

And thus the work is going on, and that we may add *our* mite in the furtherance of this good work is the object of this meeting. Even though it be a *mite* I think we should take courage from the fact that this movement has sprung from the faithfulness of *one* man in the expression of the impressions on his mind. Let us earnestly "do what our hands find to do," remembering, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me."

ALZINA ZAVITZ.

NEWSPAPERS.

Read in connection with Philanthropic work in Lobo First-day School.

The annual circulation of newspapers in Canada and the United States is about 1,650 million copies, which would give about forty copies every year to every man, woman and child. As I sat down to write this essay I was overawed when I conceived that the task you appointed for me was toward the purification of these 1,650 million yearly copies. If the ocean was foul, who would notice whether I put into it a drop of ink or a drop of pure water? And this is all that one common being could presume to do towards purifying the enormous daily and weekly out-put of the press. Yet, in view of all this, it would be a moral wrong to become discouraged. Discouragement would hinder us from doing the little good that God has put it in our power to do.

If I may not hope, in this article, to purify the press, I might drop a few hints that may save some from being so contaminated by it. In reading the newspaper there are some things we would be better and wiser if we did not peruse. This is a case where "ignorance is bliss." It is an inevitable law that the mind is influenced by what it associates with. Therefore we must discriminate and select, if we would read the newspaper with more profit than harm. For the sake of our mind's honor we ought to shun as poison such

headings, for instance, as these: Bold Robberies, Murder in Cold Blood, A Terrible Tragedy, An Elopement, etc., for the mind is not capable of perusing these, and be as pure for it. Disseminating by the newspaper the details of a murder, broadcast over the land, is but sowing the seed in youthful minds for future murders. The thrilling account of robberies trains the daring spirit of youth for like adventures. The story of selfish love in fiction and the more enticing one of real life, excites the inconsiderate mind with thoughts, the thinking of which is sin. There are poisons lying about our houses that are not labelled with the skull and crossbones, but they mean death all the same, death to the innocence of mind, and the purity of soul.

Then there is something to be said in the manner of reading as well as in the matter. James Freeman Clarke says, in reference to the effect of newspaper reading on our estimate of truth and on the memory, "The whole world rushes to the newspaper every morning to find out what has happened since yesterday; and the moment it finds what has happened, it cares no more about it. We think no more of yesterday's newspaper than of yesterday's dinner. We forget both as soon as possible. This is a mental dissipation which takes away mental earnestness and destroys all hearty interest in truth. It also weakens the memory. The memory, like all other powers, is strengthened by exercise. We cultivate our memory by remembering. But we read, not intending to remember what we read, but expecting to forget it then we cultivate the habit of forgetting. I think that the effect of reading newspapers, in the way we read them, must be to weaken steadily and permanently the memory of the nation. Every generation will be born with a worse memory than that which preceded it."

If this be so that James Freeman Clarke declares, we should be on our guard, in reading the newspapers, for the