

**Debate.**

*"Resolved that the Pulpit has a wider Influence than the Press."*

**FIRST AFFIRMATIVE.**

"The pulpit is the greater individual influence for good; books may be good but as Henry Ward Beecher once said, books at best are only dried men. The minister is a live man and a living influence. He has a double influence by works as well as by words. He has personal influence, he goes among the people and is largely their confidant, he is present at scenes of joy and sorrow, and has grand opportunities for studying human nature; it is necessary for him to be well acquainted with his people in order to make his sermons answer to their needs. All great sermons have had their influence first felt from the pulpit. As the majority of people are more anxious to hear an eminent minister speak from the pulpit than read his sermons in print, it has a deeper effect upon them. The minister in social life is the standard of the highest morality.

At the present day the pulpit is exerting a wide influence upon its hearers for putting down evils that are a curse to mankind. An eminent minister in New York City, preaching in his own pulpit there against gambling led to other ministers taking up the same subject in other cities and became largely the means of helping to put that evil down. The minister arouses the individual conscience from which must come all sense of responsibility. What an influence the preaching of John Wesley and George Whitfield exerted among the people of this time. John Wesley with his far reaching voice, fitted to hold the attention of his hearers, gave to his audience ideas which never left them; and who could resist Whitfield's great magnetism. Both imparted a deep religious character to British Christianity, which the press

never could have accomplished. A minister has a large influence in deciding moral and political questions, for there is scarcely a great question of the day but what is touched on in the pulpit. He is expected to be well posted on the leading questions of the day. The minister's education is superior to the majority of those around him, consequently his thought is broader and deeper. The pulpit is largely instrumental in influencing the people to provide means for sending out missionaries to New Countries and foreign lands. In many cases the Missionary is among the first to enter, and to spread Christianity. The missionary enters the New Country and foreign land and thus other parts of the country become more civilized, and protection is secured for travellers, new industries are founded, and the education of the children is looked after, among those who have had scarcely any civilization before. The people become more enlightened and are led to feel their need of education, mentally and morally. In this way the minister is the only one who opens a way for the press. In many communities the minister is the only well educated man, the only man who keeps abreast of modern intelligence and endeavor. In all ages from the pulpit great inspiration has been given to the cause of education, many institutions of learning would never have come into existence had not the idea of them first arisen from the pulpit. Harvard College, the first institution of advanced learning in the American Colonies, was the direct result of the Rev. Thomas Shepher's preaching, and during the first century of its history 317 of its Alumni became ministers of the Gospel. The great success of this institution led to similar ones in other parts. Williams and Mary grew out of the labors of the Rev. Dr. Blair. Yale and Princeton and many other colleges are monuments of the pulpits power to establish educational advantages. In times of war the pulpit's voice has been on the side of right.

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