

THE PRINTING PRESS.

Rev. Dr. Talmage Tells What He Thinks of It.

The Decent Newspapers and the Pulpit are the World's Strongest Forces for Good—The Trials of Newspaper Men Commented Upon.

In the following discourse Dr. Talmage tells how his sermons first found their way into the newspapers. His text was Nahum 2: 4: "They shall seem like torches; they shall run like the lightnings."

Express, rail train, and telegraphic communication are suggested if not foretold in this text, and from it I start to preach a sermon in gratitude to God and the newspaper press for the fact that I have had the opportunity of delivering through the newspaper press 2,000 sermons or religious addresses, so that I have for many years been allowed the privilege of preaching the gospel every week to every neighborhood in Christendom, and in many lands outside of Christendom.

After while Dr. Louis Kloppsch, of New York, systematized the work into a syndicate, until through that and other syndicates he has put the discourses week by week before more than 20,000,000 people on both sides of the sea.

The institution of newspapers arose in Italy. In Venice the first newspaper was published, and monthly, during the time Venice was warring against Solyma the Second in Dalmatia, it was printed for the purpose of giving military and commercial information to the Venetians.

The first attempt at this institution in France was in 1631, by a physician, who published the News, for the amusement and health of his patients. The French nation understood fully how to appreciate this power. So early as in 1520 there were in Paris 169 journals. But in the United States the newspaper has come to unlimited sway. Though in 1775 there were but 37 in the whole country, the number of published journals is now counted by thousands, and to-day—we may as well acknowledge it as not—the religious and secular newspapers are the great educators of the country.

But alas! through what struggle the newspaper has come to its present development. Just as soon as it began to demonstrate its power, superstition and tyranny shackled it. There is nothing that despotism so much fears and hates as the printing press. A great writer in the south of Europe declared that the king of Naples had made it unsafe for him to write on any subject save natural history. Austria could not bear Kosuth's journalistic pen plending for the redemption of Hungary. Napoleon I., wanting to keep his iron heel on the neck of nations, said that the newspaper was the regent of kings, and the only safe place to keep an editor was in prison. But the great battle for the freedom of the press was fought in the court rooms of England and the United States before this century began, when Hamilton made his great speech in behalf of the freedom of J. Peter Zenger's Gazette in America, and when Erskine made his great speech in behalf of the freedom to publish Paine's Rights of Man in England. Those were the Marathon and the Thermopylae where the battle was fought which decided the freedom of the press in England and America, and all the powers of earth and hell will never again be able to put upon the printing press the handcuffs and the hobbles of literary and political despotism. It is remarkable that

Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration of Independence, also wrote these words: "If I had to choose between a government without newspapers, and newspapers without a government, I would prefer the latter." Stung by some new fabrication in print, we come to write or speak about an "unbridled printing press." Our new book ground up in unjust criticism, we come to write or speak about the "unfair printing press." Perhaps through our own indistinctness of utterance we are reported as saying just the opposite of what we did say, and there is a small riot of semicolons and hyphens and commas, and we come to write or talk about the "blundering printing press," or we take up a newspaper full of social scandal and of cases of divorce, and we write or talk about a "filthy, scurrilous printing press." But this morning I ask you to consider the immeasurable and everlasting blessing of a good newspaper.

There are only two kinds of newspapers—the one good, very good, the other bad, very bad. A newspaper may be started with an undecided character, but after it has been going on for years everybody finds out just what it is, and it is very good or very bad. The one paper is the embodiment of news, the ally of virtue, the foe of crime, the delectation of elevated taste, the mightiest agency on earth for making the world better. The other paper is a brigand among moral forces; it is a beslimer of reputation, it is the right arm of death and hell; it is the mightiest agency in the universe for making the world worse and battling against the cause of God.

Men of the press, God has put a more stupendous responsibility upon you than upon any other class of persons. What long strides your profession has made since the day when Peter Sheffer invented cast metal type, and because two books were found just alike they were ascribed to the work of the devil; and books were printed on strips of bamboo; and Rev. Jesse Glover originated the first American printing press; and the common council of New York, in solemn resolution, offered \$200 to any printer who would come there and live; and when the speaker of the house of parliament in England announced with indignation that the public prints had recognized some of their doings, until in this day we have in this country many thousands of skilled stenographers, and newspapers sending out copies by the billion. The press and the telegraph have gone down in the same great harvest to reap, and the telegraph says to the newspaper: "I'll rake while you bind," and the iron teeth of the telegraph are set down at one end of the harvest field and drawn clear across, and the newspaper gathers up the sheaves, setting down one sheaf on the breakfast table in the shape of a morning newspaper, and putting down another sheaf on the table in the shape of an evening newspaper; and that man who neither reads nor takes a newspaper would be a curiosity. What vast progress since the days when Cardinal Wolsey declared that either the printing press must go down, to this time, when the printing press and the pulpit are in glorious combination and alliance.

One of the great trials of this newspaper profession is the fact that they are compelled to see more of the shams of the world than any other profession. Through every newspaper office, day by day, go the weakness of the world, the vanities that want to be puffed, all the mistakes that want to be corrected, all the dull speakers who want to be thought eloquent, all the meanness that wants to get its wares noticed gratis in the editorial columns in order to save the tax of the advertising column, all the men who want to be set right who never were right, all the crack-brain philosophers, with story as long as their hair; and as gloomy as their finger-nails, all the itinerant bores who come to stay five minutes and stop an hour. From the editorial and reportorial rooms all the follies and shams of the world are seen day by day, and the temptation is to believe neither in God, man nor woman. It is no surprise to me that in your profession there are some sceptical men. I only wonder that you believe anything. Unless an editor or a reporter has in his present or in his early home a model of earnest character, or he throws himself upon the upholding grace of God, he may make temporal and eternal shipwreck.

Another great trial of the newspaper profession is the diseased appetite for unhealthy intelligence. You blame the newspaper press for giving such prominence to murders and scandals. Do you suppose that so many papers would give prominence to these things if the people did not demand them? If I go into the meat market of a foreign city, and I find that the butchers hang up on the most conspicuous hooks meat that is tainted, while the meat that is fresh and savory is put away without any special care, I come to the conclusion that the people of that city love tainted meat. You know very well that if the great mass of people in this country got hold of a newspaper, and there are in it no runaway matches, no broken-up families, no defamation of men in high position, they pronounce the paper insipid. They say, "It is shockingly dull to-night." I believe it is one of the trials of the newspaper press that the people of this country demand moral slush instead of healthy and intellectual food.

Now, you are a respectable man, an intelligent man, and a paper comes into your hand. You open it, and there are three columns of splendidly written editorial, recommending some moral sentiment, or evolving some scientific theory. In the next column there is a miserable, contemptible divorce case. Which do you read first? You dip into the editorial long enough to say, "Well, that's very ably written," and you read the divorce case from the "long primer" type at the top to the "monopariel" type at the bottom, and then you ask your wife if she has read it. Oh, it is only a case of supply and demand! Newspaper men are not fools. They know what you want,

and they give it to you. I believe that if the church and the world bought nothing but pure, honest, healthful newspapers, nothing but pure, honest, and healthful newspapers would be published. If you should gather all the editors and the reporters of this country in one great convention, and ask of them what kind of a paper they would prefer to publish, I believe they would unanimously say, "We would prefer to publish an elevating paper." So long as there is an iniquitous demand, there will be an iniquitous supply. I make no apology for a debauched newspaper, but I am saying these things in order to divide the responsibility between those who print and those who read.

Another temptation of the newspaper profession is the great allurements that surround them. Every occupation and profession has temptations peculiar to itself, and the newspaper profession is not an exception. The great demand, as you know, is on the nervous force, and the brain is racked. The blundering political speech must read well for the sake of the party, and so the reporter, or the editor, has to make it read well, although every sentence were a catastrophe to the English language. The reporter must hear all that an inaudible speaker, who thinks it is vulgar to speak out, says, and it must be right the next morning or the next night in the papers, though the night before the whole audience sat with its hand behind its ear, in vain trying to catch it. This man must go through killing night work. He must go into heated assemblages and into unventilated audience rooms that are enough to take the life out of him. He must visit court rooms, which are almost always disgusting with rum and tobacco. He must expose himself at the fire. He must write in foetid alleyways. Added to all that, he must have hasty mastication and irregular habits. To bear up under this tremendous nervous strain, they are tempted to artificial stimulus, and how many thousands have gone down under their pressure God only knows. They must have something to counteract the wet, they must have something to keep out the chill, and after a scant night's sleep they must have something to revive them for the morning's work.

This is what made Horace Greeley such a stout temperance man. I said to him: "Mr. Greeley, why are you more eloquent on the subject of temperance than any other subject?" He replied: "I have seen so many of my best friends in journalism go down under intemperance." Oh, my dear brother of the newspaper profession, what you cannot do without artificial stimulus, God does not want you to do. There is no half-way ground for our literary people between teetotalism and dissipation. Your professional success, your domestic peace, your eternal salvation will depend upon your theories in regard to artificial stimulus. I have had so many friends go down under the temptation, their brilliancy quenched, their homes blasted, that I cry out this morning in the words of another, "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright; for at the last it biteth like a serpent and it stingeth like an adder."

And now before I close this sermon, thankfully commemorative of the "Two Thousandth" publication, I wish more fully to acknowledge the services rendered by the secular press in the matter of evangelization. All the secular newspapers of the day—for I am not speaking this morning 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. There is not a single doctrine of theology but has been discussed in the last ten years by the secular newspapers of the country. They gather up all the news of all the earth bearing on religious subjects and then they scatter the news abroad again. The Christian newspaper will be the right wing of the apocalyptic angel. The cylinder of the Christianized printing press will be the front wheel of the Lord's chariot. I take the music of this day, and I do not mark it diminishing—I mark it crescendo. A pastor on a Sabbath preaches to a few hundred or a few thousand people, and on Monday or during the week, the printing press will take the same sermon, and preach it to millions of people. God speed the printing press! God save the printing press! God Christianize the printing press!

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 all those who manage the newspapers of the land, for all typographers, 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. An aged woman making her living by knitting unwound the yarn from the ball until she found in the center of the ball there was an old piece of paper. She opened it and read an advertisement which announced that she had become heiress to a large property, and that fragment of a newspaper lifted her up from pauperism to affluence. And I do not know but as the thread of time unrolls and unwinds a little further, through the silent yet speaking newspaper may be found the vast inheritance of the world's redemption.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun Does his successive journeys run; His Kingdom stretch from shore to shore, Till suns shall rise and set no more.

Just the Place for a Barn.

An old Sussex farmer visiting London for the first time was taken into St. Paul's cathedral. He stared about him in amazement, and his astonishment at the magnitude of the building seemed too great for utterance. It was only when he stood under the dome and gazed down the vast nave and up to the dim and misty roof that his admiration at last found vent in words: "My! what a foine barn this 'ud make!"

In the Wrong Order. "He was married and went crazy," she said, referring to a statement in a morning paper. "Granting that he had any sense in the first place," he returned, "you must have got the statement reversed." "How do you mean?" she demanded. "He went crazy and married" makes it seem more plausible," he answered. Of course he had already planned to spend the evening elsewhere, or he wouldn't have dared say it.—Chicago Post.

The Husband's Way. She (at the desk)—Dear, please tell me how to spell costume. I'm writing to mother about my lovely new gown. He—Well, are you ready? She—Yes. He—C-o-s-t, cost— She—Yes. He—T-o—t— She—Well? He—M-e, me—\$65, as yet unpaid. She—You're a wretch!—N. O. Times-Democrat.

Her Unfortunate Knowledge. After he had kissed her and pressed her rosy cheek against his and patted her soft round chin she drew back and asked: "George, do you shave yourself?" "Yes," he replied. "I thought so," she said. "Your face is the roughest I ever—" Then she stopped, but it was too late, and he went away with a cold, heavy lump in his breast.—Chicago Daily News.

His Desperate Action. Drummer—Did that man who attempted to commit suicide while I was here last afterward succeed in accomplishing his purpose? Squam Corners Merchant—Well, just about the same thing; the week following he married a widow with five grown daughters.—N. Y. World.

How They Got Rich. She—I could have married either Whipper or Snapper if I'd wanted to, and both of those men whom I refused have since got rich, while you are still as poor as a church mouse. He—Of course, I've been supporting you all these years. They haven't.—N. Y. Weekly.

Ab. Nol. Impatient Husband (tired of holding his chin up)—It's taking you an awfully long time to fix this necktie, Laura. Patient Wife—You never used to complain about the length of time it took me to smooth out your neckties before we were married, George.—Chicago Tribune.

Two Bold Deceivers. Mrs. Newed—I want to confess something to you, dearest. I deceived you about my age; it is more than I told you. Mr. Newed—Then I may as well reciprocate, darling. I deceived you about my income; it is less than I told you.—Tit-Bits.

One Definition of It. "Pa," said Tommy, "what is economy?" "Economy," replied Mr. Hardup, with a meaning glance at his wife, "is walking three blocks to save a car fare and making a keg for a new bonnet on the strength of it."—N. Y. Journal.

Two Extremes. "Why did you ever come to this frozen country?" asked one shivering traveler of another in the Chilkat pass. "My creditors made it too hot for me in New York," said the other through his chattering teeth.—Brooklyn Life.

Illegal. "Why don't you fill that tire?" said she. "It looks did quite disgust me." "It is against the law," said he. "To fill-a-buster!"—Cycling Gazette.

THE MODERN CASABIANCA.



The boy stood on the baring deck. As straight as a noble Festus; He said: "I'm not a bit afraid, My suit's made of asbestos."—London Idler.

The Recipe. "How do you begin to shave, chap?" "Aw—I follow the good old wule, deah boy, youah know; first catch youah haiah."—The Rival.

The Modern Maid. She—Why didn't you warn me you were going to kiss me? He—Why? She—I would have made it easier for you.—Town Topics.

He Wanted to Know. Pastor—Come out to church to-morrow. I feel sure you will enjoy the sermon. Friend—Who is going to preach?—Harlem Life.

That's What They Do. Willie—Pa, what's an usher? Pa—It's the man who shows people where they mustn't sit at church.—Chicago Daily News.

A Hollow Square. Bill—He's got a good square head on his shoulders. Jill—Sort of hollow square, isn't it?—Yonkers Statesman.

Of Course It Was. Brainard—How did that baby party your wife got up last week turn out? Ferguson—It was a howling success.—Chicago News.

The New Method. "Then you are going to get a divorce from your husband?" "Oh, mercy, hol!" she replied. "We are merely going to segregate."—Judge.

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