

On the Gentle Art Of Interviewing

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT is never interviewed "for publication." No president is.

But in the days when he was civil service commissioner, police commissioner, lieutenant-colonel of the Rough Riders, governor of the state he was born in, and so on, he was generally very approachable by the reporter, always providing he wasn't too busy.

A reporter who went to see him one day at police headquarters in New York had a rather curious experience. Mr. Roosevelt was out when the reporter's card was sent in. It was nearly an hour before the commissioner returned. By that time a score or more of persons were waiting. Then a stir at the door made them all sit up and take notice, and Roosevelt rushed through the ante-room like a dark-brown streak to the door of his office, scattering his visitors right and left, and shutting the door behind him with a slam. The reporter was the first caller and entitled to precedence, but he preferred to wait, and it was nearly another hour before he had his audience.

The future president was cordial in his greeting, and, after looking at his watch, said he could give twenty minutes to the interview, but made it understood in short order that he was a professional writer as well as a public man.

"The subject you suggest is an important and interesting one," said the commissioner, with his characteristic smile, "but I haven't time to think it all out now. Besides, I may want to write about it myself. What else have you in mind?"

Fortunately for him, the reporter had other "talkable" topics to suggest, but his spirits fell as he called them off in succession, for the first half dozen all appealed to Mr. Roosevelt as too good to be spoiled by being interviewed about them. Finally, though, a suitable subject was agreed upon and an hour, instead of twenty minutes, was given up to the interview.

Russel Sage has never been a hard man to interview when he wanted to let the public know what he thinks about something, but otherwise you might as well seek information from a stone. In fact, Mr. Sage will not be seen at all in such an instance, and it is useless to try to convince the clerk who pokes his head out of the little barred window in the thin partition that shuts in the capitalist's office. Sometimes Mr. Sage has been known to invite an interview by causing the insertion of a little five or ten line item in the newspapers.

On one occasion such an item was printed saying that Sage was about to lend his backing to a man who had had a spectacular, but not wholly successful career in the world of railroad finance. The statement seemed so preposterous though, that the reporters were not sent to Sage's office. A correspondent of an out-of-town paper, however, short of material for his daily dispatches, went to Mr. Sage's office, and, showing the little item to the clerk at the window, was admitted without ceremony. Mr. Sage seemed pleased, and the correspondent got a creditable "scoop" on all the New York papers. Sage didn't verify the item explicitly, but what he said amounted to the same thing.

"The man mentioned in the item," said Mr. Sage, "is one of the brightest men now before the public, and I have learned more from him than from almost any one I ever met."

By the time he had finished, the correspondent had material for a column and a half dispatch, the accuracy of which was questioned at first by the New York papers, but afterward confirmed with all the dignity of display type. The result was that the "man mentioned" was able to get on to his feet again—for a while.

Mr. Sage has always been more than willing to talk about his horses, of which he is very fond, and more than one reporter, anxious to get his views on a current financial topic, has gained admittance to his private office by asking for some information about these pets. He is always ready also to talk of the methods by which success in life may be attained, and when he does his talk is always optimistic.

He thinks the struggling young man of today has just as good a chance to win as the young man who started out early in the last century, and is full of anecdotes and incidents to prove that he is right.

It is not of record, though, that any ingenious reporter ever got Mr. Sage to talk on something he didn't intend to by questioning him about either horses or success in life.

Of all the men big enough to be interviewed, Roscoe Conkling was one of the easiest. Proud and haughty in his bearing to most men of his own class, he was generally accessible to newspaper writers, and sometimes he would take a reporter into his confidence in a way that was startling. But it was another thing to get permission to print what he said with the hyperion curl had said.

As one young reporter to whom Mr. Conkling had devoted a long two hours of the most interesting talk, which threw much illumination on current political matters, rose to leave the office with his

note book safely buttoned in his inside pocket, Conkling smiled and said: "Let me look at your notes a moment, my boy."

The book was produced, when Conkling stuck it carefully in a pigeon hole.

"I didn't tell you all this to have it printed," he said, "for that would never do, but because I like you and because I thought it would be a good thing for you to know the inside of some things. Knowing what you do now, you will understand better how to treat certain topics you are assigned to 'cover.'"

The reporter had to submit and the information that had been given was of much use to him afterward, as Conkling said it might be.

Another reporter who didn't know Mr. Conkling, but had been assigned to interview him, asked a political follower of the great man for an introduction. The politician acquiesced, and the two were presently in "the presence." Then a curious thing occurred. The politician, it appeared, was not only a follower of Mr. Conkling, but he stood in such personal awe of the leader that he was able to say hardly a word beyond the barest commonplaces, much less to introduce the reporter. After about five minutes of talk on the weather, the politician terminated the interview for the time being, with a "Well, good day, Mr. Conkling," and the two went away. Later, however, the reporter's wits having returned to him, he went back to Conkling and got the interview he was after.

Naturally the reporter or correspondent personally known to a public man as reliable and capable rarely has any trouble in getting to see the public man, or in finding out anything that is proper to print. And naturally public men generally often tell reporters and correspondents many things that they do not want printed, exactly as Conkling enlightened the young reporter mentioned above. But it is not surprising that public men are a little shy of strangers.

Just after the present speaker of the house was made sure of his election to his post, a newspaper man was sent from New York to get some facts about a subject then exciting general attention. The correspondent was unknown to Colonel Henderson, and, being sure that he would hesitate to talk to a stranger, took along several strong letters of introduction. The colonel was found in the rotunda of the hotel in Dubuque, which has been his home for many years when he is not in Washington. To him the correspondent presented the letters, which Henderson read through with great care before responding. Then he returned all the letters except one.

"I don't mind those letters," he said, "they mean nothing to me. But this one is from a man I can't well refuse. I wish I had him here. He ought to be kicked. But you come upstairs with me and I'll talk, providing you don't say in your article that you got your information from me."

So, turning over the action of his friend who had made it virtually impossible to refuse to be interviewed, the colonel led the way to his rooms and there, puffing away at their cigars, the speaker-elect and the correspondent talked out fully the topic which the latter had traveled 1,200 miles to investigate.

Like the president, the speaker of the house is rarely interviewed, so far as the public knows, and Henderson was just then so nearly a speaker that the correspondent fully understood his reasons for not being quoted.

The late Abram S. Hewitt varied in his treatment of interviewers, and newspaper men who knew him tell many anecdotes of their meetings with him. One reporter who went, a stranger, to ask him a lot of questions on certain municipal matters, found him sitting alone in his little office.

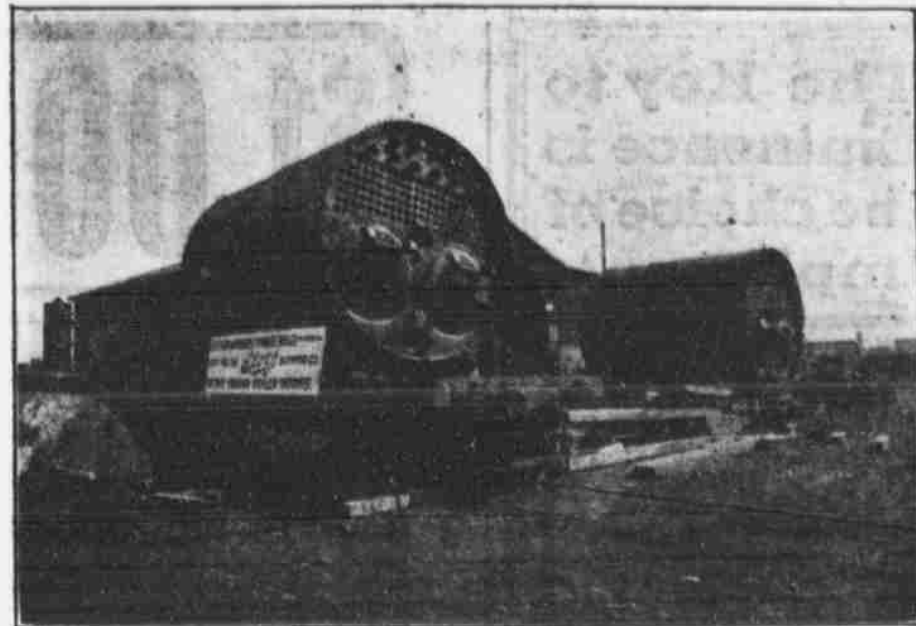
"I don't know you," said Mr. Hewitt, briskly, not to say sharply, "and I don't know how correctly you will print what I may say, but I'm willing to talk with you if you won't bring out your note book. Note books always make me nervous. No, I don't want to see your copy after it's written. Nobody'll believe it if you make me say ridiculous things, and, of course, you'll never come to me again if you don't report me accurately."

Then he talked rapidly and fully while the reporter listened, without taking a note, and wondering the while whether he would be able to remember all that was said well enough to write it out afterward.

Apparently he did, for Mr. Hewitt was interviewed repeatedly after that by the reporter and he never complained that the reports printed were inaccurate.

Phonograph Clock

The kaiser received from the Geneva inventor a phonograph clock that reminds him of business engagements and other intended stunts. If, for instance, he wants to drive to the chancellor at 11 a. m. next day, he informs the phonograph clock, moves the hand to 10:30 and at that minute, exactly, the phonograph shouts: "See here, your majesty, it's about time to order the carriage for Buelow's." While



This photograph shows again how Omaha's industries are progressing right along. These two boilers, which are the largest boilers ever constructed between the Mississippi and the Pacific coast, were made by the Omaha Boiler Works (of which concern John R. Lowrey is the head). The length of each of these enormous boilers is 16 feet 6 inches, the diameter of shell 10 feet 6 inches, and the total weight 64,000 pounds, and were built and completed in the short space of 10 weeks—a remarkably short time. The boilers were built for the Storz Brewing Co. of this city, who had these made to replace two of their smaller boilers, which were found not large enough for their steadily increasing business. It is to the credit of Storz Brewing Co. that they patronize home industry in placing their order with a home concern, and shows plainly that our city and state is well able to compete in any line of industry—a reason that everybody should patronize home industries.

William breakfasts, the clock tells him half a dozen things he must not forget, and if the eggs are bad, or the cutlets burned, he steps up to the clock and tells the phonograph that "cock will get his walking papers unless—"

Cook must report to the clock immediately after meals and hear what his majesty thought of the food set before him. The kaiser thinks the phonograph clock a wonderful success and has ordered half a dozen for the different palaces.

Bachelor's Reflections

A miser can't bear to think even of the money his coffin will cost.

A man who can't think up a new way once a week to make a woman believe he loves her just as much as the day he married her is a failure as a husband.

It makes a thoughtful man feel pretty bad to think that if he had all the money he has spent for drinks in his life he could afford to smoke imported cigars.

A man is so appreciative of his virtues that when he is economizing and buys a two-for-a-quarter cigar instead of a fifteen-cent straight, he regards himself as a hero.

It's the man who kicks like blazes against his wife paying \$2 a month more to get a good maid that calls anybody pretty mean who doesn't tip the waiter where he gets his lunch a quarter a day.—New York Press.

His Busy Date

Adam was naming the animals. The pterodactyl slipped into the line and came forward again.

"Here!" exclaimed Adam, "didn't I name you once?"

"Yes, sir," answered the pterodactyl, "I merely wished to ask you how to pronounce my name."

"Go look in the dictionary," replied Adam, "I'm busy enough telling the Smiths, Smiths and Smythes how to spell their names without being bothered by you."—Judge.

Michigan Wrestling Bear

While blazing a trail to a homestead in Elm river district, Houghton county, Michigan, Charles Buchanan and Elmer Demary encountered a bear. The meeting nearly ended fatally for Demary. He had no weapon, so he fled, with the bear close at his heels for a quarter of a mile. The brute caught him at the bottom of a hill and was about to devour him when Buchanan answering Demary's shouts, ran up and belabored the bear with an ax. The bear left his victim unconscious, with a broken arm and a severely lacerated shoulder. Buchanan, after furnishing his companion medical aid, overtook the bear and shot him with a rifle.

"Balkan Question"

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riser of Turks and sings little songs carefully calculated to embitter even the most stolid souls.

The care-free spirit of the Macedonian is beautifully expressed by his simple method of inciting the Turks to commit atrocities, in order to attract the attention of the outside world. This charming little bit of state craft is not rare. It explains many things—among others why a Macedonian brigand may be expected to keep his word if he promises a captured traveler that his ear shall be cut off if ransom is not ready at a certain time. A person who is ready at all hours of the day or night to provoke the Turk into massacring his friends, is not likely to hesitate unduly about a stranger's ear.

Everybody lives in the past. The Balkans

were the portals into Europe of all the strange tribes of early time. The traces of the Dacians, the Marcomanni, the Quadi, the Goths, the Huns, all are to be found in survival in the Balkans. It is as if all those irrupting tribes and races had left their flotsam and jetsam there, to remain unchanged in those undeleitable mountains.

Their songs are songs of the Czar Sireon and the Czar Boris and the Czar Dushan, who ruled more than 1,000 years ago, when there was no such a thing as a czar in Russia.

Throughout the Balkans today the favorite dance is the kolo, which is nothing more or less than the ancient Roman dance of Hero, without a change. Bagpipers go around everywhere and everywhere the inhabitants are prone to drop their work suddenly and dance and sing as if every one of those queer villages were a stage village and all the peasants were ballet. The land has been described by one traveler as a land that still lives in the days of the Troubadours.

The Montenegrin, if he is truly patriotic, still wears his little red fez with a black band. It has been worn by Montenegrins for more than six centuries in memory of the killing by the Turks of the last of the great Serb Czars in 1889. The loyal Montenegrin declares that the cap shall be worn until a terrible revenge has been wreaked on the Turk.

The Bosnian is another old one. Although the Hungarian railroads beat at his door with goods, he still ploughs with a wooded plough. His ox-cart is made of wood alone, without a bit of metal in it. The harness of his horses is of rope.

The little Bosnian horse is still the leading means of transport. Instead of a saddle, a wooden thing that looks like a table upside down, is tied to the beast with ropes and the load is tied to the table legs with simple disregard of beauty or the finer feelings of the horse.

Building a Bridge

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the draw spans. They will be capable of raising the ends and turning the spans 90 degrees in two and one-half minutes under ordinary conditions. The motors are to be placed in little operating houses above the roadway and directly over the pivot piers, in what are known as the "towers" of the bridge. Ball bearings will be used throughout, and the mechanism is of the most approved and efficient pattern for the transmission of power and the safe manipulation of the draws.

HOW MANY HANDS

do you suppose dip into that bulk coffee before you buy it?

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