

Wellesley Talk:

If it ^{is} quick returns you are after I have nothing to say to you. I have the same feeling about stepping into good positions through luck, pull, persuasiveness, trading on connections, talent, personal appeal, that I have about gambling on the stock exchange. If you want to gamble in the profession I am the last one to help you.

As a fact, I know of no method for success in any form of journalism, save that of persisting ^{out} to work, hard work, self-denial, and an eye always on the star ahead.

That is, when you enter this great house of the writer's world, unless you are willing to begin at the bottom and take the stairs ⁱⁿ rooms as they come, intent on reaching the top or reaching a room where you are convinced that you have a real piece of work, useful, satisfactory, something that you are willing to follow through life, I am afraid this talk will be useless.

Consider first your bent - what aptitude - what is it that you would like to do in the house. Is it writing, is it editing, is it administration, is it managerial, or executive. There is a place for all these talents and the old ^{saw} ^{||} that there is always room at the top is true in the field of journalism, as in every other ^{field}. Moreover, there are today women who have proved themselves in all these positions or departments. Look to yourself and not to somebody else for the particular kind of activity which appeals most to you.

Let us say it is writing. How are you to get your foot inside the door which leads to the writer's chambers? Here again you should look to yourself. What is it you want to write? Do you want to be a journalist? That is, do you want to report and interpret the life about you as it is reported and interpreted in the daily, weekly, monthly press and in the flood of journalistic books which follow? I know ^{better} no way myself than beginning frankly with a newspaper. A newspaper is a great trainer in certain essential qualities of the writer; it teaches you by the hardest kind of experience when a fact is a fact; you cannot go long in any newspaper if you do not have a passion for truth, for that is what the fact is - the truth about the thing - the least thing, the biggest thing. Get the fact about the daily reportings that the newspapers calls of them and you will get a feeling for the facts.

Another essential thing that a newspaper experience gives one who goes in it determined that all there is in it for him as a writer, is that ^{an} ~~it~~ is invaluable in ^{travelling} ~~determining~~ an observation. It does not matter what you propose to be - poet, novelist, essayist, historian or journalist, editorial or reporter, the power to observe exactly, seeing with a seeing eye is essential. Study any great writing and what a part seeing plays in it.

You get your training in that in journalism if you prove you are worth your salt.

And there comes ^{you} a reaction, if your writing is to be

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so invaluable. What is this fact - the ^{du} thing seems ^u to say to you? You must ~~attach it~~, fix it, train your mind to lay hands on that reaction; not necessarily to put down into the report you may be making of facts gathered, but to have it there in the back of your mind the ^{thing-} all that sub-conscious wisdom alive and growing. It is the easiest thing to blunt in the world - this intuitive sense of the meaning of things.

But you may ask - How do you get on to a newspaper? How do you get the chance to get this early experience in gathering facts, seeing, sorting out what things mean to you?

If it is writing you are after you have not an easy approach for you must prove that you can do the work of a journalist - do it so you will not be a nuisance or a drag - see what is new - what is fitting - see it exactly - and you probably if you go in then on a newspaper if any importance whatever, ^{will} go in as a cub reporter, as it is called. And you earn according to what the newspaper expects - given an assignment; you get on according to the success with which you fill these assignments.

But that ^{is not} necessarily all ~~that~~ there is to it. If you are wise, diligent, far-seeing enough, while you are at work on this daily experience you will be watching the chance for special articles - seeing things which you can work out for the weekly daily magazine supplements.

Wally & seizing opportunity