

Church and Its Troubles

From the beginning of the ages various reforms, innovations and changes have been attempted or made in every religion practically every year. In ancient days the reformers were given short shifts, if they came in the way of the ruling powers, the kings and priests; in the early history of many European nations the reformers were boiled in oil or their convictions removed in some other gentle manner and even in American colonies for a long time religion was not a matter of conviction but was merely the ideas of the head men of the state. But despite persecution, or maybe because of it, certain men have, from time to time, given their ideas into circulation and lived long enough to make radical changes in existing forms. Among the most important of these men, from a historical religious standpoint, may be mentioned Luther, Calvin, Hess and Wesley. Generally when all attempt to stop the reformers or their reforms had failed, a compromise was attempted and the original or parent body modified its views. But such compromises were often for political reasons and everybody concerned had their fingers crossed. In other words nobody gave one iota of his beliefs and never intended to permit others to maintain contrary views. And so religion wars without end devastated the world and even in this day and age the fanatics of all races take their toll of life.

Our country was founded upon the rock of religious toleration to all and in spite of various and spasmodic attempts to introduce religion into politics, we have repulsed most attempts upon this form of independence. Also the several churches have uncrossed their fingers so often and honestly compact principles, that the ordinary run of men now begin to see that the hedges about the various churches have been built up by man and that the only difference between the Gods of the Chinaman, Hindu, and Turk and the Christian creed is a little higher hedge built up by man's intolerance and lack of understanding his fellow. But altho the general public now begin to see the higher ideas in all religion yet certain ones in all churches are still slow in seeing the advantage of church union and real toleration of another man's ideas. Or if they do see the advantage, they do not grasp it and permit a golden opportunity to pass. It is true that in nearly all parts of America a series of Union Meetings are held every year and from that we may hope for the better. For in union there is strength.

And now for a few suggestions of the power for real good that a church may have in any community. For a crisis has been reached the young people are not satisfied with conditions as they are now offered, and a reform is necessary even if the reformers receive the usual old time treatment.

Religious toleration, what a blessed word and how much it is abused. To become a real power for good the Christian people of the world must unite, if not in one vast union then at least in spirit and mutual help. Union Meetings, Union Spirit and United Churches with a tolerant regard for the forms and fads of the faith of others will induce a Christ-like spirit throughout the land. Real consideration for the Gods of the so-called heathen, who no doubt believe in another world only in another way and in different forms. Above all let us be Tolerant.

Smiles for everybody, charity to all in our thoughts, friendship and good feeling toward others and a practice of Christianity as well as the reading of it, will help us to be tolerant of others. So when the commercial traveler comes to town or the farmer boy walks the streets they will not feel that our town is composed of cold suspicious inhabitants. Our police force is good and can do most of the Sherlock Holmes work without assistance. So as some popular author has it "Smile, damn you, smile, and you will feel better."

Where are gone the good old churches socials, picnics and parties where everybody met, strangers were welcome and nobody was sad. Going, going, gone. The Lord did not intend for us to be unhappy and it is not necessary to commercialize such affairs to make money for this and that. Is it because we don't want to become acquainted would rather go to the movie or because we are so busy that we cannot stop for a few minutes peaceful recreation. The picnic can be made interesting enough and we are convinced that it will be snappy we will come. Many entertainments of this kind be made interesting enough for the present generation? Will a Christian people say that it can't be done? And wouldn't it be worth while?

It is reported that certain churches have opened their doors throughout the week to civic and community organizations. And in these cases, what are the places of God being used for? Not for so-called sacred purposes, certainly not. They are used for the instruction of children, education of the people and training of the body that covers a possible Christian soul. Some Houses are being used as a gathering place for the poor, homeless and hungry. And are not the above deeds that Christ would have done? Some may claim that this is profaning the House of God but Christ taught and labored more often on the highways and byways and so chose his audience wherever it could be found. If we consider the Temple of God to be the place where His Word is, or can be taught, then indeed the

true Sacred places will be the mountains, forests and highways. And never can man erect as wonderful a Temple as may be found by any that wish to use them, the great wayside of the world which are not inclosed by man's feeble attempts at architecture. So let us hope that the church door will be no longer closed making it impossible, as it is now, for a poor sick man to die upon the very steps without aid when a very little might help many such. Rather make it possible to fill the House with happy children, strangers and older people throughout the week. It can be done so why not today.

And for an example of what has been done in other places and which may try to follow no matter how small our means or membership: The First Presbyterian Church at New Castle Pennsylvania, built a \$300,000 brownstone church some time ago and drew up in the plans and built into the basement a rest room, open day and night, with a janitor always present, where ALL strangers could come at any time find cooking facilities, bath, toilet, some cooking supplies and a warm welcome. And no matter how trample the stranger looked he was welcome. Also notices were placed in the hotels, Post Offices and all prominent places advising everyone to come and be sure of a welcome. Such an action was very unusual in a wealthy congregation and should not be condemned. Other churches have in various localities, adopted the same idea. In Atlanta Georgia, there is such a plan either under way or under advisement.

And now in closing, have you ever seen a Church where the congregation were more interested in the building their individual plans or dresses than in the children and growing boys? Children require happiness, joys and play. As starved children will search the gutter for food so will the joy starved children seek the saloon or its equivalent unless we build up a constructive, helpful program for them within the home church. Even a church could have a Boy's Club in its midst and pay more attention to our own children and let the heathen alone for a while, if necessary. Let us remember that we were red-blooded animals ourselves when we were young and so look at the ambition of the younger people in the reflected light of our own early days. And certainly we all had red blood at one time in our life.

Lecturer Found

Chautauqua Lecturer found: It having come to our notice that some person or persons, is engaged in giving a series of lectures before the Biology and other classes of the local High School, pertaining to the general subject of Forestry and specifically taking up Fire Prevention and Suppression, and fearing that evil would result therefrom should the true facts of Forestry not be given, and instant and complete investigation was made by our Supervisor, with the result that the culprit was found and sentenced to take the position of Lecturer Extraordinary of the Nantahala Forest, to operate in the Forests thereof in North Carolina South Carolina, and Georgia. The truth must out—Thomas W. Alexander, Jr. Forester has been discovered.

His first lecture was before the Science Class and he was allotted the full period—one hour. Later investigations showed that he spent full time and that he covered only half of Fire Prevention. Being ambitious and more especially not wanting to lose the best part of his oration on the desert air, he asked for permission to speak before the Biology Class next day. So next day he would up and sidetrack Fire Prevention in favor of his favorites—Fire Prevention and then tried to act surprised when the bell rang for noon. It was while Alex was begging for the class in Basketball in which he is a star, of the first magnitude, that the Supervisor found him out and compromised with the Student Body by allowing him to orate one hour a week, before Student Assembly.

Nor is this all. Even the churches have been disrupted. The young people pleaded so earnestly for him prayer and collection, and he talked so long and earnestly that they forgot that he was given a place between got the collection. I don't know what would have happened to prayer if he had started first. It is too early to know the full returns, but we suspect that Farmers Association and Park Commission, have both asked for his services. If anyone wants to see Alexander now on real business it is necessary to push away an admiring circle of longwhiskered gents and admiring children, tap him on the shoulder to stop his train of thought for a moment and shout the password "Fire," and watch him then make a start for his trusty knapsack.

As an aid to his admirers in "tuning in" on these outbursts of wisdom the Supervisor has ordered a lantern and one thousand slides. It may be necessary to erect a broadcasting station with call letters FIRE!

Now maybe you think I am spoofing you. Well you just wait until you see him on the Chautauqua platform, take it from me. B. B. B. —Service Mulletin U. S. Forest Service.

Sleepiness Elusive.

Sleepiness is such an elusive function that it visits you in your evening chair, but flees as soon as bedtime arrives.

X-Ray Sermons

Let's Boost the Sunday Schools.
"Sow a thought and you reap an act,

Sow an act and you reap a habit,
Sow a habit and you reap a life,
Sow a life and you reap a destiny."

If we wish to lay the foundation upon which we can build good business, good government, and good social conditions, we must put noble thoughts into the chief place in the hearts of the children around us. We have no more right to allow the rising generation to fill their minds with trash than we have to allow them to eat poison. The Sunday school should be the chief means for leading the little one to form the leading the little ones to form the habit of thinking continually of worth while things. This being so the greatest work that any person can do is to carry on the work for which he is best fitted in the Sunday school nearest him.

Who should go to Sunday school? The answer is that parents should go and take their children with them. And when they are assembled at the church, they should do something more than to listen at one of their number say a formal prayer and then plod in dead-headed way through the school should be a gathering of earnest men, women, and children, who should sincerely study with the definite purpose of learning about their Savior and the way of life. Lessons should be made as vitally interesting as possible, and there should not be either nonsense or an artificial solemnity that will freeze the life of the work.

And when we have gone to Sunday school and made a proper study of the lesson, still we have done but part of our duty. We should be tremendously interested in getting others to attend. "Go out in the highways and hedges and compel them to come." Who knows when some boy or girl may be saved from a life of failure and shame and made into a valuable citizen—just by bringing the influence of a good Sunday school into the boy's or girl's life at some critical period? After the multitude has been fed, Christ commanded that the very fragments of food should be picked up and that nothing should be lost. Are there not in your neighborhood some fragments of humanity—some persons whose souls have been crippled and warped by sin, whom you might lead to attend church services? Why not appoint a committee from each class in your Sunday school and have them to go to the home of all who are staying away from services and invite them to join you in Sunday school work? Why not try to get every person in the community to take a part in the work? That would mean organizing a home department for those who are "shut-ins". Why not send flowers or more valuable gifts from your Sunday school to sick persons in their homes and to those who are in jails and poorhouses? Christ would do such things and if you would be like Him you must do things different from what are done by most people.

Learning More Words

While some teachers seem to think that the present fad of cross word puzzles is not specially beneficial from the educational point of view, it would seem as if it should help many people to learn more words and enlarge their vocabulary.

The complaint is often made that many people know so very few words. Authorities on language reports that a great many of them know only a narrow range of ordinary terms by which they make their daily wants known, and engage in conversation on a very simple basis. But when it comes to expressions conveying the finer shades of meaning, they are hopelessly lost.

If such people set out to read some informative article or the discussion of some political subject, they are confronted by a large number of words that are unfamiliar to them. They lose the thread of the argument, and are likely to turn back to some very simple article or story that shall be within their reach.

One would think cross-word puzzles might have some effect to wake these people up to the value of words and know the meaning of more of them, so that discussion of important subjects should not seem so formidable to them.

Many complaints have been made because so many people are unable to spell correctly, so that they appear ignorant and uninformative. But inability to understand the meaning of words is a still more serious fault. An intelligent person who is able to take an influential part in progressive movements, may be a poor speller. Meanwhile some good spellers have a narrow range of interests. The modern schools are doing much to increase the knowledge of words, by their efforts to have their pupils form the habit of reading general literature, through which their familiarity with words is increased.

A Big Success.

"Was your garden a success last year?"
"Very much so. My neighbor's chickens took first prize at the poultry show."

DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS

in

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Robin Hood and his merry crew who took from the rich to aid the poor; his love for sweet Maid Marian; Sherwood Forest and Nottingham Town; Friar Tuck and Little John with their staves and cudgels—all etched out of the dim past and made to live again!

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Our Country Still Best

"Big Bill" Haywood would rather come to America and face prison than to stay in the communistic Russia of his muddled dreams. Emma Goldman, Sick at heart over the failure of the soviet oligarchy to give or even dream a people's government, wants to come "home" to the land she said she despised. Theodore Petroff, a vulgar swindler caught in Wisconsin, pleads for life imprisonment in this country rather than deportation and freedom in Russia.

There are many thing that need fixing; thing that need the golden rule and the rule of common sense and the teaching of experience. But it is still the best country. It can be made still better when more realize this in the same sense that any sovereign realizes the responsibility for the charge committed to his care. More active participation in every public move, and intelligent vote in every primary a realization that every broken law is a personal assault on the national life would greatly improve social and political conditions in Our Country.—Manufacturer.

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