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TALMAGE'S SERMON.

"DIVINE MISSION OF THE NEWSPAPER," HIS SUBJECT.

A Fair Statement of the Conditions That Surround Newspaperdom—The Average Daily or Weekly Paper is an Instrument for Great Good.

WASHINGTON, March 22, 1896.—"Newspaper Row," as it is called here in Washington, the long row of offices connected with prominent journals throughout the land, pays so much attention to Dr. Talmage they may be glad to hear what he thinks of them while he discusses a subject in which the whole country is interested.

What is a preacher to do when he finds two texts equally good and suggestive? In that perplexity I take both. Wheels full of eyes? What but the wheels of a newspaper printing press? Other wheels are blind. They roll on, pulling or crushing. The manufacturer's wheel, how it grinds the operator with fatigues, and rolls over nerve and muscle and bone and heart, not knowing what it does.

The course of procedure is about this: A literary man has an agricultural or scientific or political or religious idea which he wants to ventilate. He has no money of his own—literary men seldom have. But he talks of his ideas among confidential friends until they become inflamed with the idea, and forthwith they buy type and press and rent a composing room, and gather a corps of editors, and with a prospectus that proposes to cure everything the first copy is flung on the attention of an admiring world.

The question then most frequently is the question now most frequently asked: What is the news? To answer that cry in the text for the newspaper the centuries have put their wits to work. China first succeeded, and has at Peking a newspaper that has been printed every week for one thousand years, printed on silk.

To publish a newspaper requires the skill, the precision, the boldness, the vigilance, the strategy of a commander-in-chief. To edit a newspaper requires that one be a statesman, an essayist, a geographer, a statistician, and in acquisition, encyclopedic. To man, to govern, to propel a newspaper until it shall be a fixed institution, a national fact, demand more qualities than any business on earth.

The newspaper did not suddenly spring upon the world, but came gradually. The genealogical line of the newspaper is this: The Adam of the race was a circular or news-letter, created by Divine impulse in human nature; and the circular begat the pamphlet, and the pamphlet begat the quarterly, and the quarterly begat the weekly, and the weekly begat the semi-weekly, and the semi-weekly begat the daily. But alas! by what a struggle it came to its present development!

money, the brain, the losses, the exasperations, the anxieties, the wear and tear of hearts involved in the production of a good newspaper. Under the impression that almost anybody can make a newspaper, scores of inexperienced capitalists every year enter the lists, and, consequently, during the last few years a newspaper has died almost every day. The disease is epidemic. The larger papers swallow the smaller ones, the whale taking down fifty minnows at one swallow.

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Once more I remark, that a good newspaper is a blessing as an evangelistic influence. You know there is a great change in our day taking place—for I am not speaking now of the religious newspapers—all the secular newspapers of the day discuss all the questions of God, eternity and the dead, and all the questions of the past, present and future.

Follow Duty. This truth comes to us more and more the longer we live, that on what field or in what uniform or with what arms we do our duty matters very little or even what our duty is, great or small, splendid or obscure. Only to follow our duty certainly, and somewhere, somehow, do it faithfully, makes us good, strong, happy and useful men, and tunes our lives into some feeble echo of the life of God.—Phillips Brooks.

may call the ephemeral periodical. Al Macaulay's essays first appeared in a review. All Carlyle's, all Ruskin's, all Melnotch's, all Sydney Smith's, all Hazlett's, all Thackeray's, all the elevated works of fiction in our day, are reprints from periodicals in which they appeared as serials.

Again, a good newspaper is a useful mirror of life as it is. It is sometimes complained that newspapers report the evil when they ought only to report the good. They must report the evil as well as the good, or how shall we know what is to be reformed, what guarded against, what fought down?

It would work a vast improvement if all our papers—religious, political, literary—should for the most part drop their impersonality. This would do better justice to newspaper writers. Many of the strongest and best writers of the country live and die unknown and are denied their just fame.

When I see the printing press standing with the electric telegraph on the one side gathering up material, and the lightning express train on the other side waiting for the tons of folded sheets of newspapers, I pronounce it the mightiest force in our civilization. So I commend you to pray for authors who manage the newspapers of the land, for all type setters, for all reporters, for all editors, for all publishers, that, sitting or standing in positions of such great influence, they may give all that influence for God and the betterment of the human race.

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