

## STEAD PROPHESED A VIOLENT DEATH

### ***New York Times***

Tuesday 23 April 1912

Once Said He Would Never Die in His Bed, but in a Crowd, Struggling

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2,000 AT MEMORIAL FOR HIM

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Dr. Hillis and J. A. MacDonald Praise Him as an Editor and a Fighter Against War and Social Evils

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More than 2,000 persons attended the memorial meeting of the Men and Religion Forward Movement's Conservation Congress at Carnegie Hall last night in honor of the late William T. Stead, the English editor and reformer, who met his death in the sinking of the Titanic while on his way here to speak on "Universal Peace" at the congress.

The platform and boxes of the big hall were draped with entwined English and American flags, and the reading desk in the centre of the stage was hung with a mourning wreath, in the centre of which was a large picture of Mr. Stead, a small original photograph having been obtained from The American Review of Reviews and enlarged.

The Rev. Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis of Plymouth Church, Brooklyn; J. A. MacDonald, the Toronto editor; the Rev. Dr. W. A. Cameron of Toronto, the Rev. O. S. Davis, President of the Chicago Theological Seminary, and Archdeacon Madden of Liverpool, who very nearly accompanied Mr. Stead on the Titanic, were among the speakers.

Dr. Hillis startled the big audience by intimating that in the final conversation which Dr. Hillis and Mr. Stead had had together, the last time the English editor was in this country, the latter had prophesied his violent and tragic death.

"We are here to celebrate the life, character, and, especially the death of a man so brave and chivalrous that he gave his life and indeed would have given all he had in this world to have saved his fellow passengers," said Dr. Hillis. "He was born in a minister's house and was brought up in a parson's library. He had the training of a clergyman, but he became a great journalist. Melville Stone, head of The Associated Press, told me only the other day that Stead carried a newspaper man's instinct to the point of genius. The founding of a great magazine was only one of many of his achievements. He consecrated this magazine to social reform. Now every magazine in this country is pursuing his methods.

#### His Social Service

"He flung himself like a knight against the social evil. Men in Parliament had been trying to put that particular traffic down for thirty years. In his Pall Mall Gazette, Stead openly denounced the rich and influential men who were growing still more wealthy by this traffic. He accused them publicly of living and amassing wealth from the bodies and souls of girls. They had him thrown into jail. But now their names are in the mud and Stead is in Heaven.

"He founded the great English Review of Reviews and started The American Review of Reviews and also The Australian Review of Reviews. We praise him because he was a very great editorial writer. He was

also especially interested in publishing low-priced literature for the masses of the people. He had a real passion for Christ's poor. Because he loved Christ's poor, he published his penny biographies. He worked for the betterment of the men on the docks, for shortening the hours of labor. He joined in the international movement against war. He went to St. Petersburg and published an appeal for what he called the "United States of Europe." He said once that he got his universal peace idea from the little volume of James Russell Lowell's poems which, with the copy of the "Imitation of Christ" which "Chinese" Gordon had lent him, he always carried in his coat pocket.

#### The Influence of Lowell

"When he was an 18-year-old boy and was trying to memorize some of Lowell's poems he walked past a poorhouse, its windows aflame with the setting-sun. He thereupon dedicated himself to bear the burdens of Christ's poor. Stead had the genius of a wonderful vision. He was a particularly skillful artist in portraying the characters of his generation. He was remorselessly and pitilessly right. His passion for justice, however, made his blade heal again almost as soon as it cut. Some of you may not have liked him because he was interested in psychic research. Death is so terrible a problem that if a man lost faith he might be led back by a study of psychic phenomena. We don't need psychic phenomena to make us believe in God and immortality. But the last day Stead spent in this country he had luncheon with Mrs. Hillis and myself and prophesied that he would die, not in his bed, as we expected to, but in a crowd and by violence.

"I had a vision of a mob. I believe I shall not die as you expect to, but that I shall be kicked to death in the street," was the way he put it.

#### Mr. and Mrs. Straus

"I congratulate Stead on his death. And I also congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Straus, the venerable Jewish couple who taught us Christians how to love. That Jewish woman who recognized her opportunity to show the world the example of her love has permanently [sic] raised all the people of the United States to a different level. The United States will always be on a higher spiritual plane because of the way that Stead and the Strauses died on the Titanic. The imaginations of 90,000,000 have been captured and transformed. I loved the man Stead. As a journalist he was not surpassed. His name will be inscribed among the great editors of the world. He owed it to Christianity. He was a busy man. But he was a Christian. Whenever the clock struck he was always in the church. May God lend a culture like Stead's to the young men of this country who start in the great career of journalism."

#### Mr. MacDonald's Remarks

After a prayer by Archdeacon Madden of Liverpool and singing by the association quartet, J. A. MacDonald, editor of The Toronto Globe, who visited Stead in London last June and brought from him a message to the American people, spoke. "Stead was an ordained apostle of universal peace," said Mr. MacDonald. "He pleaded for it with Kings, Czars, and ministers. He fought with the beasts of greed and plunder and the fire-eating jingoists. When I visited him last June he talked especially about his wish to lift the journalists of America and England against the war syndicates which menace the world---the financial 'war lords.' Most of all did he believe in the future of the Anglo-Saxon race. When I left him for the last time last June he placed his hand on my shoulder and said: 'You Americans must remember your English-speaking fraternity. And [this he said with unusual emphasis] remember that Canada holds the key.' Had he been here tonight he would have undoubtedly made us face the awful facts of war---its inconceivable folly, its intolerable burden. Please God at least that the Anglo-Saxon's sword shall never be drawn against his brother Anglo-Saxon."

Jane Addams of Hull House, Chicago, will address the Congress this Morning at Carnegie Hall on "The

Church and the Social Evil."

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