

**ENGLISH JOURNALISM,
AND THE MEN WHO
HAVE MADE IT**

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English Journalism, and the Men Who Have Made It by Charles Pebody

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CHARLES PEBODY

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BY

CHARLES PEBODY.

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P R E F A C E .

THE history of English Journalism has yet to be written. It ought to be one of the most interesting works upon our library shelves, dealing, as it does, with the achievements of men who have in many cases been distinguished by eloquence, by high public spirit, and by some of the rarest civic virtues, as well as with the rise and growth of an institution which has in a few years placed itself on a level, as far as power and influence are concerned, with the old Estates of the Realm.

There are, of course, many works upon the Press—sketches of men, sketches of newspapers, anecdotes and reminiscences—some of them, like Mr. James Grant's well-known volumes, to which I am frequently indebted in the following pages, works of considerable interest. But history, in any adequate sense of the term, there is none; partly, perhaps, because the Press, as an institution, is of comparatively recent origin, and

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partly because an historian, when he takes up his pen to sketch an institution, a career, or a campaign, prefers, if possible, to deal with accomplished facts—with that which is passed and gone, with men and events

“Whose distant footsteps echo
Through the corridors of time,”

or at all events with that which is complete in itself, instead of dealing with one of the living forces of the moment, where everything is controversy, criticism, chaos. Perspective constitutes one of the charms of history as well as of art.

You cannot very well write the history of an institution which, like the Newspaper Press, is almost day by day striking out fresh developments of its enterprise and power; which is superseding, or threatening to supersede, with its staff of special correspondents, the functions of our ambassadors; which is rivalling with its Forbeses, its Stanleys, its MacGabhans, and O'Donovans the exploits of the Livingstones, the Vambérys, and the Bakers whose books of travel are among the most delightful of our companions; and which, with all this, is arrogating to itself some of the chief functions of Parliament—most of its

functions of public criticism, most of its functions of debate, and many of its functions as a Constitutional check upon the conduct of Ministers.

Yet there never was an institution in the world that better deserved to have its history written than the Newspaper Press. For the history of the English Press is the history, if not of English liberty, of all those popular forces and political franchises which have given strength and solidity to English institutions; renewed the youth of the State; made England, with its ancient monarchical institutions, with its feudal relics, with its aristocracy, and with its Established Church, the freest State in the world; purified the public service; raised the tone of our public life; made bribery and corruption, in the old sense of the term, impossible; and welded together the whole British Empire, with all its races, all its religions, into a compact and powerful mass, which moves, when it moves at all, with a force, a unanimity, and a decision that constitute Public Opinion one of the marvels of our time.

I, of course, cannot attempt in the narrow compass of this volume to fill the conspicuous blank in our literature which will have, one of these days, to

be filled with a history of Journalism. But a series of publications like this would hardly be complete without a volume upon the Newspaper Press: without some account of its origin, of its development, of its present position, and of the men who have made it what it is, of the men by whom the Newspaper Press is still carried on—the special correspondents, the reporters, the contributors, the proprietors; and that is the purpose of the present work. The nature of the subject will perhaps justify me, if nothing else does, in expressing a hope that mine will not be the least interesting volume of the series.

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