologize for these errors when they result in injury to any person. To be tolerant of every persons religion, political, and other opinions, and to encourage tolerance on the part of everybody.

-- Seattle Star

Remember there are two sides to every question. Get both.

-- Marion Star

New York World's Bureau of Accuracy and Fair Play.

-- New York World.

---- to know both sides of the question.

-- Kansas City Kansan

Fearless, but fair.

Everyone with a complaint should be given a respectful and kindly hearing; especial consideration should be given the poor and lowly, who may be less able to present their claims than those more favored in life. A man of prominence and education knows how to get into
the office and present his complaint. A washerwoman may come to the door, timidly, haltingly, scarcely knowing what to do, and all the while her complaint may be as just as that of the other complaint, perhaps more so. She should be received kindly and helped to present what she has to say.

Be fair. Don't let the libel laws be your measure as to the printing of a story, but let fairness be your measure. If you are fair, you need not worry about the libel laws.

Always give the other fellow a hearing. He may be in the wrong, but even that may be a matter of degree. It wouldn't be fair to picture him as all black when there may be mitigating circumstances.

— Detroit News

The furnisher of an item is entitled to a hearing for his side at all times, not championship. If the latter is ever deemed necessary, the editorial department will attend to it.

In every accusation against a public official or against a private citizen, make every effort to have the statement of the accused given prominence in the original item.

In the case of charges which are not ex-officio or from a public source, it is better to lose an item than to chance the doing of a wrong.

Consider the Bee always a tribunal that desire to do justice to all; that fears far more to do injustice to the poorest beggar than to clash swords with wealthy injustice.

— Sacramento Bee

Always deal fairly and frankly with the public.

Before making up judgment, take care to understand both sides, and remember there are at least two sides. If
you attempt to decide, you are bound to know both.

All persons have equal rights in the court of conscience, as well as in courts of law.

--- Public Ledger

We will deal by all persons alike so far as it is humanly possible, not varying from the procedure of any part of this code, because of the wealth, influence, or personal situation of the persons concerned, except as herein after provided. (Provision: mercy)

We believe that it is an essential part of this policy that we shall not be respecters of persons.

--- Oregon

Be impartial. Never express an opinion. Give both sides a chance to be heard. (For reporters)

--- Manchester (N.H.) Union & Leader

Be fair and impartial. Do not make a paper for Democrats or Republicans or Independent Leaguers. Make a paper for all the people and give unbiased news of ALL CREEDS AND PARTIES. Try to do this in such a conspicuous manner that it will be noticed and commented upon.

--- Hearst

A newspaper that plays favorite never is either a newspaper or a favorite. The same rules of publicity must be applied to all readers of the page.

--- Richmond News Leader

New York World Bureau of Accuracy and Fair Play.

--- New York World

If a mistake is made, it must be corrected. It is as much the duty of a Bee writer to work to the rectification of a wrong done by an error in an item as it is first to use every precaution not to allow the error
to creep in.

-- Sacramento Bee

If you make an error, you have two duties to perform: one to the person misrepresented and one to your reading public. Never leave the reader of the News misinformed on any subject. If you wrongfully infer that a man has done something that he did not do, or has said something that he did not say, you do him an injustice -- that's one. But you also do thousands of readers an injustice, leaving them misinformed as to the character of the man dealt with. Corrections should never be given grudgingly. Always make them cheerfully, fully, and in larger type than the error if any difference.

-- Detroit News

MERCY

It shall be one of our canons that mercy and kindliness are legitimate considerations in any phase of journalism; and that if the public or social interests seem to be best conserved by suppression, we may suppress; but the motive in such instances must always be the public or social interest, and not the personal or commercial interest.

-- Oregon

Where the publication of names in connection with disagreeable news will do serious injury, -- as in the case, for instance, of a man or woman of hitherto good reputation, and its publication will serve no useful purpose other than as news, such can be omitted. But sometimes omissions will do more harm than good, -- by removing one of the influences or consideration deterring from crime.

Public officials who violate their oaths of office or are delinquent in any way have no right to expect silence or omission of names, but sometimes even in their cases suppression may be better than exploiting.

-- Portland (Me) Express
Time heals all things but a woman's damaged reputation. Be careful and cautious and fair and decent in dealing with any man's reputation, but be doubly so — and then some — when a woman's name is at stake. Do not by direct statement, jest, or careless reference, raise a question mark after any woman's name if it can be avoided — and it usually can be. Even if a woman slips, be generous; it may be a crisis in her life. Printing the story may drive her to despair; kindly treatment may leave her with hope. No story is worth ruining a woman's life — or a man's either.

— Detroit News

Be extremely careful of the name and reputation of women. Even when dealing with the unfortunate, remember that so long as she commits no crime other than her own sin against chastity, she is entitled at least to pity.

— Sacramento Bee

Printing nothing that will injure or reflect upon the reputation of any man or woman without thorough and painstaking investigation of the facts, remembering that it is better to miss a good story than to run the risk of damaging the name and reputation of an innocent person.

— Tampa Times

Deal gently with weak and helpless offenders.

— Public Ledger

Minor news of first offenses is always to be played down and is to be kept out for good cause shown at any time. As far as the tastes of readers make possible, all crime news is to be played down. The general question to ask is: Has this particular case any relation to the public welfare? If it has, print it; if it has not, why give some young fool or some person who slipped a handicap for life? Public curiosity and public welfare are not synonymous.

— Richmond News Leader
CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS

We will try so to conduct our publication, or to direct our writing, that justice, kindliness, and mercy will characterize our work.

-- Oregon

Never refer to race or religion and seldom to other association where the story is of such character as to reflect on those of the same groups. This rule applies particularly to court stories.

-- Manchester (N.H.) Union & Leader

Because many people are very sensitive about religious matters, care must be used not to give anyone a chance to complain justly that favoritism is shown either in the position, extent, or display of matter of special interest to one creed, faith, or denomination.

-- Portland (Me) Express

If it can possibly be avoided, never bring ignominy to an innocent woman or child in telling of the misdeeds or misfortunes of a relative. Don't wait to be asked, do it with out the asking.

-- Marion Star

A newspaper with intelligence, and with a soul and a heart.

-- New York Globe

Sneers at race, or religion, or physical deformity, will not be tolerated. "Dago", "Mick", "Sheeny", even "Chink" or "Jap", these are absolutely forbidden. This rule of regard for the feelings of others must be observed in every avenue of news, under any and all conditions.

-- Sacramento Bee
It is the policy of the Courier not to over-display or sensationalize either telegraph or local stories pertaining to the clergy of any sect who have erred or fallen from grace in the eyes of their parishioners, on the ground that the fact of a man's being an ordained minister is no fair reason for exploiting his mis-steps, or mistakes, which same mistakes in a layman would be given no undue notice.

-- Buffalo Courier

SOCIAL PRINCIPLES TO BE ADVOCATED

We will advocate in our respective communities the same thoroughness, sound preparation, and pride of craft that we desire in ourselves, our employees, and our associates.

-- Oregon

To use every endeavor to elevate the standards of journalism and to so conduct our papers that competitors may find it wise, profitable, and conducive to happiness to emulate our example.

-- Washington, Texas, S. Florida

Repudiation of the Red Flag whenever, wherever, and however displayed.

The best schools and the best teachers the community can afford.

-- Seattle Times

The Express will seek to uphold the hands of those engaged in the promotion of prosperity, uplifting and general welfare of the city, county, and state.

While not an advocate of "Blue Laws", etc., in the offensive sense of that term, -- the paper is not to lend its influence to anything that will tend to break down the Sabbath or the moral well-being of the community.
The paper will support Prohibition of the liquor traffic, and wisely directed efforts of officials and citizens to give effect to that.

-- Portland (Me) Express

We believe in the power of the church and in its practicability as a decisive factor in all the affairs of men and nations. We shall give to the church and to religion continued editorial support.

In both news and editorial policy we shall do everything within our power to further efforts toward Americanization among the foreign-born. Our support will be given to schools and all other reputable agencies which seek to teach the ways of American citizenship to aliens.

The Journal believe in the right of labor to organize. It is friendly to organized labor so long as law and order are observed and when justice and fair dealing are the end in view.

-- Detroit Journal

The Journal must always combat evil and injustice.

It must always strive for progress and reform.

It must never tolerate corruption.

It must be in sympathy with the poor and unfortunate.

It must stand for good government, civic patriotism, and the public welfare.

For Dayton it must always stand, with an unselfish devotion for the achievement of the finest ideals of every high purpose, of every enterprise, of every step in the march of progress.

In national affairs: The truest patriotism and the American principles of freedom, equality, tolerance and undying love of country.

-- Dayton Journal
Never add fuel to the fire of popular excitement.

There is nothing more demoralising in public affairs than habitual disregard of law.

Uphold the authorities in maintaining public order, rectify wrongs through the law. If the law is defective, better mend it than break it.

Nearly always there is law enough. It is the failure to enforce it that makes most mischief.

There is no need, and therefore no excuse, for mob law in American communities.

-- Public Ledger

EXAGGERATION

The Examiner is to contain no exaggeration of facts. Care must be taken to state accurately the truth. If an $800,000 transaction is described, do not call it a million dollar transaction. If someone dies leaving two million, do not say he left ten million.

Don't allow exaggeration. It is a cheap and ineffective substitute for real interest. Reward reporters who can make THE TRUTH interesting, and weed out those who cannot.

-- Hearst to his Editors

Don't exaggerate. Every exaggeration hurts immeasurably the cause it pretends to help.

-- Sacramento Bee

Understate your case rather than overstate it.

-- Public Ledger
EMPLOYEES

We will consider it an essential in those we employ that they not merely be of ethical attitude, but reasonably equipped to carry out their ideals.

-- Oregon

No reporter should be retained who accepts any courtesies, unusual favors, opportunities for self gain, or side employment from any factors whose interests would be affected by the manner in which his reports are made.

-- Kansas

Take advantage of no man's ignorance, insist that employees be truthful and straightforward and that no one in your office shall under any circumstances misrepresent or overcharge.

In the conduct of your establishment it should be your constant aim to employ none but people of high moral character and to pay them wages in proportion to their ability and value to you.

-- Nebraska

When a wrong picture is brought in by a reporter, or a wrong picture is used, through lack of care or neglect, or when grossly inaccurate statements are made by a reporter or copy-reader, such reader or reporter will be asked for his immediate resignation.

-- Hearst

If a reporter gets drunk, the people do not say, "There goes so and so", calling him by name; they say, "There goes a News reporter". That reflects on the entire staff; that robs the paper of a certain amount of standing, of a certain amount of its reputation for reliability. No one has confidence in the work of a drunken man. Anyone on the editorial staff who gets drunk once or who wilfully prints a misstatement of any kind should not be retained on the staff a minute.

-- Detroit News
UNCLASSIFIED ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

We will make care our devotion in the preparation of statements of fact and in the utterance of opinion.

We will not make our printing facilities available for the production of advertising to be socially harmful or fraudulent in its intent.

-- Oregon

The honor of the profession should be dear to all in a realization that individual character and conduct reflects good or ill upon the profession. If then, private honor never be smirched by private act or omission the honor of the profession remains unsullied.

-- South Dakota

Be a good citizen. Take an active part in the affairs of your community. Don't try to do everything in your community, and don't shirk.

-- Nebraska

Be decent. Be fair. Be generous.

Treat all religious matter reverently.

-- Marion Star

In general, the Express will be in sympathy with wisely progressive and uplifting efforts. In all cases of doubt upon controverted topics, consult the president.

-- Portland (Me) Express

To do the right thing at the right time, in the right way; to do some things better than they were ever done before; to be courteous; to work for the love of the work; to develop resources; to recognize no impediments; to master circumstances; to be satisfied with nothing short of perfection.

Kansas City (Kans) Kansan
This paper should be vigorous, but not vicious.

— Detroit News

An interesting newspaper.

A newspaper ever seeking improvement.

A progressive newspaper.

— New York Globe

Have a voucher for every statement, especially for censure.

There is a wide gap between accusation of crime and actual guilt.

Don't be too positive. Remember always it is possible you may err.

Grace and purity of style are always desirable, but never allow rhetoric to displace clear, direct, forcible expression.

Plain words are essential for unlearned people, and they are just as plain to the most accomplished.

— Public Ledger

There is a time for humor and there is a time for seriousness. The Bee like snap and ginger at all times. It will not tolerate flippancy on serious subjects on any occasion.

— Sacramento Bee

The Examiner is to talk as a gentleman should.

— Hearst to his Editors

Vowing solemnly to ourselves that ours shall be an honest and truthful newspaper in which shall be printed nothing but well-established facts, emphasizing constantly that guessing is unpardonable and the printing of irresponsible rumors a journalistic crime.

— Tampa Times
The design of this paper is to diffuse among the people correct information on all interesting subjects, to inculcate just principles in religion, morals, and politics; and to cultivate for sound literature.

— New York Evening Post

A newspaper never should have a "Don't mention" list. News is a public utility: a place in it no more should be denied a man than connection with the public water-supply should be refused: this applies to opposition newspapers and newspaper men as to others.

— Richmond News Leader

In an ethical attitude toward truth, we will be open at all times to conviction, for the sincere journalist, while fearless and firm, will never be stubborn; therefore we will never decline to hear and consider news evidence.

If new evidence forces a change of opinion, we will be as free in the acknowledgement of the new opinion as in the utterance of the old.

— Oregon

By study and inquiry and observation, we will constantly aim to improve ourselves, so that our writings may be more authentic, and of greater perspective, and more conducive to the social good.

We are the active enemies of superficiality and pretense.

We will aim to protect, within reason, the rights of individuals mentioned in public documents, regardless of the effect on "good stories" or upon editorial policy.

— Oregon

Mix freely with intelligent members of your own craft, study their ways and methods and co-operate with them in the promotion of just business standards.

— Nebraska
We condemn as against justice:

The practice of reporters making detectives and spies of themselves in their endeavors to investigate the guilt or innocence of those under suspicion.

Reporters should not enter the domain of law in the apprehension of criminals. They should not become a detective or sweating agency for the purpose of furnishing excitement to the readers.

Whereas, a view or conclusion is the product of some mind or minds, and whereas the value and significance of a view is dependent upon the known merit of its author or authors, the reader is entitled and has the right to know the personal identity of the author, whether by the signature in a communication, the statement of a reporter in an interview, or the caption in a special article and the paper as such should in no wise become an advocate.

We do not allow the presumed knowledge on the part of the interviewed that we are newspaper men to permit us to quote them without their explicit permission, but where such knowledge is certain we insist upon our right to print the views unless directly forbidden.

An interview or statement should not be displayed previous to its publication without the permission of the author.

-- Kansas

Interviews given the paper at the paper's request are to be considered immune from sneers or criticism.

-- Sacramento Bee

To give due credit for all matter copied from other papers or magazines.

-- Washington, Texas, S. Florida
Keep the paper clean in language and thought. Profane or suggestive words are not necessary. When in doubt, think of a thirteen-year-old girl reading what you are writing.

-- Detroit News

Not to speak disparagingly through editorial or news columns of competing papers or editors.

Not to engage help employed by a competitor without first informing the competitor and giving him an opportunity, if he wishes, to retain his employees.

-- Washington, Texas, S. Florida

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In this classification of ethical principles, it is interesting to note the difference between state codes and codes followed by individual papers. The latter go into much greater detail, as a general rule, with the exception possibly of the Kansas code which was adopted in 1912, and the Oregon code which was adopted in 1922. Lack of detail would seem to be one of the faults of the state codes, and perhaps one reason why they might not have much of a following in actual practice. It requires detail which deals with certain puzzling situations to make a code practical for the individual
editor. Of course, it is not possible to make hard and fast rules in all cases, nor to make a code all-comprehensive, but as much detail in approved policies and standards as possible is highly important. An attempt at such a code will be made in the fourth chapter, which will also discuss in a limited way some of the standards the public has a reasonable right to expect of the press.
Chapter IV

Conclusion

Varied and many and partly just are the criticisms which have been made of the press. If all those charges could be grouped into one, it might be stated perhaps as the failure and apparent unwillingness of the press to fully recognize and accept its great social obligations: upon the newspaper, the public would place the greatest responsibility for a healthy national life. The problems, presented in Chapter II, however, point out some of the obstacles in the path of the paper which tries to meet that responsibility, and indicate some of the ways in which that self-same public is much to blame. On the other hand, the several codes of ethics which have been adopted within the past two or three years are evidence of an ethical awakening of the press; sentiment favoring greater service to the public is rapidly crystallizing among newspaper people. However much a few members of the profession of journalism may dissent from this view, the press is, whether or not it
has been, at least a semi-public utility. It certainly is not a private enterprise to be conducted just as the publisher, the editor, or the business manager might please; it may not be, probably is not in fact, a public utility in the sense that street railway systems are; it seems rather to be a combination of these two, or perhaps a compromise between them -- a semi-public utility. As such, there is a certain service which the public may reasonably and rightfully expect it to perform; certain principles which it may reasonably and rightfully be expected to maintain. Any person who may be inclined to enter the profession of journalism, but who is unwilling to recognize these obligations should look over his talents with a view to entering some other profession or business.

Interpreting "the public" as meaning readers and subscribers -- not advertisers except as they are readers -- and considering their rights paramount, it is important to know before formulating a code for the press, just what some of those rights of the public are:
what may the public reasonably and rightfully expect of the press.

**Independence.** — A thoroughly independent press is probably one of the greatest ambitions of progressive newspaper editors. They are moving toward the realization of that ambition, slowly perhaps, but nevertheless surely. The two great petitioners for favors have been pointed out in previous pages as the advertiser and "the interests".

As to the advertiser, the public may properly expect absolute independence by the press. The advertiser, that is, business concerns, must advertise. Present commercial conditions which mark advertising as practically the only point of contact with the prospective customer, demand that. The editor, then, really has the advantage, and it devolves upon him to give the advertiser to understand that the editor, not the advertiser, runs the newspaper. Those editors who have had the courage to try it, have found that although the advertiser does wrathfully withdraw his advertising, if the editor holds his ground, the advertising contract is
generally renewed. An illustrious exponent of the theory is William Allen White, editor of the Emporia Gazette, who declares that it takes only one "scrap" with any advertiser to teach him his lesson. Personal or social relationships with him afterward, are, of course, one of the reasons why editors are not always as independent as they might be. However, the advertiser, once he understands that the editor is in earnest, will admire him the more and very often "come across" as a friend just as he did as an advertiser. If he does not, then he is not worth making a friend of; indeed, it is impossible always to stand for what one should, and not make some irreconcilable enemies.

The question of independence of "the interests" as distinguished from the advertisers is one which is not easily answered. However, the public may reasonably expect of any newspaper independence of local interests. If they try to bring too much pressure to bear, many papers have found that to publish the whole story is an effectual means of quelling them. The editor, of course, should take especial pains not to affiliate with any business that could subject him

1 - In an address before Journalism students at the University of Kansas, May 5, 1922.
to actual coercion by "the interests". As to the interests with more than local scope, independent newspapers would necessitate independent news agencies. There are many newspapers which would fearlessly print facts, uncolored, and unbiased, regardless of the wishes of "the interests", if they could get them. It is, then, up to the newspaper associations to demand independence of the news agencies. This is one of the most important features of modern journalism, for as long as newspapers or news agencies will suppress, bias, or color news at the behest of "the interests", there is little hope of soon improving anti-social conditions which exist through the selfishness and the crooked methods employed by many of them. The public may certainly reasonably expect of newspapers that they do all in their power to gain independence of all "interests" as rapidly as possible.

The News Columns.— In general, the public may rightfully expect a strict separation of the news and the editorial or interpretive functions of the newspaper. The editor must reserve all his prejudice, all
his bias, all his personal opinions for the editorial page, giving facts, only, in the news columns, unless opinionated articles in the news sections of the paper are signed. In the news columns, there are certain important standards which the editor may fairly be expected to maintain:

First, that news facts be as accurate as it is humanly possible to get them and to state them. Where news sources are supposedly reliable, reporters should be held to strict accountability for accuracy of facts,—for reasonable care makes that possible — and the reporter who persistently misstates or distorts news should be penalized or discharged. A standing policy requiring personal bias to be put aside, which was fully impressed upon newcomers in a newspaper office, and rigidly enforced, would help attain accuracy. If unreliable sources are to be used in particular instances, that fact should be made clear in the news story. Because news may be presented accurately, the public has the right to demand it.
A second standard which might fairly be required, is that of "all the news that is fit to print" -- that may humanely be printed. The public cannot reasonably or rightfully demand publication of news involving actual disgrace which the editor sincerely feels will do more of harm, to innocent persons or first offenders, than of good as a deterrent to others. Humanity is fully of weaknesses, and if news of all short-comings was published, much unnecessary mental suffering would result. The point is to be impartial as regards wealth and social standing.

Thirdly, the newspaper may reasonably be expected to make full correction where mistakes in publication have worked injury to any person or institution.

A fourth demand which may rightfully be made of the news columns is that all news be presented in a manner that is clean and unsuggestive. This is exceedingly important. While addressing an audience of Michigan newspaper men, Mr. Cyril Arthur Player, staff correspondent of the Detroit News, remarked: "It is a tragic truth that the messenger of crime and passion finds a welcome among immature individuals and pur-
sues its course of moral discouragement long after the day of issue. Here it seems to me is a definite standard to be reached by every newspaper having an honest motive; this standard should be measured by the American home, and by the right type of American home; can it be less?

"The standard of the American home implies the perspective toward the events of life which the father of a family holds toward his household. There are things it is necessary for them to know, but they must be told in a manner not to shock them, not to assault their modesty, nor to reflect too seductively the easy looseness of the more careless citizens. If they are to be shocked it is because action, stimulated by opinion, is needed and they, if aroused, can hasten it." 2

This standard, championed by Mr. Player, not only might reasonably be, but should be, demanded of the press.

A fifth demand that may be justly made of the press, and which is more or less related to the last,

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is that anti-social news of all kinds be kept in the background as much as possible. There is much of such news, particularly crime and scandal, which must be published because it is news, and because it is important for its deterrent effect. Some of it should be given front-page position, but very seldom top-head position. If handled in a comparatively inconspicuous manner, such news would accomplish practically as much good as a deterrent as if it were blazoned from the top of every newspaper, and there might be some hope of part of it escaping the notice of the immature or delinquent, at least some of the time. An anti-socially-electrified atmosphere cannot help having a destructive influence even though sordid and salacious details, themselves, are not thrust into the face of every newspaper reader. For example, the simple idea of much crime may suggest to the delinquent the possibility of his practicing crime, although the actual methods of some one else's criminal procedure are not explained. Given a mentally normal, and a mentally abnormal person, and the latter may easily be the more
cunning in the devices which he invents for crime, once having suggested to him the idea of criminal activity. Anti-social news should be played down as much as possible: this the public may reasonably expect.

The Editorial Columns.— Granted that the editorial page is the editor's own and is reserved for his especial opinions and whims, the public may rightfully demand that no morally vicious schemes or ideas be advocated there. The public may reasonably expect, also, a wholesomely constructive attitude, toward life and its institutions, governing the comment on that page.

The Advertising Columns.— The one great standard which the public may rightfully expect the newspaper to maintain in its advertising columns is that of carrying only reliable advertising. In spite of the fact that a very great many papers still retain advertisements of unreliable patent medicines, of "gold brick" investment companies, of questionable employment and matrimonial agencies, and the like, as well as much
advertising of a less objectionable, but nevertheless untrustworthy, nature, the public may justly expect all newspapers to banish all unreliable advertisements in the near future. This, of course, would involve something of a revolution for some papers, but there always comes a time when new standards and policies must be substituted for the old if there is to be any progress. To guarantee those advertisements obtained through an agency need work no great hardship upon newspaper men, because they may make united demands that the agency offer only such advertising as it can, itself, guarantee; this, in turn, would not be an injustice to the agency, because its intimate association with the business methods of its clients makes it almost impossible not to know the reliability of the advertisements.

As to the local advertising which is largely handled directly, the newspaper man, himself, must take the responsibility of convincing the advertiser that exaggeration and misrepresentation must be eliminated. This problem is practically solved for him in
thirty-four of the largest cities of the country where Better Business Bureaus are maintained. One of the duties of these bureaus is to investigate all department store, and all other local advertising, and to compel accuracy. Investigations are conducted as much as possible before publication of the advertisements; but, if some of doubtful veracity appear, inquiry is made, and pressure brought to bear to insure truthful advertising in the future. This plan has been reduced to such fine points, that if the Bureau's "buyer" reports, for example, that the word "array" has been used in an advertisement with reference to only a few dresses, a severe reprimand is administered to the advertiser.

This, of course, does not facilitate matters for the newspaper in cities where no such bureau exists. But, the advertiser may be courteously educated to the idea of having his advertisements censored by the newspaper or by an agent agreed upon.

When the great amount of injustice done by unreliable advertisements is taken into consideration, it seems that neglect by the press to do what it can
is almost criminal: but, the wholesome effect that would result in the business world when the acceptance of advertising by newspapers was put on the basis of its reliability, makes the obligation of the press doubly heavy.

The Newspaper as a Whole. — Of the newspaper as a whole, the public may reasonably and rightfully expect at least three or four things. The first is that the paper be interesting. Sordid sensationalism need not be the keynote of interest in the American press, indeed it is not although there is a strong tendency in that direction. Clean, straight facts in the news columns should be supplemented by wholesome features of many kinds.

In the second place, the newspaper ought to be helpful. Reliable financial pages, such as many newspapers now carry, is one means of accomplishing this. Dependable information departments of various kinds, contribution and exchange departments, and articles on the editorial page written by experts in their respective fields of endeavor, should be utilized as far as practicable by every editor.
A third policy which might reasonably be expected of the newspaper by the public is that it take the lead, or at least lend whole-hearted support to such movements for the social welfare as are backed by reliable civic organizations. This does not mean that the editor may rightfully be expected to run as news what should be paid for as advertising, but that he runs in his news columns as many stories in support of social welfare campaigns as may fairly be regarded as actual news.

These are at least some of the standards or policies which the public may reasonably and rightfully expect of the newspaper, regardless of professional codes. They do not cover, however, all the points that should find a place in the professional code of ethics of journalism. A model code is presented below which has been formulated upon the basis of a year's intensive study of the practical field of journalism and its ethical standards, as indicated by all that has preceded in this thesis. The controlling aim has been to construct a code of ethics that would point to the highest standards possible, and still be practical -- that is, within the reasonable and possible
reach of every newspaper.

A Suggested Code of Ethics for the Newspaper

The American newspaper press has become, without question, the most extensive medium for the exchange of news, ideas, and information in general, that the country possesses. The minds and talents of many great men, and small, have made it so; and, as such it may be the most powerful instrument of democratic government: in its message lies the power to arouse, or direct public opinion, and a true democracy is government by public opinion. In order that this public opinion and the national life shall be efficient, effective, and wholesome, it becomes necessary that the contents of the newspaper be organized and presented in an efficient, effective, and wholesome manner. To accomplish that ideal requires the technique and skill of a fine art, the successful practice of which will unquestionably dignify journalism to the status of professionalism.

Up to the present, journalism has won only a more or less conditional recognition as a profession. To merit full recognition it must conduct itself as an honorable and indispensable one. Its intricate relationships to social welfare have so far removed the press from the plane of mere private property as to endow it with even greater responsibilities and obligations to the public than those of any public utility. In order that it may meet these obligations in a truly professional manner, a code of ethical standards to guide its many practitioners becomes imperative.
SERVICE

We accept as a definite characteristic of our institution and profession, the highly social aspect of the press. We believe, therefore, that as editors and publishers, we hold much the same position as does the man in public office whose fundamental obligation is one of service to the public. That we may better meet that obligation we adopt these principles of guidance:

1. To all movement, large or small, the purpose of which we are convinced is directly or indirectly to improve the welfare of the community or of society at large, we will give as hearty editorial support as each cause seems to justify. In order that we may also give full support in the news columns, we will print stories to the limit of news value; beyond that, however, we will require that full advertising rates be paid for campaign material to be carried in the advertising columns. (When we contribute white space to any cause, the matter shall appear as regular advertising in the advertising columns, not as advertising disguised as news.)

2. Where we ourselves see especial opportunities to increase the moral, spiritual, intellectual, or social welfare of the community, we will unhesitatingly initiate programs to that end. This may be in the nature of a mere newspaper educational campaign of the editorial or feature department type, or a more extensive one in which other persons or organizations participate.

3. By means of wholesomely and attractively presented news, entertaining feature, and helpful information departments, we will endeavor to make our newspapers as interesting as possible.

4. Our columns shall be open to communications, subject always to the editor's discretion. Three
restrictions are imperative, however; first, that the communications shall be within the libel laws; second, that they shall be morally unobjectionable; and third, that all discussion shall be fair and good-natured. We also reserve the right to edit such copy so that it will conform to the common rules of English grammar.

5. We will take every precaution to make all departments, such as the financial page, "questions answered" and others, accurate and authoritative.

6. We will not knowingly accept any advertisement which is designed to deceive or mislead the public. As rapidly as it become possible we will increasingly carry only such advertisements as we can personally guarantee.

7. We recommend that editors, as a rule, avoid outside affiliations which must necessarily interfere with their maximum efficiency as newspaper directors. This refers to the holding of stock in public utilities, in real estate enterprises, and the like, as well as occupancy of public offices, either elective or appointive.

OUTLOOK UPON LIFE

We believe that one's outlook upon life is one of the most important features of his earthly existence, because that outlook invariably colors his every activity, and largely determines his value to the human race. It cannot be otherwise with such an institution as the press. We, therefore, set forth certain policies as indicative of our professional attitude toward life and people.

8. A determined optimism shall be our view of life. This means, in general, that ours shall be a constructive criticism and comment at all times; it does not mean, however, a blind optimism which ignores conditions that temporarily present a dark picture of human character.
and which may require drastic measures to improve them.

9. Remembering that "A wise man will change his mind, but a fool never", we will always be open to conviction: when convinced that truth demands a change of opinion on any subject, we will readily accept and advocate the new position.

10. We regard it as a breach of faith with our public to take advantage of our position as editors, by making of the press an instrument for the promotion of our own selfish personal ends, or those of our friends.

11. Believing that insincerity is one of the greatest curses to society and hindrances to progress, we shall make it our constant effort to be sincere and trustworthy in all our newspaper activities.

ACCURACY

Public opinion largely determines the plane of the national life and its sets the standard of government; for its authenticity it is pre-eminently dependent upon the press, which means that inaccurate, careless newspapers proportionately decrease the efficiency of the active public opinion. Inaccuracy, not only misdirects public opinion, however, it works much injustice as well. We obligate ourselves, therefore, to maintain the following standards:

12. In the gathering of news, we will spare no effort to get facts correctly stated. Where news is obtained from sources of uncertain reliability we will indicate or imply that fact in the story.

13. We will present facts in their true perspective, including all details necessary to do so. We will not editorialize or exaggerate in the news columns, and we will never intentionally bias or color.

14. Because we realize that the headlines are the chief sources of news for many persons, we will take
every precaution to give facts their true perspective
in the heads and to see that they are accurately
stated.

15. We will never knowingly deceive the public
in financial drives of any kind, either as to the amount
of the quota or the daily subscription figures. (When
there seems to be danger of public over-confidence and
consequent falling off of subscription, precautions taken
shall be in the nature of editorial or box-features,
rather than cut figures.

16. We will always give full credit for reprint
or quoted material of any kind.

JUSTICE

We see about us appalling injustice on every hand.
Many seemingly deserving persons are fairly overcome
with trouble and grief, while many scapegraces apparently
going free. We recognize in the profession of journalism
unusual opportunities for unintentional, as well as in­
tentional, injustice, which it is our desire to diminish.
To that purpose we adopt these principles:

17. When a mistake is published in any of our
columns which misrepresents any person or group of
persons, we will immediately and cheerfully make cor­
rection. Since a printed error cannot be recalled, we
will do the next best thing by giving the correction
as nearly the same prominence accorded the original
story as practicable.

18. As accurately as human judgment can determine
the merits of each case, we will give the undertakings,
the opinions, the affiliations, the race, and the feelings
of men and institutions equal consideration in our col­
umns. We will listen with the same sympathy to the
petitions of the halting and retiring that we do to
the petitions of the successful and powerful, and handle
each case upon the basis of merit.

19. A man's personal opinions, the secrets of his
family or business life, his photograph, the use and in­
fluence of his name, and the like, are his private property. Except as they might seriously affect the public welfare, it is his right to determine whether or not they shall be exploited by the press, and we pledge ourselves to respect that right.

20. Because we believe that every man is capable of some good, we ban the black list, as a frequently unjust feature of the journalistic profession.

MERCY

The greatest human frailty is to err. Through publication of facts which is one of his professional functions, the editor has the unwelcome power of cutting to the quick innocent persons involved in some loved one's slip: but, because his word largely determines what shall be published and what not, the editor has, as well, the power to shield the innocent by suppression of news facts. Which to do is one of his great problems. We declare on the side of mercy, and subscribe to the following principles of guidance:

21. When justice to the public demands publication of any local story of this nature, we will take the utmost care to couch the facts in terms which will grate the least possible upon the feelings of the friends of the offender.

22. In cases of minor first offenses, it shall be our general rule to withhold the names, at least. If the entire story can reasonably be suppressed without particularly violating the public's "right to know", we will suppress.

23. Where violations of the law result in actual trial and sentence we will not, as a rule, suppress unless particular circumstances surrounding the case seem to demand it in the interests of humanity.

24. It is next to impossible to live down a damaged reputation, particularly so for a woman; therefore we will never print mere rumor of any kind that raises any question as to the reputation or character
of man, woman, or child. When the public welfare for-
bids the protection of a good name by suppression, gen-
erosity and mercy shall be the keynote of the pub-
lished story.

25. When the editor's discretion is the determin-
ing factor between publication and suppression, we
will make every effort to be guided only by the merits
of the case, and not to be influenced by wealth, social
position, race, creed, or color.

26. We consider it a violation of decency and
charity to speak slurringly or disparagingly of any
man's religion, race, or color, or unnecessarily to
emphasize it in connection with crime or other error.
This is our attitude, as well, regarding physical or
mental peculiarities or defects about which many per-
sons are highly sensitive.

SOCIAL WELFARE

Having accepted the social aspect of the press,
we recognize that there are certain points of its
influence which must be closely guarded if it is to
serve the best welfare of the community, the state, and
the nation. We believe that to "give the public what
it wants" if that be vulgar, questionable, or degrading,
is frank betrayal of our trust. We believe, moreover,
that it is one of the newspaper's prime obligations
to lend its influence in a purposeful way toward a
higher national life, morally, spiritually, and intel-
lectually. To that end we adopt these policies:

27. The mere over-emphasis of crime news sug-
gests criminal activity to immature minds. It, then,
shall be our rule to reserve top-head positions for
other events of the day, while crime shall be given only
bottom-page positions, and that on the inside pages as
much as is practicable. Top-head position shall be
granted crime only when the unusual prominence of the
principals, or the particularly startling circumstances
of the case compel it, and then only for the first story,
and perhaps the last. Crime methods and resulting
physical conditions of the victims shall be minimized.
28. Stories of scandal, particularly offenses against private morality should be played down always, when not suppressed entirely. Salacious and sordid details shall find a place in the paper only when the public interest demands publication, and then in the least offensive manner possible.

29. In the interests of better government, we condemn mob violence of all kinds, and pledge our support to law and order. If laws and statutes fail to meet the issues, or administrative officials seem negligent, we will direct our energies and influence toward the enactment of adequate laws and the election of sincere and courageous officers.

30. Believing that the man in public life whose private morals are lax, or whose business ethics are questionable, cannot and will not serve the best public interests, and that he has no right to public office, we will strenuously oppose his election, even to the extent of exposing his private life if that becomes necessary.

31. To guard the welfare of children shall be our constant aim. We will be generous with encouragement and praise of any child's merit, but in the interests of its best development we will refrain from extravagant applause and undue publicity of any kind. Whenever possible, we will withhold the names of children in connection with crime, scandal, or other objectionable conduct of their elders. Because we deplore the triviality and the treacherous influence of the modern colored comic sections, we will endeavor to raise their standards; if that proves impossible or impracticable, we will substitute for the comics, rotogravure sections or other features of a wholesome and entertaining character.

32. In an effort to do our share toward maintaining a sane public opinion and well-balanced national life, we will make it our endeavor to observe steadiness, moderation, and proportion in all our newspaper conduct. Ours shall be a progressive conservatism.
33. We will refuse the use of our printing facilities for the production of advertising which we believe to be deceptive or misleading, or for the production of an sheet or bulletin of an immoral or otherwise anti-social nature.

INDEPENDENCE

Newspapers restricted by the interests of social, business, or political affiliations can never be purveyors of the news in the proper sense of the term. At best, the editor is too often requested or commanded to publish this, or suppress that. If he yields his paper is no longer a newspaper, but becomes a mere instrument of conflicting, selfish interests. Believing that the editor should and can hold his ground, if he but will, and that without serious loss socially or financially, we subscribe to the following policies:

34. We will courteously give the advertiser to understand at all times that we can accord him no other privileges than those of the ordinary subscriber.

35. We will steadfastly refuse to make any agreement with "the interests" which is contrary to our personal standards or the best welfare of the public. If firm denial of favors is not sufficient, we will publish all the circumstances of their demands.

36. Believing that no person nor institution has the right to take advantage of its position to accomplish any selfish ends at the expense of the welfare or others, we will recognize no "sacred cows".

37. We will unhesitatingly condemn, editorially, particular acts of any political party which we realize are against the best interests of the public.

38. We will not admit mere propaganda of any organization or institution to our columns. What there is of news we will print in the news columns; the other material we will carry only as paid advertising.

39. Because we believe it the privilege and the duty of every man, whether editor or not, to stand for his convictions even though they may be unpopular, we will do so until convinced of error.
In the average newspaper office, the editor cannot and does not publish the paper alone. He must have one or more assistants and they must be able to co-operate harmoniously if the publication is to be a success. Certain standards of employment must be maintained, whether the editor or the business manager is the immediate employer. On the other hand the assistants have certain rights which the employer is bound to respect. With this in mind, we propose to observe these principles:

40. We will not employ our reporter as detectives to search out scandal or other anti-social news. We do not disapprove, however, the use of reporters as detectives in the interests of public welfare: as, for example the apprehension of offenders against the law whose cases the officers have failed to handle properly, either through neglect or apparent inability.

41. We will require of all employees a knowledge of, and the ability to conform to, the common rules of English grammar.

42. We will increasingly employ college- or otherwise trained assistants because we believe that the efficient practice of our profession no less demands knowledge and training than do other professions.

43. We will require accuracy of reporting as well as accuracy of copy-reading and proof-reading. Those employees who persist in avoidable errors shall be replaced by new assistants.

44. As far as it is feasible, "beats" for the reporter, and subjects for the editorial writer, shall be adjusted to meet their personal preference and approval.
Upon two things, editors seem pretty generally agreed: that journalism is fundamentally a profession, and that as such it needs definite and defined ethical standards peculiar to its characteristics and problems.

I have attempted to point out in this code what is the ethical responsibility of the newspaper as I see it after a year's study of the problems of ethics in Journalism. It is impossible, of course, to formulate a code of ethics which stands even a chance of meeting all of the many situations that confront the editor: all any code can do, is to incorporate some policies upon which a group of editors may agree as obligatory, or at least appropriate, to the practice of journalism. In this code, I have proposed certain definite policies regarding questions upon which editors in the field do not agree, but I have tried to avoid advocating standards which would not be within the realm of the reasonably possible.

To declare absolute independence of the advertiser, for example, "the interests" and the general propagandist, sounds idealistic and impractical to some editors. I real-
ize that fact. For any newspaper to undertake to maintain that standard by itself means a turbulent career certainly, as the Detroit Times and the Philadelphia North American, to cite two noteworthy examples, can testify. But, it is not necessary to try it alone, for newspaper editors are organized by districts, by states, and nationally. Since people cannot live without the newspapers, the editors have the advantage of the petitioner for favors if it comes to that. If, then, they would but unite upon the proposition of independence it would not take them long to convince the public that they were in earnest. The bankers educated the public to the "Open at 9, Close at 4" idea. When physicians first undertook to define their office hours, they met an indignant public; but, now people have learned to discover their cuts and bruises during office hours, and to call the physician after those hours only for serious illness.

"The first regular session of the Press Congress of the World held at Honolulu, Hawaii, between October 10 and November, 1921, saw the dream for a united world's press change from a vision to an actuality." Certain
"Outstanding accomplishments of the meeting in Honolulu indicate the part the organization is to play in the journalism of the future.

"Through acquaintanceships formed in Hawaii and through the strikingly frank and helpful discussions heard on the floor of the Congress, the way was opened for a better understanding between the journalists of all nations. ------- For the purpose of keeping in close touch with all members of the Congress, a bulletin will be issued regularly from the office of the Secretary-Treasurer." 2

The American Society of Newspaper Editors came into being April 26, 1922. Among its one hundred charter members are the representatives of virtually all the leading newspapers. The membership will comprise editors in cities of more than one hundred thousand population, although by special vote of the Board editors from smaller cities may be taken in. Commenting upon the purpose of the new organization, Mr. Casper S. Yost, President and editor of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, says:

"What we aim to do above everything else is to establish a strong esprit de corps editorial opinion" 3 - Editor and Publisher, December 5, 1921.
Determined unity -- that is the all-important thing in any undertaking when once the program of action is decided upon. That spirit is evidently growing very rapidly among newspaper people, and it is both the cause and result of the increasing recognition by the public of journalism as a profession. When the press unites in appreciation of its unlimited power to accomplish anything that it might undertake; when as a whole, it recognizes and accepts its ethical responsibilities; and, when it gives evidence to the public, of its sincerity, by adopting a code of ethics which it is actually ready to practice; then, the press will attain the full dignity and standing of a profession.
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