

East Carolina Teachers College

October 24th, 1923.

Address by President Wright.

Scripture lesson - Psalm 27

May I continue this morning our series of talks on the things that enter into the life of the American people, and help to shape what we call the spirit of America. I dealt the last time with the press, and I didn't finish with the press, but I don't suppose a man in my position ever finishes with the press. There is something that we want to say about the press all the time. Some times it is something good, and some times it is best not to say anything. I believe, however, it is almost impossible to over estimate the influence of the print shop on any people. The things that come to the people from the press are so valuable in shaping the opinion of people, that practically every organization of any size has some kind of publication. Your church gets out a church paper. These clubs that exist all about over the nation, and some of them are international, each one has its publication. Almost every college has its publication, the high schools, the city schools, the county schools in some counties, the State Board of Education gets out a number of publications. Different departments of the government get out an enormous number of publications. Each political party has its publication, practically every kind of organization in this country gets out some kind of publication.

Why I went to a hotel in New York not long ago, and the next morning the hotel news sheet was under the door, printed by the hotel for the guests in the hotel. Practically, every thing in the form of an organization in this country gets out some kind of publication. Why? It is because the publication, the thing that is published, I won't call it the publication, is the very best means of giving something to the people who are interested in that organization. The labor unions have publications. Every once and a while I get a publication from some railroad justifying its position with reference to labor replying to labor union publication. You can hardly touch any one place in American life that the Press doesn't come in that peculiar angle to shape the opinion of those people to enter into the formation of the spirit of the American people. So I repeat it- it is almost impossible to over-estimate the importance of the print shop in forming the spirit of the American people. While we are talking about that side of it we might take also for the publicity side the moving picture. The moving picture is being used in a commercial way and a social way and in a religious way, and then just the movies.. They are educational, they may be very helpful or they may be just the opposite. They got so <sup>bad</sup> in this country at one time that we had to have them censored, and those films that they wouldn't allow them to produce in America they sent them to foreign countries because they wanted to sell them, and when those people in



foreign lands saw those pictures that the American people refused to see, but they were told they were pictures the American people loved to see, then those foreign nations formed at once an erroneous idea of American people.. The things that we threw into the garbage can were fed to other nations creating an absolutely erroneous idea of America among other people, and I dare say we get some of the same kind of pictures from other countries, and in that way we fail to get a correct idea of the other people. Now everything we see and everything we hear enters into the life of each one of us. Do you know the color of the wall on your room at home, or here or any where else, has something to do with the kind of disposition you have? Do you know the kind of clothes that you wear has something to do with the kind of character you build. The things that we hear enter into our lives, and consciously or unconsciously help to mould our character, and to give us our turn in life. In other words it enters into the formation of the spirit of the individual and multiply the individual by you have the spirit of the nation. Now the moving picture takes a lot of the pleasure out of life. I know that. A man on one occasion spent a considerable sum of money to go to Europe to see the Alps, and he wouldn't go up on the Alps. Wouldn't go up at all, sat down in the dumps in the hotel. He says I have seen every bit of this in the movies. It took all of the pleasure out of the trip for him because the moving pictures had brought the Alps to that man at his home back in his home town. It is a wonderful instrument in the education of the people. They are making a tremendous appeal through the moving pictures to the childhood of America. You know the movie man had much rather get my little boy- William- than to get me. There is only about 24 years of me, but there will be 60 of him, and if they could make him form the habit early they have a patron, and they have got him all right. They would give a large sum of money to have the public school folks of American back them, endorse them unhesitatingly. I know whereof I speak. Why we have to do that because they realize the influence of the moving picture has on a people. It isn't quite as influential as the newspapers but it is almost. (Bell rang)

Just a minute. The radio phone or radio is going to be almost as influential as either of the others. It isn't quite so influential yet, but anything that will allow a woman to stand in New York and sing and have an audience, a multitude of audiences spread out over the United States, and an audience in France, England and Germany, anything with that power is going to be one of the greatest instruments in shaping the spirit of the American people.

As I was coming home on a late train last evening a man said "if the report that is broadcasted from the Weather Bureau is correct, the people in New England are in a bad fix." Some one said "what is that?" The report to-night is that all New England is freezing up. The storm has produced that effect in New England. Here is a man down here in North Carolina, and here is a man in Washington telling him that the people in Bangor, Me. are about to freeze to death, and it is nothing miraculous.

I was lying in my bed some time ago trying to go to sleep,



and there was a racket going on, and Mrs. Wright said what is that? I said, dont you know what that is? I said, that is the radio phone down at the Serve-U station. I said, here we are trying to go to sleep in a house here in front of the college and the radio phone is keeping us awake.

Of course the woman didn't know she was troubling the President of East Carolina Teachers College and she didn't care, but it is simply wonderful when you stop and think about it, and the radio phone is going to be an instrument in shaping the destiny of this nation

Any thing that will carry information now is a great instrument in shaping the spirit of the American people.

I won't talk any more on that subject for to-day.