SOME BACKGROUNDS OF NEWSPAPER FUNCTION

by

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University of Kansas, 1925.

Submitted to the Department of Journalism and the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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June, 1926.

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INTRODUCTION: THE PROBLEM STATED.

The term "function" has come to have a technical sense in sociology. Primarily it means action; but it includes a connotation of action definitely, but not necessarily consciously, directed toward an end. It is an outgrowth of the organic conception of human society, in the ideal form of which all persons "work together for good," each playing his part to the end that the whole has each of its wants served. As Cooley puts it, "In a truly organic life the individual is self-conscious and devoted to his own work, but feels himself and that work as part of a large and joyous whole."(1) In a footnote appended to the term, Professor Cooley says, "I make frequent use of this word to mean an activity which furthers some general interest of the social group. It differs from 'purpose' in not necessarily implying intention."(2) Adopting Cooley's distinction in terms, the aim of this thesis might be stated as the development of part of the background for a future study which would turn newspaper function into newspaper purpose by bringing the newspaper's function

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(1) Social Organization, p. 97.
(2) Ibid., p. 239.

into consciousness. Considering function as action, three questions might be posed concerning the function of the newspaper: I. What <u>does</u> the newspaper do? II. What <u>can</u> the newspaper do? III. What <u>should</u> the newspaper do? This inquiry deals primarily with the third question, secondarily with the second, and with the first only in so far as particular newspaper enterprises are used for illustrative purposes. That is to say, it is philosophic rather than scientific.

A complete definition, delimitation and description of the function of the newspaper as a social entity is probably beyond the capabilities of any one person. The problem involves too many abstractions and ramifications. The newspaper, particularly in the United States, has become a familiar object in the archaic sense of being a common object in family life. It has become one of those elements in our everyday life that, being well acquainted with, we are the most ignorant of. To say, then, that the aim of any study is to formulate a statement of the function of the newspaper is to say that the writer has embarked on an enterprise admitting of no ultimate conclusion. The whole problem is definitely within the realm of "vain philosophy"; yet is is withal a thoroughly

practical question that is posed. Though it is philosophical, it is philosophy of a highly pragmatic type, for upon the editor's purpose depends his selection and presentation of news. Various purposes have animated newspapermen in the past, prominent among them having been, on the one hand, the earning of a living, and, on the other, the leadership or control of the political opinions of the masses. Out of the functional concept of society there has grown a new attitude on the part of a few editors: that of serving an organic need of society and taking in return for this service a legitimate part of the social income. This ideal is still nebulous, and hardly visible among the older ideals of reaping personal profit in either money or political influence. Yet it is present in the minds of some leaders in the newspaper world today; and it is to this ideal of the newspaper as an organic part of the social machinery that this thesis has reference. The final question always in view has been, "What need of the society of today is met by the newspaper?"

The question at first had no verbal form. It was simply a half-conscious awareness that in writing and editing news something beyond the earning of a weekly pay check was in process. In the daily playing up of this event and toning down of that one, of giving detailed coverage to this and more or less desultory attention

to that, the question arose, "Just why such a selection and such an emphasis? What is the effect of this writing of words, and setting of type, and marking white paper with black ink?" Beneath the smooth surface of habitual routine stirred a vague uneasiness such as Professor Dewey tells us is the beginning of all thought. This study was the result of that half-conscious disquietude. As originally planned, it had a dual objective: first, a study of how well the small, community daily newspapers were fulfilling their function; second, a study of the possible remedies which might be applied in cases where such papers were not fully meeting the expectations of society. When work was started, however, it did not take long to find that before any study of the functioning of the newspaper would be possible it would first be necessary to formulate a statement of newspaper function. Next it became apparent that there were as yet no studies which even formed a basis for such a statement, that there were no established viewpoints from which the student might start. Hence what was finally developed, and what is presented here, is a pioneering effort. What has been done in effect is simply to say, "Here is the townsite; the marking of streets and building of buildings is left to those who may come after." Furthermore, just as in other

pioneering, the particular townsite marked out here may not be suitable for development. It is only one among many possible ones. To me it is the logical spot for building---every pioneer must believe in his own vision.

This thesis I regard as only one of the steps in a process having as its goal the formulation of a set of generalizations which the socially-minded newspaperman may use to guide himself in his selection and presentation of news. The completed group of studies would include:

1. A socio-moral interpretation of the function of the newspaper (Part of the background for which is presented here).

2. A statistical standard for newspaper success, based on the circulation of the newspaper as compared to the population available.

3. A comparison of typical newspapers on the basis of standards determined in "1" and "2."

4. The formulation of the set of generalizations mentioned above, having as background for the work the results found in "3."

The process would be much similar to the one used by the Bureau of Standards in formulating specifications,

as described by Chase and Schlink:

> When a given product is under consideration, the Bureau of Standards engineers first secure samples of all significant varieties in the field and subject them to rigid tests, in order to determine comparative quality. Thus they inform themselves as to the current status of the technical art covering that product. Next they go into the field of pure theory and ask: What is the highest quality obtainable; what is the perfect product; and what are the reasonable limitations that prevent attaining perfection in commercial manufacture? Then the engineers, in committees of the Federal Specifications Board, representing the Government's interest as a consumer as well as its technical experts, write a specification.(3)

In the field of journalism, the process of sampling and testing has been fairly well done in recent years by the critics of the newspaper who have done more than express in sweeping generalizations their petty annoyance at some particular incident. The matter of technique has been fairly well covered by now in the text books used by schools of journalism. The problem set in this thesis is, then, the groundwork preparatory to a theoretical statement of the qualities of the "perfect product," the newspaper which most capably performs those services which its nature best enables it to perform.

Any statement of theoretic perfection in any field is necessarily open to dispute, and for that reason some social philosophers have sought to leave out of account

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(3) Your Money's Worth, p. 62.

all ethical problems in an effort to make their field of study a science. This, I hold, is merely imitation of the ostrich. So long as the aim of science is control and prediction, the aim of social science must be the control of and prediction about the action of men; and just as long as human action is involved in a matter, discussion of ethics is pertinent, for ethical questions will creep into the field of discussion in disguise if they are not welcomed in their natural dress.(4) "The place of ethical ideals in sociological inquiry is an old subject of contention," as Professor Hobhouse says. Since it is hardly to be hoped that I shall be granted the privilege of saying the final word on the subject, I can do no better than quote that English sociologist:

> The good and the bad is one contrast, the real and the unreal another. About this controversy [concerning the place of ethics in sociology] two things are clear and certain. The first is that both methods of inquiry are perfectly natural and legitimate. ..... The second proposition which is equally clear is that they must not be confused. We must avoid thinking either that things happen because they are good, or are good because they happen. ..... When science and philosophy have both done their work, when we know the facts and have our values fixed, it is legitimate to compare the two results, and to ask how far, if at all, the facts conform to the standard which we have established. Upon this final question of supreme interest the scientific and philosophical methods converge. Both are thus not only legitimate but necessary to a completed sociology.(5)

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(4) This point is extensively developed by J. A. Hobson in his Free-Thought in the Social Sciences.

(5) Hobhouse, Social Development, pp. 91-2.

General and social psychology can tell the newspaperman much about the mechanism of his business---reader appeal, effect of pictures, large type, and so forth. Regarding the purposes for which those mechanical effects are to be employed, however, the individual newspaperman's philosophy or life is the sole guide. As one recent writer on social psychology has put it, "Psychology can indicate the mechanisms and resources; a social-moral conscience must set the course to be followed."(6)

Nor is an excursion into ethics of value only to the sociologist or other student of the newspaper. It has its value for the practicing journalist as well. The daily press is under indictment in the minds of numerous persons today. While it is true that decrying the press has been for centuries a favorite and relatively safe form of lion baiting, it is also true that today the newspaper is being weighed and found wanting by students of society who speak in reasoned terms and advance evidence to support their assertions. Silas Bent, who criticizes more understandingly than any other contemporary critic except Professor Robert E. Park, has occasion to warn the newspapers that they have abandoned the function upon which their constitutional freedom is based, and that "The extent to which it [the press] is conscious of its responsibility and

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(6) Arland D. Weeks, The Control of the Social Mind, p. 7.

acknowledges the bases of its privileges must finally determine whether it shall continue in the enjoyment of them."(7) In addition to these measured statements of the newspaper's shortcomings, there are current numerous revilings which may be traced primarily, I believe, to the former assumption of omnicompetence on the part of newspapermen, an assumption of "priesthood," as Bent calls it.(8) The holier-than-thou attitude once adopted by some journalists has resulted in a public reaction which denies to the newspaper any reason for existence; and that reaction can be met only by a sane statement of the function of the press and an earnest effort to perform that function satisfactorially. The newspaperman whose intentions are honest must have some conception of the part his instrument plays in human life before he can put his talents to the use he desires to make of them. His conscience in settling the problems he meets must have constant reference to a sound view of the newspaper's function. Therefore the present is an excellent time for finding what service the newspaper should render and what should be left to other agencies of communication and leadership. To do this completely is impossible. The best that can be hoped for is a blazing of the path for further study; and in the final analysis

(7) Ballyhoo, p. 271.
(8) Ibid., Ch. XIII.

the aim of this thesis becomes, not to solve a problem, but to raise one. The effort is not so much to draw any conclusions which may immediately be put to the test in practice as it is to determine the most promising roads along which further search may be conducted by critics of the press who are honest in their endeavors to serve society. If what is here written may be of service in limiting criticism and study of the newspaper to productive fields, its purpose will have been accomplished.

Ch. I. THE LITERATURE OF NEWSPAPER FUNCTION.

The terms used by various writers as synonymous with function, in the sense in which that term is used here, include: office (by far the most common), province, aim, business, duty, purpose, mission, responsibility, work, service, and object. "Function" is used here as being the least colorful, and therefore the most scientifically accurate term. "Aim" and "object" imply a secondary responsibility which confuses the issue. "Duty" and "mission" have a moral tinge which irritates the scientific mind; while "business" and "service" are likely to be disturbing to the poet. All of these terms, like all the statements in which they are included, tend to take too general a view of the subject. To be a missionary, for instance, is the business of the clergyman and the school teacher as well as of the journalist. "Business" and "service" are as necessary to the successful corner grocery as they are to the newspaper. The blanket indictment of most of what has been written about the office, or business,

or mission of the newspaper is that much of what is declared to be such office or business or mission is also the duty or aim of other social institutions. The press is an inclusive institution, and partakes of much of the nature of other institutions; but it has enough responsibility of its own without encroaching further than necessary on other fields. The press (a body of men set off from society to serve a specialized social need) is only one of the social institutions using the printing press (a mechanical device) for its instrument. Generalized discussions of the newspaper press in the past have tended to confuse the function of the newspaper with the other functions of the printing press. The limitations of the newspaper are what need particular attention just now; we have had enough of poetic laudations of the newspaper, and of criticisms whose burden is that the newspaper has failed to fulfill an ideal, but utterly unattainable, function.

The first impression of the student who begins a search for literature on this topic is that there is none. The only measured and consciously evolved statement with which I am acquainted is that presented by Professor Willard G. Bleyer in the final chapter of his Newspaper Writing and Editing. Continued search reveals the fact that numerous writers have discussed the subject, but only incidentally.

Except in rare cases, the office or function of the newspaper is not recognized to a sufficient extent to gain for it a place in index or table of contents. The remainder of the sources are simply passages occurring here and there in the literature of journalism and sociology. The most common source of information regarding contemporary writers' views of newspaper function is in comments praising or dispraising the newspaper. It follows that these statements are scattered, and that they are expressions of an habitual mode of thought rather than of the writer's conscious effort to formulate an expression of his views.

The literature of newspaper function, like all other kinds, has its curiousities, the outgivings of writers rabid or cynical, ecstatic or morbid. One such was written about 1858, when Lambert A. Wilmer, probably the most violent critic the newspapers ever have had, declared:

> The chief design of this work is to show that the newspaper press of America has mistaken its proper office and position. It should be a serviceable drudge---a modest, submissive, civil-speaking, unobtrusive lackey; not a supercilious, domineering, insolent, foul-mouthed major domo. In short, the press should be the people's most humble servant, and not their master."(1)

Cynicism is well represented by Harry Tammen, an

(1) Our Press Gang, p. 14.

associate of Fred G. Bonfils in publishing the Denver Post, "The newspaper," he says, "has to entertain people. Of course, we have to keep them informed, and now and then to expose something, thought half the time we may not know what we are talking about. But the main thing is entertaining after all."(2)

Such statements as Mr. Wilmer's and Mr. Tammen's may be passed by as interesting but irrelevant. There are plenty of well-balanced, considered statements. Of these, Professor Bleyer's is, as I have said, the most outstanding. He recognizes the multiple functions of the newspaper, and discusses in a temperate manner their relations with each other and with the life of society. Another of the same nature, but more concise, is that given by Manton Marble of the New York World in 1874:

> Is it not the proper aim of a public journal to get and publish all the news worth publicity, made intelligible by apt information therewith, instructive by philosophy of cause and consequence, conative by well uttered and iterated reasonings; thus, at least, a journalist might serve his fellowmen, and for service have sufficient reward.(3)

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(2) In an interview written by Carlos F. Hurd for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, quoted in Bent, Ballyhoo, p. 279.

(3) In Wingate, Views and Interviews on Journalism, pp. 220-1. It is unfortunate that Mr. Marble's conciseness of utterance was not accompanied by an equally skilled use of punctuation. The above is a correct transcription from Wingate.

Professor Charles A. Ellwood of the University of Missouri points out one of the limitations of the function of the newspaper when he says: "The process of public discussion may, of course, go on through various devices. It may go on largely through the press, especially through newspapers. It is usually more effective, however, when it goes on orally in face-to-face groups, such as public assemblies or discussion groups formed by friends and associates."(4)

The foregoing three statements recognize certain aspects of the question that are fundamental: that the newspaper has more than one function; that there are other social agencies serving similar ends; and that the newspaper is not an omnicompetent social force; in short, that the newspaper has a specific set of duties. The three examples quoted here are not meant to be taken as the only statements showing such moderation, but simply as typical of a class. The various shortcomings of other typical statements may be illustrated from other sources.

Radder holds that the newspaper has as a "legitimate duty" the "promotion of agriculture, business, better housing, health, schools, parks, playgrounds, and worthy community enterprises of every kind."(5) The news paper does

(4) The Psychology of Human Society, p. 227.
(5) Newspapers in Community Service, p. 198.

have this legitimate duty, but so, too, does government; and to a certain extent every institution, as well as every individual citizen, has such a duty.

The American Society of Newspaper Editors, in its code of ethics, holds that "The primary functionof newspapers is to communicate to the human race what its members do, feel and think." This is probably as definite a statement as could be passed by a large group, yet it might be the function of literature in general rather than of the newspaper in particular.

Dr. Washington Gladden once told the newspapermen of Kansas that their duty was "to generate and diffuse a sound, sweet, vigorous, generous, wholesome public opinion" and in that way "promote and advance the reign of the Republic of God on earth."(6) Promotion and advancement of the Kingdomof God is part of the business of a newspaper in a Christian country, but so is it also the business of clergymen and of individual Christians.

The late President Harding, in a letter to the Press Congress of the World in Hawaii in 1921, expressed belief that "the primary purpose of the press, as a social institution, is the opening of men's minds rather than the

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(6) "Tainted Journalism: Good and Bad," in Merle Thorpe's The Coming Newspaper, p. 33.

closing of them."(7) Such a theory applies as well to the school as to the newspaper.

Henry J. Raymond, publisher of the New York Times, once said, "I think it may be truly said the press, the free press, all over the world, has but one common mission---to elevate humanity."(8) That is, as well, the mission of humanity: to elevate itself.

All these statements have as their common error the confusing of general human aims with the aims of the newspaper. The truth that they speak is that the newspaper represents humanity in general, and that it is, in the words of William R. Nelson, "attorney for the men and women who pay it 10 cents a week."(9) The error that they contain is best expressed by the reductio ad absurdum, and it cannot be done better than it once was done by a newspaper columnist in a little skit, entitled "The New Solomon":

"A new arrival, a long-necked, lop-eared optimist, is starting a new weekly paper here," said the landlord of the Petunia tavern.
"What do you think of the outlook for its success?" asked the recently arrived guest.
"Well, in a 2-column salutatory in the first issue,

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(7) Williams, Walter (ed.), Press Congress of the World in Hawaii, p. 68.
(8) Quoted in Wingate, Views and Interviews on Journalism, pp. 74-5.
(9) Quoted by Hadder, Newspapers in Community Service, p. 153.

out yesterday, he threatens to elevate the manners and morals of the community, point us to a higher and better life, instruct us how to manage our farms and children and cultivate various crops and virtues, lead us politically, elucidate the burning questions of the day, regulate the solar system, the markets and the weather, prescribe for our ills, improve our architecture, refine our tastes, bend us in the way we ort to incline, and lead us whither we should go, all for a dollar and fifty cents a year. And probably he'll try to do it.(10)

In short, as Professor Park says, "..... the newspaper is an institution that is not yet fully understood. What it is, or seems to be, for any one of us at any time is determined by our differing points of view. As a matter of fact, we do not know much about the newspaper. It has never been studied."(11) To say that it has never been studied is not, however, to say that no one has ever expressed an opinion as to its function. On the contrary, they are numerous enough, once search has accumulated them. It is not lack of opinion regarding the function of the newspaper that is apparent from a search for statements. The paucity of extended discussions, presenting the basis on which the opinions have been formed, is what I have been noting here.

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(10) Starbeams, Kansas City Star, Oct. 11, 1926.

(11) The City, p. 83.

Ch. II. THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEWSPAPER.

"The press, as it exists, is not, as our moralists sometimes seem to assume, the wilful product of any little group of living men. On the contrary, it is the outcome of a historic process, in which many individuals participated without foreseeing what the ultimate product of their labors was to be." Robert E. Park, The City, p. 80.

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"For language is bound up with thought." Wilhelm Wundt, Elements of Folk Psychology, (Schaub translation), p. 53.

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"By communication is here meant the mechanism through which human relations exist and develop." Charles Horton Cooley, Social Organization, p. 61.

News spreading is among the oldest of arts. The first news story was told when some genius among man's ancestors first succeeded in indicating to his fellows the nature of an event which had occurred outside their immediate experience. Since that time refinements in news-telling have multiplied enormously, but the elementary nature of news has remained the same, at least insofar

as the elementary nature of man has not changed. When Andy Neanderthal described to Nancy Neanderthal how he had slain the deer on which they were feasting, a bit of routine news was told---and if he told it with a view to impressing her with the advantages she enjoyed through subjecting herself to his domination, a bit of Neanderthal propaganda was being set afloat. Nor was Andy Neanderthal doing anything original. News was already old in the world when he was born; for even before the accents of Neanderthalese were heard, gesture probably was playing a part in communicating news. News, and speech or gesture, began together, and we must go back to the dawn of man's life on earth to get a complete view of the part news has played in human existence. Nor can we know the significance of news unless we know the significance of conversation and of human intercommunication in general. To find news in its most elementary form will take us on a by-path; but the things we learn along that by-path will later be of value in our search for the newspaper's function, when we resume that search along the main road.

I. The Development of Human Speech and of News.

Considerable imagination is today necessary to allow one to picture a world from which abstract thought is absent, yet such a picture must be conjured up before we can realize the state of terrestrial life before language was evolved. The first human intercommunication was by means of gesture. "This mode of communication," says Wundt, "is not the result of intellectual reflection or conscious purposes, but of emotion and the involuntary expressive movements that accompany emotion. Indeed, it is simply a natural development of those expressive movements of human beings that also occur where the intention of communicating is obviously absent."(1)

Speech an Outgrowth of Action: The lack of intention to transfer thought or idea is the phase of the earliest form of communication which particularly interests us here. The first gestures and the first vocal cries were purely reflexive acts. They preceded consciousness, and were physiological rather than psychological in character. This aspect of the matter is stressed by Malinowski

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(1) Wundt, Elements of Folk Psychology, p. 60. In this and much of what follows my indebtedness to Wundt is so obvious as to require thanks rather than acknowledgement. My interpretation of his work, however, is made in the light of material presented by several others, notably Dewey, Mead and Malinowski.

in his study of the origin of meaning among primitive peoples. He says:

> The emission of inarticulate emotional sound and of articulate speech is a biological arrangement of enormous importance to the young and adult of the human species, and is rooted deeply in the instinctive and physiological arrangement of the human organism. Children, savages and civilised adults alike react with vocal expression to certain situations---whether these arouse bodily pain or mental anguish, fear or passion, intense curiosity or powerful joy.(2)

Gesture was at first simply action; and it was not until action was interpreted by others than the performer that the overt act became more and more attenuated until finally it came to be used solely and consciously to convey an idea. This phase of the matter is concisely expressed by Professor Mead when he declares that "the gesture itself is a syncopated act, one that has been cut short, a torso which conveys the emotional import of the act." He continues:

> Out of the emotional signification has grown the intellectual signification. It is evident that but for the original situation of social interaction the bodily and vocal gestures could never have attained their signification. It is their reference to other individuals that has turned expression, as a mere outflow of excitement, into meaning, and this meaning was the value of the act for the other individual, and his response to the expression of the emotion, in terms of another syncopated act,

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(2) "The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Language," in Ogden and Richards, The Meaning of Meaning, p. 483.

with its social signification, gave the first basis for communication, for common understanding, for the recognition of the attitudes which men mutually held toward each other within a field of social interaction. Attitudes had meaning when they reflected possible acts.(3)

Elsewhere Professor Mead says:

> The fundamental importance of gesture lies in the development of the consciousness of meaning---in reflective consciousness. As long as one individual responds simply to the gesture of another by the appropriate gesture [i.e., habitually or instinctively], there is no necessary consciousness of meaning. The situation is still on a level of that of two growling dogs walking around each other, with tense limbs, bristly hair and uncovered teeth. It isnot until an image arises of the response, which the gesture of one form will bring out in another, that a consciousness of meaning can attach to his own gestures. The meaning can appear only in imaging the consequence of the gesture. To cry out in fear is an immediate instinctive act, but to scream with an image of another individual turning an attentive ear, taking on a sympathetic expression and an attitude of coming to help, is at least a favorable condition for the development of a consciousness of meaning.(4)

As I interpret Professor Mead, what he is here insisting upon is, to state it concisely, that action and not consciousness is primary. It is thus an extension and amplification of Wundt's original theory.

Action Not a Synthesis, But a Psychological Whole: Another extension of the Wundtian theory which merits our attention is this: the action in which meaning originates

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(3) "Social Psychology as Counterpart to Physiological Psychology," The Psychological Bulletin, Vol. VI, No. 12. Dec. 15, 1909, pp. 406-7.

(4) "What Social Objects Must Psychology Presuppose?" The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods, Vol. VII, No. 7, March 31, 1910, p. 178.

is always a coherent whole; our philosophical distinctions between emotion and intelligence and volition come after the fact. As John Dewey says in discussing the James-Lange theory of emotion,

> ..... we have but the one organic pulse, the frightful bear, the frightened man, whose reality is the whole concrete co-ordination of eye--leg--heart, &c., activity, and ..... the distinction of cold intellectuality and warm emotionality is simply a functional distinction within this one whole of action. We take a certain phase which serves a certain end, namely, giving us information, and call that intellectual; we take another phase, having another end or value, that of excitement, and call that emotional. But does anyone suppose that, apart from our interpretation of values, there is one process in itself intellectual and another process in itself emotional?(5)

This insistence upon the primacy and unity of action is of supreme importance in a study of news, as I shall attempt to show later. Meanwhile we may examine another aspect of the genesis of speech which will be useful for our purposes.

Interpretation an Essential Part of Communication: Because communication originated in action, it follows that the possibility of communication is latent in all action and in any act, and that it needs only interpretation to bring out its significance. As Wundt says, "What is lacking [to make involuntary expression of emotion

(5) "The Significance of Emotions," Psychological Review, Vol. II, No. 1, p. 13.

into a means of communication] is only that the emotionally coloured idea be not a mere expression of one's own emotion, but that it evoke the same emotion and, through this, the same idea, in the minds of others."(6) This communicative power of action regardless of the intent of the actor to convey an idea is also of significance in studying news, and it also will be referred to later.

Communication Functions Chiefly in Non-Routine Social Situations: Still another phase of the Wundtian theory, the part which emotion plays, is also of use to us. It is noticeable that Wundt, Mead and Dewey all hold that communication originated in the expression of emotion.(7) In this they build both on Darwin's Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals and the James-Lange theory. Darwin seems to regard emotive expression as a conscious (and literal) expression of feeling, a view contradictory to the James-Lange theory. Dewey, however, has resolved this contradiction, and shows that the facial and bodily movements described by Darwin preceded the development of meaning: that language and expression

(6) Elements of Folk Psychology, p. 61. See also the quotations from Mead, supra., pp. 22-3.

(7) It is, of course, the physiological-psychological meaning of emotion that I refer to here, the change in heart-beat rate, visceral action in general, and their rise into consciousness.

grew out of these movements and out of the cries that accompanied them through interpretation of the cries and movements by other participants in the social situation where they occurred.(8) Now the point I wish to make is this. In routine (habitual) acts, emotion is at a minimum; hence there would be but little communication involved in any performance of a routine act or series of acts (Instinctive acts in the sense of those performed by the aid of fixed synaptic connections). From this it follows that the chief utility of communication is in meeting new situations; and this is another conclusion that should be useful in analyzing news. Connected closely with this is another conclusion: that communication is a social product and is useful only in a social situation. This, indeed, should be axiomatic, for the idea of transferring thought without the presence of at least two beings is beyond sense.

Summarizing briefly, we have in this short statement of the origin of the most primitive human intercommunication, brought out these concepts to be used later as tools in a study of news:

1. Human action preceded human consciousness (power of interpretation).

(8) John Dewey, "The Theory of Emotion," Psychological Review, Vol. I, No. 6, pp. 553-70, and Vol. II., No. 1, pp. 13-33.

2. Action is to be regarded as a whole rather than as a synthesis of parts.

3. Action has the power of becoming a means of communication regardless of the intent of the actor.

4. Communication plays its part chiefly in non-routine action.

5. Communication is useful only in social situations.

Primitive Language Concrete: Now we may proceed a bit further along this by-path we are travelling. Leaving the more or less speculative realm in which man's intelligence first dawns, we move to the surer ground of primitive language or highly developed gesture. The most striking characteristic of intercommunication at this stage of development is its concreteness. It is here that the circumlocutions described by Wundt are found. He mentions particularly the Togo negro expression of the concept "west" by the words "sun-sit-place," the place where the sun sits down.(9) Still better for our purpose is the case of the Australian Bushman, related by Wundt as follows:

> The meaning would be substantially this: 'The Bushman was at first received kindly by the white man in order that he might be brought to herd his sheep; then the white man maltreated the Bushamn; the latter ran away, whereupon the White man took another Bushman,

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(9) Elements of Folk Psychology, p. 71.

who suffered the same experience.' The language of the Bushmen expresses this in the following way: 'Bushman-there-go, here-run-to-white man, white man-give-tobacco, Bushman-go-smoke, go-fill-tobacco-pouch, white man-give-meat-Bushman, Bushman-go-eat-meat, stand-up-go-home, go happily, go-sit-down, herd-sheep-white man, white man-go-strike Bushman, Bushman-cry-loud-pain, Bushman-go-run-away-white man, white man-run-after-Bushman, Bushman-then-another, this one-herd-sheep, Bushman-all-gone.' In this complaint of the man of nature against his oppressor, everything is concrete, perceptual. He does not say, The Bushman was at first kindly taken up by the white man, but, The white man gives him tobacco, he fills his pouch and smokes; the white man gives him meat, he eats this and is happy, etc. He does not say, The white man maltreats the Bushman, but, He strikes him, the Bushman cries with pain, etc., ... His thought always attaches to individual objects. ..... The thinking itself, therefore, may be called concrete.(10)

The Bushman's story may be primitive in its phrasing, but it isnot awkward. Graphic is a better word. ("Bushman-cry-loud-pain," for instance). Its lack is in the nuances of thought which abstraction makes possible, not in its pictographic possibilities. It is reporting of the most concrete sort; and this concreteness will do its part in helping us to recognize news when we return to the main road of our inquiry. Meanwhile we must note another characteristic of primitive speech: its attention to the present.

Primitive Speech Deals Chiefly With the Present: Primitive man, it is believed, lived mostly in the sunlight or shadow of today, with little thought for the past or

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(10) Wundt, op. cit., p. 72.

the future. (The limitations of his language, indeed, reveal the limitations of his thought), and it follows as a corollary that his conversations were concerned mostly with current or very recent action. What he said had reference to here and now. This was even more true of the period when speech was forming than it was of the one we are now discussing, for, in Professor Mead's words, "The probable beginning of human communication was in co-operation, not in imitation, where conduct differed and yet where the act of the one answered to and called out the act of the other."(11) In other words, it began by dealing with the business in hand, today's business.

Thus we have developed three more concepts to take back to the highway with us:

1. Primitive conversation was concrete. It conveyed the nature of an action by describing seriatim the overt characteristics of the action rather than by giving the abstract term descriptive of such acts in general.

2. It dealt with current happenings, i.e., was timely.

3. It was directed to a purpose, i.e., had practical consequence in the life of the individual involved.

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(11) "Social Psychology as Counterpart to Physiological Psychology," Psychological Bulletin, Vol. VI, No. 12 (Dec. 15, 1909), p. 406.

The Speech of Action Older than Philosophy: Next we come to a stage in the development of primitive language where the conceptual tools we are to collect must be used negatively; that is, we have arrived at the point in the evolution of culture where language and communication begin to differentiate, and we must attempt to point out those new developments which lead away from the essentially newsy character of primordial conversation. According to Wundt, two sorts of ideas may be distinguished in the content of primitive thought:

> The one comprises that stock of ideas which is supplied to consciousness by the direct perceptions of daily life---such ideas as go, stand, lie, rest, etc., together with animal, tree, (particularly in the form of individual animals and trees), man, woman, child, I, thou, you, and many others. These are objects of everyday perception that are familiar to all, even to the primitive mind. But there is also a second class of ideas. These do not represent things of immediate perception; briefly expressed, they originate in feeling, in emotional processes which are projected outward into the environment. ..... This world of imagination, projected from man's own emotional life into external phenomena, is what we mean by mythological thinking.(12)

Professor Malinowski expresses the same idea more concisely in this way: "Before the earliest philosophical speculation sets in, there emerges the practise and theory of magic, ... "(13) H. G. Wells strikes the distinction

(12) Elements of Folk Psychology, p. 74.
(13) Op. Cit., p. 490.

between the two kinds of communication when he says, "At Solutré in France there are traces of a great camping and feasting place. There was no doubt an exchange of news there, but one may doubt if there was anything like an exchange of ideas."(14) In his use of the words "news" and "ideas" Mr. Wells makes clear the point I am developing: that when man first began to talk and to think about life rather than the incidents of life, a subject of communication that had not the characteristics of news was first appearing. The fetish of the medicine man was protection against all evils, or all of a certain class of evils, as well as a protection against one specific type of evil. Homer's heroes were representations of all of a certain type of men, not of any particular man. Ulysses embodied all the virtues of many men. But while mythology and folklore were developing, the concrete, immediately useful type of speech did not languish. It remained basically the same as it had been originally; and, again to quote Malinowski, "We have to realize that language originally, among primitive, non-civilised peoples was never used as a mere mirror of reflected thought. ..... In its primitive uses, language functions as a link in concerted

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(14) Outline of History, p. 94.

human activity, as a piece of human behavior. It is a mode of action and not an instrument of reflection."(15) (Italics mine).

Though folklore and mythology were the forerunners of the material which today enters into conversation and other forms of communication, but is not news, the distinction did not become clear at once---Homer was partly war correspondent and partly philosopher---but it became clearer as the years passed. The story of the further differentiations falls under the head of the development of writing, for Greek mythology and Hebrew folklore, both representative of the transition period, have existed until today, saved through the art of representing vocal signs by written and printed signs. To that art we now turn; and in doing so we shall again be back on the main highway, for written communication contains the germ of the newspaper, just as oral communication contains the germ of news. As we leave the by-path a final glance backward shows us news as the most primitive content of communication, its aim being to present changes in the situation as they occur, and to present those changes in the situation in all the concreteness of their actuality. It endeavors to show the situation as a whole, without

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(15) Op. cit., p. 474.

taking from it for special emphasis and study the intellectual element (which is for science to do), nor the emotional element, which is the task of art. It is not study, but transference of experience that is the immediate and primary aim of news. Its effort is to show the situation as a concrete reality, without reference to the abstractions which might be made. That is, news is here seen as the nearest approach possible to a direct reproduction of sense experience that any method of intercommunication can produce.

II. The Development of Writing, and of the News-Letter.

The history of the newspaper (as distinguished from news) may be divided into two periods: the first extending from the beginning of written communication to about 1600, the second from the invention of printing to the present day. Any division is necessarily arbitrary, and the overlapping in the one presented here is accounted for by the fact that printing was not used for periodicals of any kind until about 1600. A third period, from 1835 to the present, might be marked off as characterized by the development of electrical and mechanical communication; but it is better considered as a subdivision of the second period, for printing is still the great mode of exchange of thought today and the telegraph, telephone, and so forth, supplementary to it.

The outstanding change in news that occurs during the first of these two periods is its change in scope, and this change is due to the broadening of human views which writing brought about. The power of intercommunication affects human life in two ways: it allows information to pass from generation to generation, and so accumulate; and it allows information to pass from person to person of the same generation, permitting specialization and interchange of knowledge and experience. Writing came as an extension of speech, and written communication displays all the varieties of content that are shown by speech. Its great advantage was in its accuracy and permanence. As long as folklore passed from generation to generation through word of mouth it remained folklore. Written, it became history. Mythology through writing gradually became science, philosophy and theology. The vocal instructions in how to hew a log canoe which a father gave to his son became the basis of a trade when communication took written form.

Public News Becomes Differentiated: Since writing was an extension of what had gone before, rather than something basically different, and since the history of written communication is more a matter of general knowledge, it need be dealt with here only in its implications

for the newspaper. The chief advantage which writing gave to mankind was the ability to extend organized undertakings. The news in speech had reference mostly to efforts confined within a family or tribal group. When news could be written, nations and commercial corporations were possible. The phonetic alphabet, it will be remembered, was developed by a nation of traders for use in their commerce. Yet even in the time of the Phoenecians, current information was limited to a more or less select circle, and it was not until the rise of the Roman Empire that news of the kind we find in the newspaper today first appeared. It had its genesis in the growth of a public which had interests beyond its own city. Publics there had been in Greece, but their interest had been so limited in extent that information available within the city walls usually served their need. But when Caesar was warring in territory far from Rome, the residents of the Eternal City wanted reports of the progress of their armies. The Acta Diurna resulted. That relation of events, we may be sure, was far from being like a newspaper of modern times; yet it contained the germ of today's newspaper. It dealt with current activity transpiring outside the ordinary citizen's range of observation, but of interest to him. The events

related in the Acta Diurna were those that interested the general populace; news of less public import or interest was dealt with in written communications addressed to individual influential Romans.

News Transmission Begins to Be Organized: So here in Rome we find the beginnings of organized dissemination of general news. Before writing came to be used for news it had been a desultory affair. Even after printing was invented the itinerant ballad singer (who was a news vendor of a sort) continued to find a living. So we cannot cite any particular date when the relating of news became a specialized occupation. Yet we know that it did, and that by 1600 in England the business of writing news-letters to country gentlemen from London was a recognized if not particularly respected way of earning a living. A contemporary says of one of these writers of news, "He is the citizen's harbinger and saveth him the labour of walking on the 'change to hear the news."(16) In that sentence we get a glimpse of the need these news-writers were fulfilling. Before their time the citizen was forced to secure his information haphazardly by word of mouth. After they appeared he could secure it regularly at a minimum of personal exertion. It was simply one more case

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(16) Quoted in Williams, A History of English Journalism, p. 49.

of the division of labor that was becoming noticeable in western civilization. But even then not all the news transmitted by writing was carried through well-organized channels. J. B. Williams points out that "No great exercise of the imagination is needed, to explain how letters from friends and relatives, in days before printing had been invented, would be supplemented by detailed accounts of the events of the day, sent first of all by the retainer of the great noble or the influential statesman or churchman, and lastly, as facilities of communication increased and roads and posts were improved, by the professional writer of news."(17)

Organization Brings Differentiation: In all this we can see the content of communications gradually differentiating in kind, yet all serving a common purpose. Information was wanted at a distance from its source, and this want could be supplied only through the medium of writing. Letters containing information of interest to more than one person were probably read aloud, or passed from hand to hand. Information of a general interest passed by word of mouth from the recipient of the letter to others. Possibly a town crier called the news for

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(17) J. B. Williams, op. cit., p. 1.

everyone to hear. But there was a lack. Communication between cities could be accomplished by letter; spreading the content of those letters as received to the members of a particular community was still accomplished haphazardly by word of mouth. As cities increased in size, this method became more and more difficult; and before 1600 the news-letters, in addition to being sent to country gentlemen, found a sale within the city of London amongst those who did not care to "walk on 'change" to get their news. Printing had been introduced in England about 1470, but it was unavailable as a means of disseminating news because of heavy governmental restrictions on the use of presses. By 1600, however, the conditions propituous for establishment of regular trafficking in news were prepared. The instrument was at hand in the printing press, population had reached a point where some division of labor was desirable, and posts had been established to carry written communications. The printed newsletter was the next logical step, and only a temporary relaxation of governmental vigilence was necessary to lead to its establishment. What happened then can be better dealt with in a separate section. Before passing to that, however, we must take a brief look backward to note that the outstanding developments during the era of written

communication were the growth of a distinction between public and private news, and the development of an organized, commercial method of disseminating the former variety of current information.

III. The Development of Printing, and of the Newspaper.

Organization implies specialization; and it is specialization and differentiation that particularly characterize the period since Gutenberg first used his movable types to expedite the multiplication of writing. The organization which was begun when, about 1600, in England, Nathaniel Butter and others made a vocation of securing and writing news, has today developed to a point where an exhaustive study of the specialized forms of printed matter would require a large volume for its presentation. Our present task is to pick out from this mass the particular place taken by the daily newspaper of today; hence what follows is only a review of the historical rise of printing as applied to the newspaper in particular and periodical literature in general. The past three and a half centuries of the development of printed newspapers may be divided into a series of seven periods, each of which is marked with some development of significance in

the study of today's newspaper. Before proceeding, however, a caveat must be entered: it is not to be assumed that in what follows the particular aspect of communication stressed is an absolute development of the period under consideration. The growth of the newspaper has been a coherent, natural one, and any splitting into periods of development is an artificiality, true only because useful to the purpose at hand. With this warning sounded, the division adopted here may be detailed:

I. 1450-1622. Periodical literature first appears on the continent of Europe.

II. 1622-1700. Periodicals find their first growth in England, and the first branching out into distinct functions may be seen beginning.

III. 1700-1783. Periodical literature begins in the United States, and the most disputed function of the newspaper, its political leadership, first appears.

IV. 1783-1810. The organized political leadership of the periodical press in the United States reaches its highest development.

V. 1810-1850. The political aspects of the newspaper press are subordinated to another function, that of giving the news; and other periodical productions of the printing machine gain prominence.

VI. 1850-1880. The characteristics of the news

function become set, and advertising appears on the horizon as a new function.

VII. 1880-1928. Entertainment develops as the newest function of the newspaper. Specialization within the newspaper appears. Organization the keynote.

Just as man's body contains an appendix and tonsils, vestiges of previous stages in his development, the newspaper today contains within itself evidence of its growth. Each of the above periods has left its mark upon the daily which is delivered to the reader each morning or evening.

1450-1622: Periodical Books Appear: Since Germany was the scene of Gutenberg's labor, it is not strange that his process developed first in that region. Therefore one is not surprised to find Nuremberg becoming the center from which annual or semi-annual "relations" of events were distributed throughout Europe. That city, a commercial center of the time, is, as Hudson says, "manifestly the spot where a newspaper would first appear and be appreciated."(18) Nor is it without significance that other authorities wouldhave Venice as the birthplace of printed recitals of recent happenings.

(18) Journalism in the United States, p. xxxi.

Where men's minds were active, the material for thought was in demand. That the England of Elizabeth's time did not produce a periodical is probably due rather to the temper of the rulers than to that of the people. According to Green, "From the moment when printing began to tell on public opinion, it had been gagged by a system of licenses. The regulations framed under Henry the Eighth subjected the press to the control of the Star Chamber, and the Martin Marprelate libels brought about a yet more stringent control under Elizabeth."(19) The English Mercurie purported to have been published by Lord Burleigh in 1588 has been shown to be a forgery, though his lordship, as one writer points out, "had missed his opportunity, and neglected to use the most powerful means for exciting the patriotism or allaying the fears of his countrymen."(20) Yet England in the sixteenth century was not without her news, despite the restrictions on printing which the crown had placed. Wandering ballad singers told in verse the story of a battle or a hanging, and later sold broadsides printed with their recitatives.(21)

(19) Short History of the English People, p. 662.
(20) Mason Jackson, The Pictorial Press, p. 6.
(21) J. B. Williams, op. cit., p. 4.

Nor were these printed ballads the only news vehicles, despite the court's ban. The people of England were awakening, and their demand for information was met surreptitiously. It was concrete fact that was wanted, and, as Jackson tells us, "many of the productions of the press assumed the character of news to attract readers. Sermons, satires, and travels were all put forward under the name of news, and sometimes a single grain of truth was deemed sufficient to leaven a whole bushel of fiction."(22) Such fly-by-night publications (we might call them print-and-run publications) could escape the wrath of the king's officers, but the transmitting of information from any office regularly known to the public was still limited to news-letters which were suffered to exist because only the upper classes could afford them. Yet the Continental "relations,"---annual and semi-annual, and more like an almanac than anything else we have today---found distribution in England.

Such were conditions in the latter sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Sermons, ballads and narratives all

(22) The Pictorial Press, p. 6. Increase Mather's Remarkable Providences is probably much similar to these productions. It relates the stories of narrow escapes from death in New England's history, and points a moral to each. It was first published in 1684.

had a thread of news running through them; but all printed matter was yet just that and nothing more. Broadly, the only distinction between different productions of the press, in either format or function, was that between the books being turned out by Caxton and his followers on the one hand, and the pamphlets, "bookes of newes," "relations," and broadsheet ballads on the other. The earliest hall-mark of the newspaper, regularity of publication, had made its appearance on the Continent, but not in England. It was not until 1622 that the first periodical left an English press.

Meanwhile another event had occurred, and we must digress for a moment to take note of a development of the times which then had no connection with printing, but was later to play a large part in the growth of the newspaper. On March fifth, 1611, the first application for a patent on an advertising office recited that all trade and commerce consisted "eyther in buying or selling or borrowing or lending. And for that a great defect is daily found in the policie of our state for want of some good and trusty and ready means of intelligence and intercourse between our said subjects in that behalf."(23) The applicants

(23) Quoted in J. B. Williams, op. cit., p. 159.

desired to establish, not a printed advertising sheet, but an office where employer and employee, borrower and lender, might meet. Type did not come to play a part in this process until later; but the application is significant because it shows that advertising is but a specialized form of communication, that it arose in answer to a need.

1622-1700; "The Press" Appears in England: The only difference between the first periodical and what had gone before was in the publisher's intention of producing an issue each week. Not even a continuous title did this first periodical have, for, like preceding newsbooks, its title was changed with each issue, and played the part that the headline does today.(24) The "current of general newes," as it was called, was dated May 14th, 1622, on its first issue. It dealt with foreign news only, nor was a periodical of domestic news circulated, legally, in England until two decades later. Its content was translated from the foreign "relations," or "corantos," which were imported into England. The title, I believe, is significant. Though I cannot know just what its author meant

(24) J. B. Williams, op. cit., pp. 6 and 13.

by the qualification, "general," I am inclined to think that he was making the distinction between kinds of news I pointed out in connection with the Roman Acta Diurna, that is, a distinction between news of interest to only a few persons and that of interest to all. The written news-letters, because they were indited particularly for country nobles or for statesmen absent from the capital, were certain to have dealt especially with events of interest to the audience for which they designed. "General newes," on the other hand, must have been descriptive of relations of events that for one reason or another would be of interest generally, that is, to all persons. The newsbooks and corantos partook more of the entertaining nature of the ballad which preceded them than did the news-letters, and hence could find a wider audience. In short, information of a sort was reaching a class of persons who had never been reached before.

In 1624, an application was made for license to print domestic news, the applicant holding that in case of "any revolt or backsliding in matter of religion or obedience (which commonly grows upon rumours among the vulgar)" his publication could "draw them in by such lines

that drew such out by speeding amongst them such reports as may best make for that matter to which they never would have been drawn." In spite of this prospect, however, the application was not granted.(25) Meanwhile, another periodical had been established under the name of Mercurius Brittannicus (the first instance of a name applied to consecutive issues); and in this appeared on February 1, 1625/6 the first advertisement, "an isolated instance twenty-two years before the introduction of newsbook advertising."(26) Thus was the scene laid for the development that was to come in 1640, when the Parliament, fighting against King Charles I, opened its proceedings to publication in order to strenghten its hand with the people. Immediately Parliament took this step, periodicals of domestic news sprang up like weeds over night. The people began to use the weapon offered to James just before his death; and to offset this advantage the Royalists were forced to resort to printing. Devoted as they were to controversy, these Mercuries, Parliamentary and Royalist, left the old basic need for information unfilled,

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(25) J. B. Williams, op. cit., pp. 23-4.
(26) Ibid., p. 26.

and the news-letter flourished alongside of the controversial periodicals. Nor did Cromwell's accession to power in 1652 better matters. By 1655 he had found the Royalist sheets too aggressive, and from then until 1696, when Parliament refused to pass a bill renewing the licensing of the press, the printed news periodical lost its power as a political factor. Neither did the Royalists, at the Restoration in 1660, free the press. On the contrary, they not only required license to print but also used another weapon, a ban placed on the publication of Parliamentary transaction. By a careful exclusion of news writers from Parliament, the information which readers chiefly wanted was denied, and this probably had as much effect in preventing dissemination of news as did the refusal of licenses.(27) Nevertheless, the power of the press had been demonstrated, and the court sought to turn it to advantage. Though not all could print when they pleased, one Henry Muddiman in 1665 was given the privilege of circulating an official court record, known as the Oxford Gazette, which later became known as the London Gazette and continues today to be the official

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(27) J. B. Williams, op. cit., p. 10.

organ of the English king, and which was the first to be called newspaper. Williams goes into the etymology of this word rather extensively.(28) In format the Gazette was neither a pamphlet, like the newsbooks, nor a sheet, like the news-letters and ballads, and so came to be called a newspaper as a matter of convenience. In June, 1666, Muddiman made a distinction in kinds of content when he said that advertisements were not the business of a "paper of intelligence,"(29) and to see the import of his remark we must look backward about twenty years, for there had appeared during the interim another use for printing.

The isolated instance of advertising which Mercurius Brittannicus had carried was one of those swallows which do not make a summer, for the second did not appear until April 2, 1647.(30) During the year 1649, however, Williams tells us, "advertisements became universal in the newsbooks; but they were confined to books, an occasional quack medicine, runaway servants and apprentices, and things lost or stolen---especially horses." He adds, "For other purposes advertising offices were used, and it is clear that

(28) J. B. Williams, op. cit., pp. 7-8.
(29) Ibid., p. 198.
(30) Ibid., p. 102.

the author of a newsbook did not desire too many advertisements for fear of being accused of 'bumbasting it out.' [I.e., using advertisements to "pad" his work]."(31) The advertising offices laterpublished sheets of their own (1657), and about 1670 there appeared in London "advertisement papers distributed gratis."(32) Thus it is apparent that, while the news-letters were still chiefly employed to distribute current information, printed literature was beginning to show signs of having specialized functions. Nor were these specialties limited for long to being either the organ of government or an accessory to an advertising office. Bleyer notes that "A popular innovation in journalism was introduced in March, 1689/90, by John Dunton, a London bookseller, when he began the Athenian Mercury, a weekly publication devoted to questions asked by readers and answered by the editors," and that "The first periodical for women, the Ladies Mercury, (1693), consisted entirely of questions and answers concerning love, courtship, and marriage."(33) These, the forerunners of the literary periodical of today, soon had followers.

(31) J. B. Williams, op. cit., p. 165.
(32) Ibid., pp. 167 and 184.
(33) History of American Journalism, pp. 15 and 16.

Yet even they were not always distinct in kind from news periodicals, as may be seen by the full title of The Gentleman's Magazine (published in the next century), which was, "The Gentleman's Magazine, or Monthly Intelligencer, containing Essays, Controversial, Humorous, and Satirical; Religious, Moral and Political; collected chiefly from the Publick Papers. Select Pieces of Poetry. A Succint Account of the Most Remarkable Transactions and Events, Foreign and Domestick. Births, Marriages, Deaths, Promotions and Bankrupts. The Prices of Goods and Stocks, and Bill of Mortality. A Register of Books. Obersvations on Gardening."(34) That the essays were "collected chiefly from the Publick Papers" indicates the narrow and almost non-existent line between the newspaper and the magazine.

And now, having come down to the eighteenth century, we may as well take a peep at some of the developments in England early in that century. Six years after Parliament, under William, had "rejected a proposal, never henceforth to be revived, for a censorship of the press,"(35) the first daily paper was established in England (1702). The editor (a woman, by the way) announced in the first number

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(34) Quoted by Mason Jackson, The Pictorial Press, p. 215.

(35) J. R. Green, Short History of the English People, p. 700.

that "at the beginning of each Article he will quote the Foreign Paper from whence 'tis taken, that the Publick, seeing from what Country a piece of News comes with the Allowance of that Government, may be better able to Judge of the Credibility and Fairness of the Relation" and that he would not "take upon him to give any Comments or Conjectures of his own, but will relate only Matter of Fact; supposing other People to have Sense enough to make Reflections for themselves."(36) Some years later appeared the Tatler and Spectator, which in addition to being a development of the English essay were also of the nature of newspaper editorials,(37) though it is not clear that the editorial had not had a place in newsbooks before that time, for Williams declares that in 1648 leading articles "For a long time past had formed a feature of other newsbooks."(38) Further research on the subject is needed, but in lieu of it I would suggest that any clear distinction between news articles and leading articles was unknown until even later than the time of Addison and Steele. This lack of a clear-cut distinction of function is characteristic

(36) W. G. Bleyer, History of American Journalism, p. 16.
(37) Ibid., p. 19.
(38) Op. cit., p. 102.

of the age; and that may well be the note on which this section ends. Speaking generally, the seventeenth century in England saw the genesis of nearly every aspect of periodical printing known today, but the development of none. We find news, advertisements, political leadership and entertainment mixed in one grand hodge-podge; and in America, to which we next turn our attention, it is not until many years later than this that any effort is made to assign each its place.

1700-1783; Colonial Newspaper Appears: The first development of newspapers in the American colonies recapitulated in some degree that of the preceding century in England. Benjamin Harris' abortive attempt to establish a newspaper is reminiscent of 1622, for it is doubtful that his sheet would have been suppressed if he had confined himself to relating foreign news. Campbell, the Boston Postmaster, had been a writer of news-letters like Butter, before he started his printed News-Letter, in 1704,; and, like Buddiman, he survived by grace of relating only official news. The trial of John Peter Zenger in New York in 1735 may be likened to Parliament's permission to print given in 1641; for the issue at

stake was the right of the people against an arbitrary ruler, and Andrew Hamilton's defense of Zenger was an appeal to the power of an aroused populace rather than to the sober rules of law. Only one other paper before 1755 is of particular interest here: James Franklin's New-England Courant. This paper, in addition to being the first established in avowed opposition to the leaders of opinion,(39) was also the first "to introduce into journalism that versatility which now began to create something of a public demand for this weekly vehicle of intelligence."(40) That there had been no public demand before is clear from Campbell's reiterated wails concerning lack of support. The reason for this non-appreciation lay in the times as much as in Campbell's dullness. North sums the matter up in a paragraph:

> Neither the times nor the people were well adapted to the creation of a new want of this character. The settlers had lived along without newspapers, and continued to so live after the latter were at hand. There were few stirring events going on in their own midst of which they required the periodical chronicle, and the news from England and Europe interested them only in a general way, and therefore they were content to know it by word of mouth,

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(39) W. G. Bleyer, History of American Journalism, p. 52.

(40) S. N. D. North, History of the Newspaper and Periodical Press of the United States, pp. 13-4.

at second or third hand, whenever it should happen to fall to their lot to hear it. The newspaper was of no aid to them in their respective business, and there was not the remotest probability of the News-Letter containing any first announcement of an event which affected the value of their properties, or even worked a rise or fall in the market.(41)

About 1750 this condition began to be changed. In the following years "taxation without representation" aroused in the colonies an increasing body of opinion. That opinion found its mouthpiece in the Boston Gazette, which was established in 1755 with Samuel Adams and his "Sons of Liberty" as the mind behind it. Isaiah Thomas founded his Massachusetts Spy in 1770, having as his aim the presentation of communications from either side, but the Loyalists soon refused to write for his paper and before long it had become known as an organ of revolt. The Loyalists had a few sheets to voice their opinion, too; yet of the 37 papers published in 1775(42) only a few were outspoken on either side, and their voice was that of some political leader, not of an editor. The pamphlet was still the main weapon of a political dispute(43), and life in the colonies was

(41) North, History, p. 13.

(42) Isaiah Thomas, History of Printing in America, Vol. II, pp. 294-5.

(43) Moses Coit Taylor, in his Literary History of the American Revolution, classes the pamphlet as the "supreme" literary political force before the Revolution. (Vol. I, p. 17).

still so simple that news travelled faster by word of mouth or by personal letter than it did by the weekly press. Furthermore, despite Andrew Hamilton, the printer of a paper required real courage to publish material designed to advance the colonial interests. The colonists were still under English law, and it was not until 1792, after the Revolution, that Fox's libel act gave English citizens liberty to criticize freely without danger of imprisonment. Nor was the circulation of newspapers then great enough to have allowed them any enormous effect, for only about 25,000 copies were issued weekly among a population of 2,800,000.(44)

1783-1810; The Party Press in the United States: It seems fair to say that, so far as the newspaper is concerned, the period preceding the Revolution was one of germination rather than of growth. But it was a vigorous germination; and removal of the restrictions of England's ancient law allowed the young plant to shoot up rapidly. By 1800, there were existing, to Isaiah Thomas' knowledge, 150 papers; and in the next decade these more than doubled,

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(44) Estimated by North, op. cit., p. 27.

to 366.(45) Of these latter, 27 were dailies, the first having been established in Philadelphia in 1784. The idea of daily publication was nothing particularly new. The advantage of furnishing information more thanonce a week had been seen by Franklin as early as 1729, but he had been forced by lack of patronage to abandon semi-weekly publication of his Pennsylvania Gazette. When the first daily did appear in 1784, it was "evidently in response to a large increase in the advertisements," says Payne, "for in the first issue of this new daily there were plenty of advertisements but not a single line of comment to indicate that the founders of the first daily newspaper on the American continent were aware that they were embarking on a most interesting and historic undertaking."(46) But it was not this commercial side of the newspaper that created the enormous increase in numbers. North best summarizes that aspect of the period when he says:

> With the establishment of independence and the prolonged and excited discussion which preceded the adoption of the federal Constitution the people of the United States divided quickly into groups upon issues which concerned altogether their own internal affairs, and

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(45) Thomas, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 9.
(46) History of Journalism in the United States, pp. 144-5.

engrossed the public mind in controversies, soon to become warm, which everywhere demanded methods of public expression and intercommunication. To this political stimulus may be directly traced the immediate multiplication of newspapers, and the fact that they rapidly attained a degree of influence hitherto unknown in America, and probably not previously paralleled in the world. ..... The neutral and colorless journal, which had been so frequent before the revolution and during its progress, almost entirely disappeared, and of the three hundred and sixty-two papers which Thomas found in existence in 1810 all but seventeen were classified by him as attached to either the federalist or the republican party, most of the exceptions being either agricultural journals or periodicals of a literary character.(47)

The change of editorial attitude is traced by this same writer through the changes in names given newspapers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Beginning with Gazette, to denote the official character of the sheet, or Mercury, following the English custom of a century before, the names adopted, particularly after 1783, were more likely to be Democrat, Republican, Whig, Constitutionalist, Federalist, and so forth.(48) Hudson, discussing the newspapers of the period, apologizes for wandering from his subject by saying, "It is not our intention to go into the political history of New York, but simply to show the reasons for changes in the management and in the politics of newspapers, and for the establishment of

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(47) Op. cit., p. 31.
(48) North, Op. cit., p. 131.

new party organs."(49) Thus the newspapers of the period were coming to represent the popular interest of the times---politics, just then. The American people, having thrown off the rule of England, had to devise and put into operation a new plan of government; and it is not suprising that the newspaper, for the first time entirely free, paid more attention to political matters than to others. Another problem of the era was the establishment of American commerce, and to this also the newspaper of the times applied itself. Indeed, the two problems were really one. It was for the commercial mind that the newspapers of the time were chiefly published, as is apparent in Allan Nevins' interesting story of the growth of the New York Evening Post. As Mr. Nevins himself says in one place, " ..... it was not the mass of poor voters on which a six-penny journal like the Evening Post relied for sustenance, but upon the professional and business men."(50) The Alien and Sedition laws, and the embargo act, were commercial as well as political matters. The press was spreading its influence to the commercial middle class. The next step came in 1833-5 when Day's Sun and Bennett's Herald found a new field for circulation.

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(49) Journalism in the United States, p. 313.
(50) The Evening Post, p. 149.

1810-1850; The Press Becomes Specialized: When Thomas found seventeen publications in the United States in 1810 not devoted to politics he was noting a phenomenon the rapid increase of which marks the period we havenow arrived at. Since commerce, next to politics, was the chief public interest, it was not surprising to find in 1795 a paper established particularly to serve that interest. It was the Boston Prices Current and Marine Intelligencer, Commercial and Mercantile. But this paper was a bit ahead of its times. "In 1798," says Hudson, "it embraced politics. In 1800 its name was changed to that of the Boston Gazette, and became a general newspaper."(51) The first purely commercial journal to establish itself permanently seems to have been the New Orleans Prices Current, in 1822. Before that time the American Farmer began to publish in Baltimore (1818), and the Boston

(51) Op. cit., p. 335. Hudson is authority for the date of establishment of each special type of periodical as given in what follows. His dates are those of the establishment of periodicals existing when he wrote in 1872, rather than of the first attempt to establish specialized journals regardless of the success of the venture. William Nelson, in his History of the American Newspaper, notices the establishment in Boston of 1743 a weekly magazine, a monthly magazine, and a religious paper, none of which lasted beyond its fourth year. (p. 258). Thomas in 1810 listed 27 "magazines and other periodical works," including five religious, two "medical and philosophical," and one law journals.(Vol. II, pp. 292-3).

Recorder was established as a religious journal (1816). In 1827 the Ladies Magazine, forerunner of the famed Godey's Lady's Book, was brought out. In 1831 a sporting paper modelled on the London Bell's Life appeared. There had been some literary magazines of a sort previously. In short, new periodicals now began to assume some of the functions once performed by the weekly newspaper. And not only were some of the functions once performed indiscriminately by pamphlet or newspaper becoming organized, but within the newspaper itself there were signs that a new age was approaching. Judge John Bouvier in 1814, in the prospectus of his Brownsville (Pa.) American Telegraph, promised to "discountenance all factions and factious men,"(52) and the same editor is credited with having been, if not the first, at least almost the first, to introduce the editorial as a distinct and separate section of the paper.(53)

(52) Hudson, op. cit., p. 306.

(53) Ibid., p. 307. William Nelson, in his paper, "The American Newspaper of the Eighteenth Century as A Source of History," has this to say on the subject: "The editorial, heretofore practically unknown, now [late in Washington's and during the Adams administration] gradually made its appearance, at first in the shape of a modest paragraph, suggesting some course of action, or criticizing what had already been done or proposed."(Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1908, Vol. I, p. 221).

Before that time it is hard to say whether the papers had been all editorial (in the sense of opinion), but it is certain that they had not been all news. It is, also, equally certain that the opinions had not been those of the editor; but were those of political leaders or others especially written for the printer of the paper. Most newspapers remained throughout the eighteenth century what one historian says they were at the beginning, "bulletin boards on which were plastered the political arguments or purposes of factions and parties."(54) Speaking broadly, the newspaper up to about 1820 had been an instrument by which men sought either to lead other men or to make a living by printing other men's opinions together with such news as happened to be convenient, with the chief emphasis on the former. The Era of Good Feeling brought a lapse in the use of the newspaper as a means of political leadership, and its use for printing news consequently gained in importance. It remained for James Gordon Bennet, in 1835, to set the precedent of printing news solely for the sake of a living by its publication. Two years before the advent of Bennett's Herald, the Sun had sounded the keynote when it declared in its first

(54) C. H. Levermore, "The Rise of Metropolitan Journalism," American Historical Review, Vol. VI, p. 447.

issue, "The object of this paper is to lay before the public, at a price within the means of everyone, all the news of the day, and at the same time afford an advantageous medium for advertising."(55)

The Sun was the first successful penny paper in New York, and in its price we see reflected the culmination of a movement which began when Gutenberg pulled the first impression from his movable types, the cheapening and wide distribution of the written word. In 1450 writing meant little to the world. It was beyond the price of the many, and consequently beyond their comprehension. Four centuries later Benjamin H. Day, the Sun's publisher, was aiming to reach all the people. Even in 1828, as a publisher's trade paper remarked recently, "the newspaper was not for, of or by the people. Its few hundred copies were written and read by business men and those concerned with affairs of government."(56) A natural consequence of the extension of newspaper reading to the members of all classes and the representatives of all interests was a broader conception of what constituted news. Only business men and merchants were interested

(55) Quoted by Hudson, op. cit., p. 417.
(56) Editorial in Editor & Publisher, December, 24, 1927.

in the shipping news which formed the great bulk of the content of those papers which before 1820 had not been primarily political organs. To interest the cartmen and the housemaids something else was wanted. The solution was "human interest stuff," which had general appeal to all persons with normal human feelings. Dana, the greatest exponent of the human interest story, had a philosophy which caused him to see life as "not a mere procession of elections, murders and lectures," but as "everything---a new kind of apple, a crying child on the curb, a policeman's epigram, the exact weight of a candidate for president, the latest style in whiskers, the origin of a new slang expression, the idiosyncracies of the City Hall clock, a strange fourmaster in the harbor, the headdresses of Syrian girls, a new president or a new football coach at Yale, a vendetta in Mulberry Bend---everything was fish to the great net of Dana's mind."(57) It is he who is credited with first having said, "News is anything that will make people talk." Bonnett had somewhat the same ideal. He went into Wall Street and into the meetings of religious organizations to seek information to meet the varied interests of his readers. Both the Herald

(57) Frank M. O'Brien, Story of the Sun, revised edition, quoted in a review in Editor & Publisher, Feb. 25, 1928.

and the Sun gave their information, not as information, but as stories. They dramatized events. In short, they sought to entertain as well as to inform. In doing so they broadened the average man's horizon tremendously, or responded to a broadened horizon, it is hard to say which. The period is neatly summed up by Levermore when he says:

> In the political world the crowd was newly emancipated from colonial and aristocratic traditions and laws, newly vocal with enthusiasm for a democratic hero, Old Hickory, and willing to pose before the world. A new conception of journalistic functions began to take shape. The newspaper must adapt itself to meet the crowd. It must become the representative of the multitude rather than of a few. Even while the violence of partisanship did not abate, the former proportions of general news and of partisan propaganda were gradually reversed. In this evolution the journalist began to differentiate himself from the politician, and journalism began to emerge as a distinct profession.(58)

Bennett, a Scotchman, added another element to the technique of newspaper publication. He refused to accept promises instead of cash in return for subscriptions and advertising. He collected his bills, and he did the same with news. Preceding 1835, New York had been witnessing a hot fight between the Journal of Commerce and the Courier and Enquirer to print the news first. Bennett beat them at their own game. While the other dailies

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(58) C. H. Levermore, "The Rise of Metropolitan Journalism," American Historical Review, Vol. VI, p. 452.

were content to have a pilot boat meet incoming ships in New York Harbor, Bennett set a news boat off Montauk Point, Long Island, and sent European news to the city by a special train. In so doing he was taking advantage of the full sunlight of the new day that had dawned. Colonel Watson Webb, of the Courier and Enquirer, and Bennett's other competitors had no vision beyond the day of sailing vessels and the pony express. Bennett looked forward to meet the telegraph and the railroad. His example was not widely followed until the Civil War brought such a demand for news as the United States had never known before. That event pleaded the emphasis upon news, recent information, not only in New York but throughout the nation. And it was everyone, rich and poor alike, that wanted news then. The telegraph furnished the means, Bennett had furnished the education in its use, and the people furnished the demand.

1850-1880; Special Characteristics Become More Prominent: The year 1880 is here chosen as a division point for reasons of convenience rather than because it marks the beginning or end of any era of journalistic progress. Hudson's history, published in 1873, Pingate's Views and Interviews on Journalism, published in 1875, and North's

history, published in 1883, give a contemporary view of the period. This year, also, marks the passing of the American frontier, an important date in the social history of the nation. Thus 1880 is a convenient milestone; but it marks more a crystallization of tendencies begun before the Civil War than the development of any new trends.

Emphasis on news, as has been said, was given great impetus during the Civil War period. This was accompanied by an enormous increase in the specialization begun early in the century. North noted that "The most striking feature of the history of the newspaper during the past decade has been its multitudinous differentiation, the press of the United States to a marvellous degree not witnessed in any other country, accomodating itself to the several conditions and pursuits of the people."(59) While his listing of the various classes of periodicals then existent might be improved from a logical standpoint, it is nevertheless significant. It includes these headings:

As to frequency of issue.
The provincial daily press.
Semi-weekly and tri-weekly papers.

(59) History and Present Condition of the Newspaper Press of the United States, p. 110.

The monthly magazines.
The weekly literary press.
The religious press.
Sunday-school and children's periodicals.
The agricultural press.
The educational press.
College journalism.
The Sunday newspaper.
Illustrated newspapers.
The professional and the trade press.
The foreign [language] press.

Fox Bourne, in 1887, found the same condition prevailing in England. He says:

Though politics and such special matters as have clear poltical bearings are supposed to be the chief business of the more important newspapers, nearly all of them have from the first paid more or less attention to affairs of trade, to popular amusements, to fresh productions in literature, science, and art, and to whatever else is interesting to any large section of their readers, and, as we have seen, several journals were started long ago with the object of supplying fuller information than was elsewhere given about particular concerns, in ways either of pastime or of serious occupation, and of commenting thereupon. In recent years, however, there have been remarkable expansion and variety in what may be called the by-paths of journalism, ..."(60)

Returning to America, we find Hudson also noting the same phenomenon: His statement reads:

Special journalism is so rapidly increasing in the United States that it deserves special notice. Newspapers of this character give the freshest and fullest information on the particular interest they represent, and are therefore newspapers. They are the religious, the medical, the scientific, the agricultural, the sporting, the financial, the railroad, the commercial, the shipping, the telegraph, the mining, the art, the musical, the yachting, the Sunday, the army, and the navy press.(61)

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(60) English Newspapers, p. 284.
(61) Op. cit., p. 329.

Not only was the distinction between the newspaper of general character and the periodicals of special interest becoming more apparent, a specialization within the general newspaper field itself was becoming apparent. North seems highly pleased to write:

> In no direction has the development of American journalism been so gratifying and significant as in the growth of what may be called the provincial daily press, for the want of a better designation. ..... Until the railroad and the telegraph came to the assistance of publishers in interior towns, both in England and the United States, all the latest intelligence, inaccessible to them, centered in the metropolitan towns, and there remained until the great dailies gathered it up and scattered it through the country. ..... But different localities have different and often conflicting interests, and growing communities, as they yearly become more closely connected by wire and rail with the commercial centers, sever their reliance and dependence in other particulars. So the provincial newspaper, representing interests which its metropolitan contemporary doesnot reach, becomes, first, a home necessity; second, an independent, self-reliant necessity; and third, the rival, if not the peer, of the great sheets that issue from the metropolitan press.(62)

About this time, together with the increasing emphasis placed upon news by editors arose an increase of emphasis on another department of the paper, the advertising. When Bennett cast aside all party allegiance, he cast away at the same time the hope of party subsidy, upon which many newspapers had existed in the decades before 1835. Furthermore, his subscription price was far short of the $8 or $10 charged annually by his

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(62) North, op. cit., p. 112.

blanket-sheet contemporaries. The deficit was made up, and a profit paid, through advertising. What had once been a by-product of newspaper production was on the way to becoming the chief product so far as revenue is concerned. But the switch in emphasis wasnot given a great deal of attention at first. Up to the World War, a newspaper could, if forced to, exist on subscriptions (E. W. Scripp's Day Book lasted long enough in Chicago to show that).(63) Even in 1874 George P. Rowell, then the chief authority on advertising in the United States, declared that "No paper whichis fully equipped ever uses a larger type than nonpariel for advertisements,"(64) and P. T. Barnum some years before had been forced to repeat each word in his advertisements a half-dozen times to get the amount of display he wanted in the small size of type allowed him.(65) In fact, it was not until the World War that advertising came into its own. The foundations upon which trade then built, however, were laid in the intervening decades, at which we may now glance.

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(63) Robert P. Scripps, Scripps-Howard News, Vol. I, No. 9, August, 1927, p. 7.

(64) Quoted in Wingate, Views and Interviews on Journalism, p. 315.

(65) Jason Rogers, Building Newspaper Advertising, p. 26.

1880-1928; The Era of Organization: The period from 1880 to the present in industry has been one of increasing organization, which means differentiation and specialization of function. The newspaper, as a product of the times, saw a similar development. Before 1880 the burden of maintinaing competing news services had forced the New York dailies into combination, and from this grew the Associated Press and its competing services, in which the gathering and distribution of news is systematized to a marked degree. Bringing more news created a demand for more news, and in spite of co-operative news gathering the public demand placed a heaby burden of telegraph tolls and writer's salaries upon the individual newspapers. Mechanical advances in printing presses and in methods of composition gave rise to mechanical forces composed of numerous highly skilled laborers. Payrolls had to be met, and advertising was the "angel." The development of advertising caused the growth of an extensive organization of accountants, solicitors and clerks within the newspaper organization and of advertising agencies and cnocking bureaus outside it. To meet the financial demands placed upon them, newspaper executives needed more advertising revenue.

Advertisers wanted circulation, and circulation demanded a newspaper with as wide an appeal as possible.

Just before 1900 Hearst and Pulitzer waged their battle in New York City which gave rise to the term, "yellow journalism." It was essentially a search for more readers, just as Bennett's sensationalism had been earlier in the nineteenth century. The old blanket-sheets had existed because the people wanted information to be put to immediate practical use: information on candidates for whom they would have to vote or on the markets in which they would have to trade. Bennett, Hearst and others attracted a great group of persons to the newspaper who had never felt the need of reading a paper before. The same thing was done after 1914 by the tabloids, which recruited their readers from sub-circulation strata, as is shown by the fact that the other dailies did not lose circulation even when the New York Daily News was able to boast a circulation over a million. Nor was the delving for circulation a particularly new thing even when Bennett began the Herald. The early news books had in their day appealed to the same class of taste as do the tabloids now.(66) From the invention of printing to the

(66) Mason Jackson, The Pictorial Press, passim.

present day the history of the newspaper has been chiefly characterized by its extension to a wider and wider group of people. Popular education and newspaper reading went hand in hand, with the newspaper the chief instrument of spreading the reading habit to more and more persons, until today in the United States the apparent saturation point has been reached. The newspaper has become almost as common an article in the home as food or clothing.

A natural consequence of the extension of newspaper reading to the members of all classes and the representatives of all interests was the increasing attention paid to departmental news. The culmination of this tendency wasnoted recently by Chester A. Lord in comparing the newspapers of today with those of his youth. He said: "The purpose of the old-time newspaper was to print its information in abbreviated form, presuming that the reader would read it all; the plan of the present-day sheet is to give the reader his fill of the things that are most interesting to him---his particular business activity, his hobby, his favorite sport---and he may let the other things go; hence the enormous size of the modern publication."(67)

This extension of the field of the newspaper may be

(67) "The Modern Newspaper," Saturday Evening Post, September 10, 1927.

seen at its best in the New York Times of today, while at the same time one must notice that even the monster Times has found itself going outside of the legitimate newspaper field so far that much of its material is now being published in periodical form, leaving the daily free to handle more strictly news matter. In 1913 and 1914 the Times began publication of The Annalist, an extension of its weekly financial review, and The Current History Magazine to care for the articles by experts reviewing current affairs.(68) In England the Manchester Guardian found the same expedient necessary following the World War, and began publication of the Manchester Guardian Weekly, devoted to political and literary criticism, and the Manchester Guardian Commercial, for business men.(69) This same tendency has created a whole galaxy of special editors: radio, automobile, aviation, society, sports, pictures, real estate, financial, and so forth and so on. It has also created organizations outside the newspaper; for the increasing complexity of society and the increasing breadth of news interest has made it almost impossible for the newspaper to watch every

(68) Elmer Davis, History of the New York Times, p. 328.

(69) William H. Wills, The Manchester Guardian, p. 142.

news source continually, and as a consequence social institutions having relations with the public have been forced to adopt press agents or "public relations counsels" to act as ministers to the newspaper. These men, though much may be said against their practices, do serve a useful function in calling the attention of newspapers to social developments outside the regular sources of news. It appears that they are here to stay, and that some recognized form of relationship between them and the newspapers must be worked out. They are but a reflection of the complexity of the modern social machinery, just as is the breadth of interest of the newspaper.

This broad appeal of the newspaper today has reached what seems to be its widest possible extension. Today, almost literally everyone reads a daily paper. During 1927, nearly thirty-eight million copies of morning and evening English-language daily papers were sold in the United States among a population estimated at over one hundred and fifteen millions of persons. This is almost exactly one copy daily for each three persons, a far cry from the one copy weekly for 132 persons of Revolutionary times. The newspaper has become an established social institution in its own right. It has become self-supporting. No longer do a bushel of potatoes or a cord of wood

from subscribers and a handout of cash or legal advertising from the party bosses support the editor. Yet the newspaper has not replaced other productions of the printing press. More readers of books and of the monthly and weekly periodicals are found in the United States than ever before.

We have seen that the newspaper has been an outgrowth of speech and writing. We have seen, too, that it is not the only one: that the various specialized journals and the books in our libraries are close cousins of the newspaper, but yet are something different. It is clear that speech, the radio, the quarterly review and the newspaper all have something in common. It is just as clear that their differing organizations denote a difference in function. What is the likeness, and the difference? The likeness is obviously in their all being specialized forms of human intercommunication. The function of communication we may now examine, reserving a discussion of the difference between the newspaper and other forms of intercommunication for a later chapter.

Ch. III. THE FUNCTION OF COMMUNICATION.

Since the newspaper has developed as one specialization of the general mechanism of intercommunication between human beings, it follows that its function must be one specialization or section of the general function served by communication. It was man's social nature that first gave rise to communication, and communication in turn has given rise to the complex social life of today. Society and intercommunication are two aspects of the same thing. That human beings are simply herded together as residents of the earth, or of a nation, or of a community, does not constitute them into a society, except that it forces them into relations with one another. It is the forms these relationships take which is called the social structure; and these forms grow out of communication, for that is "the mechanism through which human relations exist and develop."(1) The close connection

(1) C. H. Cooley, Social Organization, p. 61.

is well expressed by Park and Burgess: "Society may now be defined as the social heritage of habit, and sentiment, folkways and mores, technique and culture, all of which are incident or necessary to collective human behavior. Human society, then, unlike animal society, is mainly a social heritage, created in and transmitted by communication."(2) And the result of this connection is shown by Cooley, who says, "Thus the system of communication is a tool, a progressive invention, whose improvements react upon mankind and alter the life of every individual and institution."(3) Modern advances in communication "make it possible for society to be organized more and more on the higher faculties of man, on intelligence and sympathy, rather than on authority, caste, and routine."(4)

The simple statement that the newspaper is a means of communication has complex and far-reaching implications. The net result of all forms of communication is a sort of vicarious experience which gives the individual a basis for modification of his behavior. It gives to each individual in society greatly increased power to shape his life to ends he deems desirable, for it is only through

(2) Introduction to the Science of Sociology, p. 163.
(3) Social Organization, p. 64.
(4) Ibid., p. 81.

experience that he knows of the forces in his environment, and it is only through knowledge of these forces that he is able to adapt himself to them or to change them. Society, being the accumulated experience of countless individuals, has communication as its very basis. Man has been called the thinking animal. He might better be called the communicating animal, for without power to transfer thought the greatest minds would remain prisoners in a bony cell, the skull. Indeed, great minds would never be developed.

But to claim all of these benefits of communication as the function of the newspaper would be foolish. We have seen the newspaper becoming more and more specialized, until it appears that only a small part of the whole field of communication belongs to it. "Writing," it has been said, "made social tradition more permanent, more reliable, broader. Then printing allowed social tradition and human experience to be diffused throughout any community so that each individual might come into personal contact with and profit by all the recorded experiences of mankind he is able to assimilate."(5) Now our question is: Where in this broad field of print does the newspaper lie? Few persons are likely to search

(5) Prof. V. E. Helleberg, University of Kansas, in a mimeographed pamphlet used as text in his course in Psychological Sociology, section titled "Public Opinion."

outside of printed matter for the newspaper's function. Few are likely to confuse it with that of the telegraph, still fewer with that of the railroad; but many do confuse it with that of other productions of the press. It is the differences between the daily newspaper on the one hand and the books and monthly and weekly periodicals on the other that now must be examined.

Ch. IV. THE NEWSPAPER AND OTHER MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

In the preceding chapters I have attempted to show that the newspaper is simply one of the many differentiated forms taken by human speech as it has developed throughout the life of man on earth. By tracing the history of writing and printing I have endeavoured to show that in this process of differentiation the newspaper has acquired certain characteristics which distinguish it from all other printed means of communication. Chief among these distinguishing characteristics, I have maintained, are:

1. The newspaper is primarily devoted to news, which is information concerning recent, non-habitual, overt action.

2. The newspaper more closely approximates vicarious experience than does any other printed medium of communication.

The second point may be questioned on the ground that fiction is a closer approximation of direct expereince than is news. It is true that the two are much alike.

The distinction lies in this: the basis of news is, or should be, actual occurrence. This distinction has not always been clear, nor is it always clear today. Yet it is a real distinction nevertheless. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe began its career as a newspaper hoax, and is credited with being the first novel. The famous moon and balloon hoaxes of the past century are well known. But today at least a modicum of fact is required by the most reckless news writers as a basis for their "yarn"; the distinction is clear if not always conscientiously adhered to. The standard of the best news writers of today calls for presentation of all the drama that is actually in the news; a growing ethical standard calls for the limitation of the recital to only those dramatic possibilities warranted by the facts themselves.

With this distinction in function cleared up, we may now proceed to examine more closely the distinction between the newspaper and other publications as they are today. Instantaneous means of communication have made knowledge originating half-way around the world available at once in the other hemisphere. The public

is impatient, and wants this knowledge immediately. The book press would be unbearably slow. Even to wait for a weekly periodical could not be countenanced. So we demand a daily, and even hourly, announcement of world happenings. "We live in a newspaper age. Active, restless, wanting to be everywhere at once, to know everything that is taking place in the world, we demand our daily paper."(1)

But even this need for daily bulletining's of the world's doings would not necessitate an institution like the newspaper. To it must be added that fact that man has chosen to live in family groups, rather than in huge communal halls. Were all the inhabitants of a city crowded into one great barracks, a bulletin board might serve the need for furnishing daily information. But, since man lives in family groups, there is need for getting this information to each of these groups separately; and thisholds good even when numerous families live crowded together in apartments or tenements.

It is evident that, were all newspapers abolished by some chance, there would soon develop something very like a newspaper. The radio has been suggested as a news organ, yet it is limited by the same handicap as is speech: it is too ephemeral. If one is not actually before the

(1) Ald. Theodore G. Morgan, of Montreal, reported in Editor & Publisher, December 11, 1926, p. 14.

loudspeaker at the time the news is announced, he must rely on the word of others. This need for repetition would soon create a structure for its satisfaction, and that structure would be highly likely to resemble a newspaper. Furthermore, out of the great mass of information arising daily in the world, only a small part of which is of interest to any one person, the printed newspaper allows the reader to select what he desires to read. None of us would be willing to sit before a radio loudspeaker all day every day while the content-matter of a 48-page newspaper was read. The information must be available in such form that each individual may choose that which particularly interests him. Any conceivable form in which it might be presented must of necessity be much like a newspaper.

Radio and the Newspaper: Though the radio is hardly classifiable as a "printed means of communication," yet, because radio is at present being touted as a successor to the daily newspaper, a more complete examination of its possibilities is not out of place here. In the first place, the danger of error on the radio is even greater than it is in the newspaper. This was pointed out by

the late Admiral H. G. Bullard in his talk before the Fourth Radio Industries Banquet in New York, Sept. 21, 1927.(2) A newspaper's error is always a matter of record; that is one reason critics of the press find it so easy to get evidence to support their charges of inaccuracy.

The fear that radio would supplant the newspaper seems to have gained strength first in England, where the compact population makes it possible to serve everyone from one powerful station.(3) By the fall of 1927, however, the fears of the English press were beginning to be allayed as publishers came to see the limitations of the radio.(4) In America, Silas Bent, in his Ballyhoo, declared that "American publishers found that readers lost interest in certain kinds of news when the bloom had been taken from it by the radio."(5) Editor and

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(2) I made a note of this while listening to broadcasting of the speech. The point I am attempting to make may well be illustrated here. No critic of my work, attempting to verify my quotation of Admiral Bullard, would have any source for comparison. Even though a copy of the admiral's manuscript had been filed, it would never be certain that it had been followed word for word in reading.

(3) See Editor & Publisher, December 11, 1926, p. 6.
(4) Ibid., November 21, 1927, p. 20.
(5) P. 297.

Publisher, in two editorials during the past year, has expressed fear that radio is encroaching on the field of the newspaper.(6) Both Mr. Bent and the trade journal seem to be needlessly alarmed. The experiences of newspapers indicate that there is no liklihood of radio displacing newspapers. B. T. McCanna, manager of publicity for the Chicago Tribune, which each evening broadcasts "Tomorrow's Tribune," replied to the Editor & Publisher editorial in a letter in which he said in part:

> It is a physical impossibility to give an entire, satisfactory, and complete presentment of the news stories by radio. It is not a question of substitution---it is a question of supplementing---giving readers a taste of the whole. It is auxiliary to the work of giving a lift to the readers' reception of and desire for the newspaper.
>
> Broadcasting of news might be compared to a promotion campaign in which every day the headlines of the newspaper are printed on a handbill which would be distributed free of charge just prior to the publication time of the newspaper mentioned. It would be absurd to consider that such "hand-bill samples," which could only whet the appetite for the complete story, act as a substitute for the newspaper as a whole.(7)

Mr. McCanna did not mention the English custom of displaying posters with the salient points of the day's news thereon, but it would have been a case in point.

A reply tending to the same conclusion was given by

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(6) November 12, 1927, p. 26, and December 24, 1927, p. 26.

(7) Editor & Publisher, February 4, 1928, p. 49.

R. L. Tindall, managing editor of the Shenandoah (Iowa) Sentinel, who said:

> The radio station at frequent intervals gives news bulletins, but we find that after hearing the brief announcements, the Iowa farmers and the town dwellers like to get more details. The fact that they cannot hear all the items broadcast and cannot sit before the loudspeaker day and night may have something to do with it.
>
> Great confidence has not been established by the radio stations as news gatherers. Frequently we are asked "is so and so true? We heard the radio stations broadcasting something about it."
>
> In times of Lindbergh flights, the telephone calls arenot lessened, even though the announcer is closely following the flights. There are plenty left to quiz the editorial room. When Lindy arrives, there is still demand for papers to read how he did it, even though the facts were announced over the air.(8)

A chain of newspapers (Scripps-Howard) even went so far as to broadcast one of the fistic "battles of the century" and found that "It is absolutely impossible for a radio announcer, even such an expert as Graham McNamee, to give in his running story such important argumentative matter as developed regarding the count when Tunney hit the floor in the seventh round, or regarding the alleged foul blows hit by Dempsey in the Sharkey fight."(9)

The whole thing is summed up dramatically by Marconi himself:

> The radio can never take the place of the newspapers. Rather do I believe that radio broadcasting encourages newspaper reading.
>
> For instance, I sit here and listen to something

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(8) Editor & Publisher, January 7, 1928, p. 49.
(9) W. W. Hawkins, vice-chairman, Scripps-Howard Newspapers, in Scripps-Howard News, October, 1927, p. 9.

interesting, what you call news, coming through the instrument. I call to my wife to share my enjoyment and I discover that I cannot find her. She has gone out. If she wants the same news later she must get it from the newspaper, not from the loudspeaker.

The newspaper has this distinct advantage: it is a record. When a man speaks over the radio he can deny that he ever made a certain statement. It is not so with the newspaper. The matter is there in black and white, and if I wish to do so I can go to him and make him contradict his words, if necessary.(10)

Some publishers seem to be touched on the pocketbook nerve by radio, and fear that broadcasting will take advertising revenue from their papers. That fear apparently is no more logical than the other, for radio advertising so far has been merely supplementary to that placed in newspapers and periodicals. One radio advertiser always announces at the end of each program: "Watch the advertisements in your daily paper."(11) And just recently Thomas F. Logan, of the advertising firm which handles the radio advertising of the National Broadcasting Company, has declared that his firm refuses contracts for radio promotion unless adequately supported by newspaper and periodical advertising.(12)

Prophecy is always dangerous, but as the situation

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(10) Editor & Publisher, October 29, 1927, p. 86.
(11) Atwater Kent, radio manufacturer.
(12) Editor & Publisher, March 17, 1928, p. 8.

now stands one is probably safe in saying that, while radio may take over part of the newspaper's function of presenting "spot" news, it can never wholly replace the newspaper or even diminish newspaper circulation.

Newspaper Distinctions; Difference of Format: The most obvious difference between the newspaper and other productions of the press is the difference in format, but this is not a particularly basic one. Those which make a real distinction between newspapers on the one hand and books and periodicals on the other are differences of content, of the area over which each particular paper is distributed, and of the speed of distribution.(15)

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(15) These differences are so much a matter of the accepted routine that most students of the newspaper fail to see them. To my knowledge, the only person to note that these have any consequence is a Japanese journalist, K. Sugimura, who says:"Newspapers have certain characteristics that are peculiar to them and which nothing else has. Among them two are particularly noticeable. The first is their 'daily circulation,' and the second their 'wide and quick circulation.' Though there are many kinds of publications; it is only newspapers that have these two features." ("Logical Basis of News Value," Press Congress of the World in Hawaii, p. 105). Mr. Sugimura from these distinctions deduces that "News can be said to be anything that the newspaper prints with the view of utilizing its daily publication, regular repetition, wide and quick circulation and the reading habit on the part of the reader."(Ibid., p. 112).

form is rather a result of these other differences, than a basis of differentiation.

Designed as it is for only temporary use, the newspaper is printed on the cheapest of paper stock. And because it must be delivered as nearly simultaneously as possible to a great number of subscribers, it is produced in such form as to render use of high speed printing machinery possible. But this is only the outward, material difference. It is in content that the greatest difference is seen.

Difference of Content; Attitude Toward Time: The genesis of the distinction in content is of recent origin. It lies in the development, alluded to above, of electrical means of communication. Hudson, who saw in his lifetime the earlier phases of this development, speaks of it in discussing the weekly papers which were an integral part of every metropolitan newspaper organization during most of the nineteenth century. He says:

> Weekly publications of mere news, however, have since lost their position, in consequence of the telegraph, and have ceased to command large circulations. When news was conveyed from one point to another by steam, thousands of newspaper readers in theinterior towns willingly waited for the arrival of their weekly paper, but in this telegraphic age the daily newspaper has taken the place of

the weekly, and the more political, agricultural, religious, literary, and illustrated hebdomadaries have taken the place of the news weeklies.(14)

"News" originally had a plural sense, but we have ceased to use the word in that way. For purposes of study, however, it is well to keep in mind that it was first a plural. Each separate item in an ideal newspaper is a new; and with the entire world connected by wire and wireless, there are new news every day. The rapid printing of the newspaper is an outgrowth of its aim. News, being closely allied to direct sense experience, has the ephemeral quality of such experience. When we see an object in motion, what we get is a series of fleeting impressions; and news in the ideal brings us a somewhat similar series of images. In the broadest extension of the word, every sense impression that reaches the brain of a human being is a bit of news; and in the final analysis all our means of communication, including the newspaper, are but artificial extensions of man's sense organs.(15) The reason newspapers played such a small part in the life of mankind even a century ago was because the

(14) Journalism in the United States, p. 445.

(15) This analogy between the sense organs and our means of communication has been given some study by Ogden and Richards in their The Meaning of Meaning. They say specifically: "..... language, thought often spoken of as a medium of communication, is best regarded as an instrument; and all instruments are extensions, or refinements, of our sense organs."(p. 196).

slowness of even steam travel made the lapse of time between the performance of an act and the reporting of it a matter of days and even months. By the aid of electricity, we can now "see" and "hear" across a continent or an ocean almost as quickly as across a room. But these electrical extensions of the organs of sight and hearing would be useful to only a few of the people if it were not for the newspaper, which collects these "sense impressions" and reproduces them as exactly as the limitations permit. As the artificial extensions of man's sense organs have been speeded up, the newspaper has been forced to speed up proportionally; and as the presentation of news has speeded up, the ephemeral quality of it has come closer and closer to being like that of direct sensation. So the newspaper forgets what happened yesterday, and devotes its energies to what is happening today. "Sufficient unto the day is the news thereof," is the reporter's motto. What happened yesterday has a voice in making the news of today, and the ideal newspaperman would have a profound knowledge of the events of the past; but for the news story it is sufficient to sketch in one line yesterday's events upon

which today's news is founded.

What happened yesterday, or even a few hours ago, is buried by the newspaperman with the epitaph: "That's history." Not so the writer in the periodical press. He looks at yesterday's events in the light of today and speculates upon the morrow. And the same is true to an even greater extent of the book press. The newspaper is intended to live but a day, the periodical for weeks and months, and the book for years or forever. Those intentions are reflected in their format and their function.

The distinctive function of the newspaper is not, for instance, to promote healthful conditions, as some writers have suggested. Stated that way, the phrase applies equally well to the weekly or to the book, or to the profession of medicine. The newspaper is specifically concerned with the new ideas on promoting healthful conditions. But even on this there is a limitation, which must next be noticed.

Difference of content; Breadth of Appeal: One difference between the content of the newspaper and that of the periodical or book is, we have seen, a difference

in the attitude toward time. Another and even greater difference is based on two different kinds of social groups.

Societyis grouped on two bases: interest; and geographical location. The newspaper is designed to appeal to every member of society regardless of group interest. News which is of interest to the great mass of the people is played up on the front page. In addition, there is included in every edition much material that is of interest to some readers butnot to others, with an attempt being made to have enough variety to meet all tastes (The growth of this tendency toward a broad interest we noted in Chapter II). Insofar as this ideal of making its columns of interest to all persons is concerned, the newspaper is not limited to any interest group; but the periodical or book usually are so limited. They are designed to appeal to some interest or class group based on social standing, occupation, or other societal distinction, and to appeal to all members of that group wherever found. The distinction is more easily illustrated than explained, and an illustration is at hand. Despite the columns upon columns of material that were printed concerning Lindbergh's flight,

the technically minded reader had to go to the aviation weeklies and monthlies to secure data on the engine, the 'plane, and the navigating instruments used in the flight. Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thelf, doctor, lawyer and the rest of us all read about "Lindy" in the newspapers. What we read about was Lindbergh, the man, not the technical aspects of his achievement; for it is human nature that rich and poor, educated and uneducated, can appreciate alike. The technical information concerning Lindbergh's flight was news, for it was information concerning recent , non-routine, overt action; but it was not news for the newspapers because it was of interest only to a special class of persons.(16)

Here we come to the distinction between news and the newspaper which I tried to make clear in the first section of Chapter II, by showing that the former existed thousands of years before the latter. Because daily newspapers are usually designed primarily to reach every human being possible, what is news for the newspaper is not all the news. Johnson, in his What Is News?, is right in stressing the point, as he does throughout the book, that news must be interesting, but he is wrong in concluding that news is anything written by a good

(16) For another discussion of this same point from a similar viewpoint, see Walter Scott's article, "The Weekly and Monthly Press," in Journalism, New York Press Club, p. 54.

newspaperman---that is, written interestingly. He implies that interest is something created entirely by the account of an event, and fails to see that interest lies partly in the mind of the reader. Rather it should be said that a good newspaperman knows from long experience what events will be of interest to his readers. Certainly Johnson would not say that the manuscript of What Price Glory? is news; yet it was written by two newspapermen. The difficulty lies in a lack of definite terminology to distinguish between the event and the various acts involved in reporting the event. For our purposes, we need only note that not all reports of news events are contained in the newspapers, and that not all of the content of the newspaper is news, but that the distinguishing characteristic of the newspaper is its report of news events that are interesting (either in virtue of the reporting or of the nature of the event) to human beings as human beings and not as members of a class or vocational group. In the words of Herbert Bayard Swope, "A well-balanced newspaper is the one that is guided in its selection and display of news by the relationship of news to life. By that I mean the stories played up are those that touch

most closely upon the average life."(17) This point of universal appeal is the one which is most often used in law to define the newspaper. A recent decision held that the Financial News, of Jacksonville, Fla., was a newspaper because it "contained news of interest to persons of varied professions,"(18) and the descriptive term, "of general circulation," is often used in statutes and elsewhere to describe newspapers.

So much for the interest group limitation on the newspaper's content. The geographical group also plays its part in fixing the kind of news event that will be found reported in the newspaper. Though it is not designed primarily to appeal to any class or vocational group, the newspaper is usually intended to reach readers all of whom are residents of a certain geographical area.

Difference of Content; Geographic Limitations: Because of limitations in transportation, not all of the people in a nation the size of the United States can be reached by a copy of the newspaper before its reports of news events lose one of their essential qualities: recency.

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(17) In an address before the Advertising Club of New York, November 11, 1927. Reported in Editor & Publisher, November 12, 1927, p. 4. Mr. Swope is executive director of the New York World.

(18) Reported in Editor & Publisher, November 5, 1927, p. 16.

The bulk of the circulation of even a powerful metropolitan newspaper is limited to a territory within four to six hours travelling time from the point of publication; and even within that limit will be found smaller newspapers able to exist, for one reason, because they can give fresher news. The other and more weighty reason these smaller newspapers can exist is because there are events of interest or significance only to the members of the geographic group which they serve. The telegraph is responsible for the decrease in the area served by a newspaper. Up to the time of the Civil War, the provinces were willing to wait a week until the weekly edition of a metropolitan daily reached them, and Greeley's weekly Tribune could have a national influence. The recency of news is a purely relative matter. In 1865 the news of Lincoln's death took days to reach London. In 1927, when Lindbergh landed in Paris, it was exactly 9½ minutes after the wheels of his airplane touched French soil that the news of the event was known in a small Kansas town. The effect of stringing telegraph wires connecting all the smaller cities is described by Hudson:

> Morse has been a benefactor of the press. This, it is true, is not the opinion of every publisher, narrowly, perhaps meanly, looking after the financial affairs of his establishment, nor of every journalist desirous of an

influence beyond the limits of the city where his paper is published, especially when he reads an announcement that "the Elmira (N.Y.) Advertiser publishes telegraph news fifteen hours in advance of the receipt of the New York dailies."(19)

The telegraph allowed country dailies to take over the function formerly served by news weeklies, and its extension accounts for the growth in their numbers noted by North.(20) Then, because these dailies were limited to a certain area, it was only natural that their news was handled with an eye to the interests of the residents of that area; with the result that today most daily papers pay more attention to local and state news than they do to national or international affairs.(21)

It is regarding this territorial aspect of newspaper function that the most discussion is aroused today. Much criticism is directed at the newspaper just now because it does not carry information concerning national and international events. While some are wasting energy in criticism, wailing for the "good old days," others are profiting, and rendering a social service, through publishing

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(19) Journalism in the United States, p. 595.
(20) Supra, p 69.
(21) S. P. Weston, a newspaper consultant, studying twenty financially successful daily papers of the United States in 1926, found that approximately 41 percent of the space devoted to news was given to local news.(Editor & Publisher, April 9, 1927, p. 29).

national newspapers like the United States Daily or the "news magazine," Time, or through the publication of avowedly community newspapers. We appear to be in a period in which a further specialization in the publication field is taking place.

Regardless, however, of what the future may bring, this much at least is clear: there are limits to the function of the newspaper. It is not an omnicompetent instrument fit to bring forth the millenium. But, on the other hand, neither is it socially useless. It has a task to perform, that task being to present each day to each person in the community it serves such information regarding the news events of the day as is of interest to human beings. That is why the newspaper exists, to furnish the raw materiel for the thought of the average man. And by the average man I mean the man of such qualities of mind as are enjoyed by nearly everyone in contemporary society, those qualities of mind which are either inhertied or acquired in the primary groups. Just what these qualities are it would be dangerous to say, for even those who make a profession of studying the subject disagree.

But this much is certain, the deficiencies of what may be called either "the herd" or "humanity" will be reflected in the newspaper. There are other limitations upon the functioning of the newspaper, and a large volume could, and should be, written on the subject. This limitation set by the people themselves, however, seems to be at present the least understood, therefore it has been singled out for special treatment in the following chapter.

Ch. V. THE INTERACTION OF NEWSPAPER AND SOCIETY.

Two broad categories of limitations hamper the newspaper in performing its function. They are the same ones which cramp other human institutions: imperfections in the minds of the persons composing the institution, and the physical limitations of the instruments they use. And with the newspaper, just as in other fields of human endeavor, it is the former that seems to be most hampering human advance just now. The physical apparatus used by newspapers has reached a development today that a century ago would have been impossible in even the wildest dreams of an editor. Printer telegraphs, radio-telephones, stock tickers, telephoto and the telephone to transmit news; printing machines to reproduce the pages of type at the rate of 40,000 sixty-four page papers an hour; busses on concrete highways, fast railroads and even airplanes to distribute the printed product; these have made

the mechanical side of newspaper production a marvel of speed and precision.

It is on its human and social side that the press seems weakest today, its imperfections reflecting the weakness of the society in which it is produced. Almost unnoticed, a huge instrument in the hands of a great institution has grown up, and only now is society asking, "What is this thing? Why have it? How does it serve human life?"(1)

I have tried in the preceding chapters to show that the newspaper is one specialized instrument among all the specialized instruments of human intercommunication that have grown out of primitive speech and gesture. I have tried to show that the particular direction taken by its development has been toward the reporting of recent, overt action of any kind that interests human beings as human beings---that it has become the one kind of printed communication read in common by persons of all classes and all vocations. Because the newspaper is specialized in mechanism, it follows that it must be specialized in function as well; and that implies that it is limited in its operation. Furthermore, because the distinguishing

(1) I here use the term "institution" in the sense of a body of persons set aside to serve a need of organized society.

mark of the newspaper is its general circulation, it follows that the chief limitation upon the newspaper arises out of this fact.

News Selection the Problem: In practice it is a physical limitation that handicaps the newspaper: the omnipresent bar set up by lack of space. If every newspaper every day could report all the overt action of the preceding twenty-four hours, and if every reader could read and take an interest in all of it, there would be no problem. If newspapermen were infallible automatons, every reader would learn every day just that information he sought. Also, supposing such an if, every human being would be his own doctor, policeman, and janitor, as well as reporter, and each of us would be free beyond the wildest dreams of anarchy. But human society isnot constituted that way.

The Basis of Selection: Moral problems arise out of human fallibility and the physical limitations on human effort. The moral problems of the newspaperman are set by the incompressibility of type and by the peculiar genius of the newspaper which makes it the accepted common means of intercommunication. The editor must select the news he is to present. That is forced by the physical limits

of his medium. What he selects is determined by the general nature of the circulation which his medium has. The best explanation, I believe, that has ever been given of this interdependence between the newspaper and its readers is that presented by Professor Robert E. Park. He says:

> The newspaper may be said to perform, for the public and the "public mind," the function of attention in the individual. The individual is assailed by innumerable stimulations. Attention intervenes as a selective mechanism to determine at every moment the relative importance of these stimulations. Most of them are wholly inhibited and thrust out of consciousness altogether. Some one or two get represented in the focus of consciousness in the form of mental images. The remainder are pushed back into the margin of consciousness, where they occupy a position and exercise an "influence" that is subordinate to those represented in the focus of consciousness. In the case of the newspaper and the public, news items play the role of mental images in the individual, and publication and publicity perform a function for the community analogous to that of consciousness in the individual. The press, in so far as it succeeds in capturing and centering public attention, becomes an organ of social control, a mechanism through which the community acts, so far as the community can be said to act. It is this that defines the function of the press and makes its role in the community intelligible.
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> It is thus apparent that in selecting his materials the editor is not as arbitrary and willful as is popularly assumed. He chooses what he knows will interest his public. In this way the public exercises a control over the form and content of the press which, in the long run, is considerable.(2)

The readers of the newspaper, insofar as it is a newspaper and not a propaganda organ, are, as I have said, human

(2) The Immigrant Press, pp. 329-30.

beings qua human beings.(3) To say in what human beings are interested is impossible without arbitrarily creating an "economic man"; yet some generalizations are possible. Those generalizations have in the past been made by practicing journalists on the basis of experience and professional habit, but it seems to me that Professor Park's analogy holds the hope of a more formal statement of them.

Public Attention as A Limitation of News Selection:

The elements of attention have been stated, with a view to practical consequences, in this way:

> There are two sets of causes of attention, and at first these two seem to be antagonistic. First, there is the attention which is attracted to what is different, the loud noise in the midst of silence, the large object looming up among small objects, and so on. Then there is the kind of attention which is due to a sensitizing of our brain mechanisms so that a stimulus to which we are thus tuned receives a moreready reception, is met half-way, in contrast to another to which one has not been tuned. ..... If we examine how this sensitizing process takes place, we discover that repetition of an experience is one of the potent factors in producing it. But repetition of a stimulus must certainly reduce its newness, strangeness, hence its difference---the very factor on which its attention power at first depended. It is true that these forces do to a certain extent work against each other, but the antagonism is not as serious as we might expect. For, if the new or novel situation is absolutely new, it may escape our attention altogether. It is the element of newness in the familiar or the hint of the familiar in the new that attracts attention.(4) (Italics mine).

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(3) I here use the term, "propaganda," in its widest sense, in which it refers to something that is primarily educative rather than coercive.

(4) Albert T. Poffenberger, Psychology in Advertising, pp. 201-2.

The quotation from Poffenberger explains why the newspaper cannot, in its presentation of news, go much beyond the ordinary man's ability to comprehend. It is because wives and husbands living peaceably together is a fairly common affair in our lives that a divorce is news, for all normal human beings are familiar with a domestic circle of some kind. The man on the street can comprehend a divorce where he could not comprehend a decision of the world court, for he has had experience with husbands and wives but has not had experience in making international treaties. Only to the interested minority who follow international events has the elevating of the navy's guns any significance (sign value, meaning). To the great majority, the whole situation is so strange that attention cannot be focused. Hence the newspaper must confine itself primarily and chiefly to overt action occurring in a background which may be supplied from experience by the reader, i.e., situations familiar to everyone because related to primary human nature, inborn or the result of life in the primary groups.

Stated in such a way as this, this limitation on what consitutes news events suitable to be reported in newspapers seems alarmingly extensive. But, though it is a

handicap which must be heeded by the newspaperman who expects to retain an audience, it isnot as heavy a one as at first appears. While it is true that the newspaper can reach its public most easily by dealing with "the element of newness in the familiar," yet there remains the reverse side of Poffenberger's statement, that "the hint of the familiar in the new" also attracts attention. It is this side of the matter in which Poffenberger was particularly interested, because he was presenting the psychological side of advertising, which is in part nothing more than the presentation of news. Just as the advertising copy writer can arouse interest in a new product, so can a good newspaperman present material the background of which is not fully understood by the reader. News stories are not all news; a portion of almost every story is devoted to sketching the situation in which the news event occurred. This aspect of news writing is given particular attention by Squire and Wilson in their book, Informing Your Public. They analyze the kinds of facts contained in typical news stories and find them falling totwo groups, which they call current facts (or facts in motion), and reservoir facts. The

first group is, of course, the news, what I have here called recent, overt, non-routine action. Of their division, the authors say:

> Group I will be composed of facts which are new, Group II of facts which are more or less old and which furnish the setting without which the new facts would be unintelligible. ..... A statement concerning the giving of a speech and of the response of the audience would present current facts. A description of why the speaker is noteworthy and of the relation of his appearance on the program to the purpose of the meeting would present reservoir facts. ..... If the current facts were properly selected and presented, they will attract interest; and if backed up by reservoir facts they will achieve that informing value which they cannot possess when standing alone, thus tending to gain the assent and cooperation of readers or hearers.(5)

Proper selection and presentation of current facts so as to arouse interest is, as I have tried to show, a matter of selecting such action for emphasis as can be easily fitted by the reader into his scheme of things-as-they-are. It is not so much a matter of arousing interest as of attracting attention. Then, when attention has been attracted to the matter, interest (which may be defined as continuing attention)(6) can be seized upon

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(5) pp. 49-54.

(6) See John Dewey, "The Theory of Emotion," Sec. II, "The Significance of Emotions," Psychological Review, Vol. II, No. 1, pp. 30 ff. The above phrase of mine is, I believe, a fair restatement of Mr. Dewey's sentence, "Interest is the feeling which arises with the completed co-ordination."(p. 30).

as the lever for education.

Significance (Meaning) the Key: In connection with this analysis of news stories, we must consider another aspect of news presentation. I mentioned in my discussion of the elementary nature of news that acts (an expression of opinion is an act) are capable of communicating an idea regardless of the intention of the actor.(7) That is to say, they have the significance, sign-value, or meaning I spoke of in connection with an illustration given above of a news event, the elevation of naval guns. Now just how much significance any particular action will have for any particular reader depends upon that reader's knowledge of the situation in which the action takes place. To a reader who knows that elevation of the guns increases their range and, consequently, the navy's fighting power, and who knows that fighting power is the basis of the 5-5-3 ratio of the Washington treaty, the mere act of raising the guns has a much greater meaning than to one that has not this background knowledge. I.e., presentation of the reservoir facts is essential to carry the meaning

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(7) Supra., p. 27.

of an event when such facts do not fall within the knowledge common to men. John Dewey's discussion of significance as depending upon consequences is applicable here.(8) The consequence of allowing the British navy to raise the batteries of its warships while those of the American navy remain in the old position is that the British navy becomes stronger than the American, gun for gun. Beyond this lies the question of armaments generally, and it finally reaches back to the whole question of the abolition of war.

Now the qestion is: Just how far can the newspaper go in presenting the reservoir facts which make socially significant events significant to the man in the street? Is it the function of the newspaper to attempt to educate the public to the significance of events? Or is it only to present the news in bare outline, the "current facts" of Squire and Wilson's terminology? Or should the newspaper abandon all effort to raise the level of public intelligence and deal solely with events which can be interpreted by those with an average degree of social insight? Practically, the answer probably lies somewhere between these extremes. On the one hand, the newspaper is

(8) Human Nature and Conduct, p. 225.

undoubtedly limited by the inability of the average man to comprehend technical problems outside his own field. On the other, artistry in news presentation can overcome this handicap to some extent. Social theorists tend to overlook the first aspect of the situation; practical newspapermen are prone to overlook the second.

The limitations imposed on the newspaper by the nature of its readers is a very real one. In the first place, there is a distinction between a journalist and an agitator. Each is valuable to society, but each has his place. As Talcott Williams, organizer of the Pulitzer School of Journalism at Columbia University, once wrote, "The instant the journalist turns into a side street and the procession leaves him and goes its own way, as has happened to many an independent journalist, he ceases to be a journalist and becomes that admirable but costly person, to himself and to his publisher, the pamphleteer ..... "(9) In the second place, but few newspapermen are capable of effective artistry in writing. Economic conditions as they are in the newspaper publishing field at present drive the best men into more remunerative occupations. Publicity work, particularly, attracts writers

(9) The Newspaperman, p. 31.

who are capable of getting over a viewpoint to the public. This, however, isnot, like the space limitation, one that is inherent in the nature of the newspaper. It is something that can be remedied when a sufficient demand for remedy is aroused. Yet even the most effective writer may waste his ability upon a certain percentage of persons. Part of the limitation is in the mind of the reader, and the general level of human intelligence will always be a hindrance to the full performance of newspaper function, just as it is to the functioning of every other fallible humaninstitution. In this connection, it must be remembered that outside of our own special field, all of us are handicapped by a lack of precise knowledge to form a background for our reception of new information, and are forced to fall back upon our "original nature" and the experience acquired in the primary groups. The skilled surgeon and the professor of Latin are often, if not usually, as ignorant concerning, say, irternational events, as are garage mechanics and cobblers. Even with readers of the so-called intellectual classes, the newspaper cannot get too far away from the common life in its presentation of events. This

is as much a problem of democracy as it is of the newspaper, and the crux of the newspaper problem lies in the political aspect of its function. Because the newspaper is the common medium of communication, and because if a democracy is to exist political affairs in some way must be a matter of common interest, there appears to be a moral responsibility upon the newspaper to present dynamically those things which affect the common life of men. Yet today government is becoming so complex a subject that it requires a specialized knowledge for its background. The ramifications of public affairs are becoming so intricate that many citizens have simply given up in despair. The dwindling of public interest in political matters is reflected in the decreasing proportion of newspaper space devoted to such matters. Then arises the moral problem: Is it not the plain duty of the newspaper to stir public interest in pualic affairs by presenting political events in such manner as to arouse the interest of readers?

The Incidence of Recent Developments. In consideration of this question, some of the recent developments of the press which I have previously noted are in point.

First comes the rise of the provincial daily, devoted particularly to the problems of a more or less limited area. In the matter of local political matters, the difficulty of public education is not as great as it is with national and international affairs. Except in the great metropolitan centers, the average citizen is well enough equipped with knowledge of the local situation to see the significance of developments. The background of any news event is likely to be familiar, or easily made familiar, to the ordinary newspaper reader. Apparently, then, there is a direction in which still greater specialization of the press may take place; indeed, is already taking place. There is distinguishable today a marked difference between the treatment of news in the great metropolitan daily papers and in their contemporaries in the smaller cities. Two quotations from small-city editors should make this point clear. The first is from the publisher of an afternoon daily in a town of 12,000, lying thirty miles from the state capital where two dailies are located, and less than fifty miles from a metropolis where five papers are

published. Thayer quotes him as follows:

With a pony telegraph service I fill a small need, which is the only competitive service required of my paper. That service is to give the most important world news briefly to a very few subscribers who do not read any other newspaper. But most of my subscribers read telegraphic news in one of the papers from the state capital and perhaps in the industrial city nearby. ..... People read my paper because it tells them the news of the home community.(10)

The second publisher whose remarks I shall quote is Stephen Bolles, editor of the Janesville(Wis.)Gazette, who says:

We have some notions that a newspaper in order to live in a community of this character, restricted by geographical limits and in competition with many other newspapers, being as we are close to large cities having most pretentious papers, must be constantly alive to the needs of this immediate community which we serve.(11).

The advertising and subscription revenue available to the newspaper in towns of from five to fifty thousand bars any possibility of its subscribing to more than the service of one news association and most certainly prevents the use of a huge corps of special correspondents such as serves every large metropolitan newspaper. Is it not logical, then, that the small-city paper can best serve society by serving first its community? This seems

(10) Newspaper Management, p. 405.
(11) Quoted by Nadder, Newspapers in Community Service, p. 208.

to be a place for the application of the adage that charity begins at home.

A second recent development that bears upon this question of the political place and function of the newspaper is the growth of national journals of opinion. It is chiefly national politics that has become too complex for the grasp of ordinary intelligence; and in this field there has been growing up a source of information akin to the class or vocational press, the journals of opinion. These in the past few years have been rapidly replacing the newspaper as a source of information for those who try to be informed on national and international affairs and as a medium for those wish to influence public action on such matters. Have these publications fully taken over the function of the newspaper as a disseminator of significant political information of world and national import? The answer seems to lie, not in space-measurement surveys of newspapers, but in a survey of the reading habits of the mass ofmankind.

Beyond this question lies another: Is it possible for the newspaper to maintain public interest in significant political and social events on a large scale? Is it worthwhile for the newspaper to make the effort to educate the

public to the significance of such events, or shall it rest content with a bare statement of them? The latter alternative seems more in line with the genius of the newspaper. News, as I have said, is a report of overt action. Yet, because the space available is limited, the newspaper does say in effect to the reader, "This event is more significant than that." It does so simply by puting an account of one event before the public and leaving out another. We have seen how this selection is affected by the state of public interest that already exists. We have seen, too, that there is possibility of the newspaper changing public interest as well as blindly following it. Just how far can the newspaper go in trying to make significant to the reader those events which are significant in the life of society? It cannot go so far as to become a quarterly journal of political science or a textbook on sociology; that is clear. But the problem of just how far it is responsible for the direction taken by public attention remains.

"Conflict" as A Way of Escape: One result of recent sociological research that appears to offer a field for

research in journalism, because it seems to offer a means for making social questions significant to the man in the street, is the stressing of conflict and crisis as social phenomena. Under the older social psychology which made so much of imitation and suggestion, the student could see little hope for social betterment; but never studies have shown that Farmer Trotter and the rest saw only one side of the picture. Not all social crises eventuate in stampedes. There is as likely to be division of opinion as unanimity, and where there is division of opinion there is conflict. Now as Dewey says, conflict "is the goadfly of thought. It stirs us to observation and memory. It instigates invention. It shocks us out of our sheep-like passivity, and sets us at poking and contriving."(12) To quote Cooley, "Orderly struggle is the time-honored method of adjusting controversies among a free people."(13) Elwood puts it in this wise: "It is usually only crises, emergencies, new situations, which call forth intelligent constructive activity, and these crises and new situations are produced by social contacts or by a changing

(12) Human Nature and Conduct, p. 300. The terms "conflict" and "crisis" as used here are not to be confused with expressions such as the "class struggle" dear to the hearts of Marxists. They refer simply to the upsetting or blocking of social habit (i.e., customs and folkways).

(13) Social Organization, p. 241.

environment."(14) The significance of the theory for the newspaper may be shown through a quotation from Park and Burgess. They say:

Wherever and wherever struggle has taken the form of conflict, whether of races, of nations, or of individual men, it has invariably captured and held the attention of spectators. And these spectators, when they did not take part in the fight, always took sides. It was this conflict of the non-combatants that made public opinion, and public opinion has always played an important role in the struggles of men.(15)

One element in the definition of a news event, as I have said, is that it is non-routine action. It is, in other words, crisis or conflict, which has often been postulated as one of the chief elements of news value. Probably the best short definition of news is still the aphorism, "News is anything that will make people talk." It has, however, its reverse side: "News is information relating to the things that are being currently talked about." News is, as Cooley and others have said, organized gossip. Cooley, at least, did not use the word disparagingly, but as a plain statement of fact. The newspaper is limited chiefly to those things which will be gossiped about.

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(14) The Psychology of Human Society, p. 211.
(15) Introduction to the Science of Sociology, p. 575.

Now the word "gossip" leaves a bad taste in the mouth of the idealist; yet its use in connection with the newspaper reveals the avenue along which the chief service of the newspaper lies. I quoted earlier the statement of Professor Ellwood that the process of public discussion is usually more effective when it goes on orally in face-to-face groups formed by friends and associates. John Dewey makes the same point when he says:

> The winged words of conversation in immediate intercourse have a vital import lacking in the fixed and frozen words of printed speech. Systematic and continuous inquiry into all the conditions which affect association and their dissemination in print is a precondition of the creation of a true public. But it and its results are but tools after all. Their final actuality is accomplished in face to face relationships by means of direct give and take. ..... Publication is partial and the public which results is partially informed and formed until the meanings it purveys pass from mouth to mouth.(16)

It is at the point where contemplated changes in the social structure get into gossip that the newspaper can have its greatest effect. Before the newspaper can come into play there must be a period of agitation through other channels. Then, when the ground is prepared, the newspaper, by its reports of overt action, plants the seeds which grow into discussion. A case in point is the

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(16) The Public and Its Problems, pp. 218-9.

recent widespread discussion of companionate marriage. Judge Lindsey's plan, as a plan, had been discussed in most of the critical periodicals of the nation long before it got into the newspapers to any extent. But when a piece of overt action occurred, when a young couple were wed avowedly under the specifications laid down by the judge, it was a matter for the newspapers. The question was no longer a merely academic one; it had become a matter of fact, or overt action. It was news; and almost overnight a subject which had been a topic for discussion among the intelligentsia became a matter of gossip to all of us. The ice is now broken for a campaign of education on the whole subject of marriage, and whether it result in a reaffirmation of the old social mores or the erection of new ones, the final result will have had the benefit of discussion by everybody. The "companionate marriage case" is an excellent illustration of all I have been trying to show in the operation of the newspaper. We have in it the overt, concrete act running counter to the accepted social code (constituting disturbance of habit, conflict), and we have also a matter which is of interest to human beings as human beings, for the family is the one

social institution that touches the lives of every one of us. The background of the action was already familiar to all, both because family life is a common factor in the experience of all human beings and also because companionate marriage was already being practiced (though not under that name) by thousands of young couples throughout the United States. And this case illustrates the factor of conflict which I was discussing previously, for here was an old moral code and a new one set off against each other in sharp contrast, with each having its protagonists.(17)

In the particular case I have been discussing, the element of conflict was clear because, as I have said, the background was familiar. Now the point I wish to make is this: If society changes by a series of crises or conflicts, and if conflict is one of the chief elements in news values, is there not a lever here which the newspaperman may use in his effort to make significant to the individual reader those events which are significant (i.e.,

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(17) Of course by the preceding argument I do not mean to maintain that the particular case could not have been handled more constructively by certain newspapers. However, despite all possible criticism of the handling of the story, discussion was precipitated, and that, in my view, is chiefly the end to be accomplished by the newspaper. It is a catalyzer, not a part of the compound.

likely to have effect) in the life of society? The answer, I believe, can only be in the affirmative, provided the limiting conditions I have described permit. In short, conflict will be the key to the situation so long as the particular conflict can be made apparent to the mass of humankind.

And there lies the problem, as well as its possible solution: on the one hand social conflict as a possible center of interest, on the other the necessity of background against which to pose the particular conflicts as they occur.

My chief contention is that the only path to an explanation of newspaper function in terms which are capable of translation into action in the workaday world lies through an application of the principles of the functional social psychology to the problems of the journalist. Under this, as a minor conclusion, I would place a statement of Walter Lippmann's which summarizes my argument in this chapter and which I believe my thesis supports. He says:

> The press is no substitute for institutions. It is like the beam of a searchlight that moves restlessly about, bringing one episode and then another out of darkness into vision. Men cannot do the work of the world by this light alone. They cannot govern society by episodes, incidents, and eruptions. It is only when they work by a steady light of their own, that the press, when it is turned upon them, reveals a situation intelligible enough for a popular decision.(18)

(18) Public Opinion, p. 564.

I quote thus my minor conclusion because I believe Mr. Lippmann's statement can be explained only against the background of functional social psychology, and that that type of social psychology best explains the newspaper is my chief contention. What I have here called conflict is, I believe, synonymous with Lippmann's "episodes, incidents and eruptions." These are what constitutes news. They are of the very nature of news as distinguished from philosophy and science. And news, vital as it is, cannot by itself maintain a democracy. "The press is no substitute for institutions." There must be persons working by a philosophy of their own to interpret the news and act upon it before, and if, news is to have effect in society. Thus is the newspaper limited by the environment in which it is placed and by the particular type of information for which it is the channel.

Ch. VI. CONCLUSION.

I said in the introduction to this thesis that my aim was not so much to reach any conclusion as to raise a problem. My only conclusion, if conclusion there must be, is as to the path along which I believe study should go in attempting to answer the questions which have been raised in the preceding chapter. It is the path marked out by the so-called functional viewpoint in sociology and psychology. Only by realizing that the newspaper is not the only social force acting in society today, but that it is yet a highly important one---only in this way can a proper basis for study of the newspaper be found. The trail has been blazed in such books as John Dewey's The Public and Its Problems and Cooley's Social Organization. But these are the philosophy of the subject rather than any answer to present problems. The detail of collecting data and organizing it is the task that now faces students of journalism and students of sociology interested in journalism. Sociology and psychology, too,

have blazed the way for a study of jorunclism with their case method. We need today numerous detailed studies of the newspaper in operation, not gross generalizations, nor yet painstaking but largely meaningless space measurements. Professor Radder has made a start in what I believe to be the right direction with his The Newspaper in Community Service, though he has only discovered possible material for case studies, not made the studies. Professor Flint's The Conscience of the Newspaper is another work approaching the subject in the same spirit, and with more attention to how the newspaper operated in each case than Radder gives. In the field of advertising, studies of the effects of particular campaigns have blazed a trail.

The particular weakness of the space measurement method which has so far chiefly characterized studies of the relationship between the newspaper and society has been that they have taken certain relationships of cause and effect for granted. They have postulated: so much news on such a subject, so much public action. They have admittedly not dealt with the quality of the news writing, which is such an important factor. Neither have they indicated whether the original impetus which caused

the insertion of certain types of news came from within the newspaper organization or from without it. We need histories of social movements written from the viewpoint of the newspaper, histories of the development of anti-slavery sentiment, of prohibition, of the exposure of Tea Pot dome. Where did they originate? What part did the newspaper play? The pamphlet? The public speaker? The weekly and monthly periodicals? Books?

Not only great national movements of this type furnish a ground for study. The search would be much easier and probably just as satisfactory in the realm of such questions as: "How Hometownville came to adopt its municipal electric light plant;" or, "Local option comes to Washington county."

In the background of such case studies must lie the topics I have been discussing throughout this thesis: the nature of news; the relation between the newspaper and other means of human intercommunication; the structure of the newspaper, and the content demanded by that structure. I have not attempted a complete exposition of these topics. My intention has been rather to indicate briefly their origins as the preliminary to further study of their implications, and to indicate the direction I believe study of the newspaper as a social phenomenon should take. My

hope is that through a continuation of such work in more detail and by more capable hands the newspaper may be brought to fulfill in society a place that will make it as honored and as honorable a profession as the constitutional guaranty of its liberties implies it should be.

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