CHURCH TRAMP ARTICLES

Having To Do With a Real Revival Of Religion In Christian Homes By GENERATION AND REGENERATION

The Birth of Holy Children (I. Cor. 7:14) and Their Nurture By Christian Parents, in Christian Homes, Directed and Supported By The Christian Churches

(Editor's Note: This is one of a series of articles that appeared in the Detroit News-Tribune between the years 1899-1910. They were written by Henry Wood Booth, of Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills, under the nom-de-plume of "Lais." Although we perhaps may not agree with all that "Lais" has written, still we believe them of sufficient value and interest to our readers to reproduce them in The Eccentric.)

OCTOBER 16, 1904.

He Again Discusses the Flirting Evil, and Urges Parents to Instruct Their Girls About It.

I have to thank "One Who Hates Flirting" for directing my attention to this reprehensible practice. I have been going to take it up again many times, as a matter of duty, for I really do not like to be discussing such things, but some one should do it, and who better suited than a grandfather, like myself?

Mrs. Sherman's flirt is a woman, young and beautiful, of course, who flirts with men for no other purpose than conquering them and adding them as strings to her harp, on which she plays at will. Her flirt is essentially the heartless, soulless, vain coquette. Neither sexual nor sensual, but just callous and selfish.

But, the flirts and the flirtings I am concerned about I described before in the paragraph to which our fair correspondent refers, and which she asks the republication of. It appeared in my No. 115, of Aug. 10, 1902, thus:

A PARTING SHOT ABOUT FLIRTING.

"There are many other things that need attention which the pulpit "fights shy" of, and of which—to mention no more at this time—not the least is 'flirting.' The real meaning of this modern term is not to be found in the dictionaries. I would define it is 'A social disease which may affect people of all ages after childhood and before senility.' It invariably attacks its victims in pairs—one of each sex. The symptoms, although always quite pronounced, are not often visible to others. They consist in certain well understood familiarities naturally incident to a state of matrimony and not allowable to such couples as are not married. Such is the disease. As to the particular combination of the couples afflicted with it, I would say that, as married couples never flirt with each other, so couples engaged to be married do not flirt with each other. Flirting always takes place between either a married man and an unmarried woman or a married woman other than his own wife; or between a married woman and an unmarried man or a married man other than her own husband; or between an unmarried man and a married woman or an unmarried woman whom he has no expectation or intention of marrying; or, finally, between an unmarried woman and a married man or an unmarried man whom she has no expectation or intention of marrying. It will be seen that flirting, in addition to being invariably a dangerous disease, is always on Christian principles a positive sin. And that is all I intend to say about it at this time."

* * *

This is a delicate affair, so I shall have to handle it gingerly. Moreover, it must not be long drawn out. Divorces usually begin in flirting. Most abandoned women began their career by allowing men to flirt with them when girls. Boys in their 'teens do not, as a rule, flirt, but girls—American and Canadian girls—in their 'teens, as a rule, do, when they get a chance. The reason why girls flirt and boys do not flirt is because girls, many of them, are taught to flirt by their male relatives, but boys are not taught to flirt by their female relatives. Moreover, women, as a rule, are never known to flirt after they are forty with anyone. But old men, grandfathers, are often known to flirt with quite young girls.

I say girls are often taught to flirt not intentionally, of course, but thoughtlessly. The first lesson is often given by the girl's own father, who when she is very little, takes her on his knee and hugs and kisses and tickles and fondles her. These familiarities are continued year after year until the girl is 10, 12, 14 and more years old. Yes, I have seen a father take his grown-up daughter on his knee and deal with her in a manner that made me sick. Mothers never deal with their sons in this way. The consequence is that big brothers, young men cousins, uncles, etc., seeing that the father's actions towards his daughter please her, take their cue from him—particularly if the girl has been taught to dance the fashionable dances. When such a girl begins to receive the attentions of young men with a view to matrimony, her only idea of courtship is flirting. She is not contented with one lover at a time. She wants several and scruples not to sample them all. She thinks she is posted and knows the limits. Perhaps she is and does, but does she never pass the limits? Those who have watched how these affairs work say that the bold, forward young man, with such girls, is always the favorite, while a modest, diffident one, however desirable he may be otherwise, stands no show at all.

Now, let me express an opinion. In my opinion, this flirting practice such as I have described is, alas, too common. Although necessarily mostly done in secret, it is well known to exist to an alarming extent. I say it is dangerous, and damnably demoralizing. Men of course are responsible for it—altogether responsible—excepting that girls are not taught by their mothers, as they should be, to repel first suggestions and advances. Very few men who find their attentions are offensive and may lead to trouble will continue them. Girls should be taught that all factual familiarities of every kind, beyond a respectful kiss on the cheek, are highly improper from even male relatives. Married women receive attentions beyond this from their husbands only. Unmarried women and girls receive attentions beyond this from lovers to whom they are engaged only. No decent girl can entertain two or more lovers of this class any more than a married woman can entertain two or more husbands. When a marriageable girl entertains a lover to the extent of sitting alone with him after dark on the verandah, or in a room, or elsewhere away from common observation, she should at once cease receiving similar attentions from any other man whatsoever. If, however, one does appear that suits her better she should immediately withdraw herself from the first and have no more familiarity with him.

I am satisfied that much more needs to be said regarding the education and training of young girls as to how they should act and what they should say when approached amorously, if not indecently, by men, whether openly or secretly; but having "probed" the matter, as my mentor terms it, as far as is safe at this time, I must again defer further treatment until the patient rallies from the effects of this operation—so to speak.

* * *

To Mrs. P. B., Grand Haven.—Owing to other matters on the tapis, I am unable at present to write an article on the subject you name. I have filed your letter as reference, however, and promise to take the matter up soon. Am sorry I cannot comply with your request soon enough for your purpose.

* * *

To "R. E." city.—The question of reformed episcopal orders will come up at the present Protestant Episcopal general convention. The matter is in the hands of a committee. There is no probability of anything being done with it. It will be referred back, doubtless.

* * *

To "A Father," Kalamazoo, Mich.—The "Bell, Book and Candle Society" is not connected with any church. It is in the hands of laymen at present and is entirely undenominational.

JUNE 4, 1905.

Laic Reverts to His Agicles on a Real Revival of Religion by the Christian Nurture of Christian Children by Christian Parents in Christian Homes. With a Word About Sabbath Keeping.

In looking over the index to my articles, herewith, I am especially proud of what I call my "revival articles"—Nos. 179 to 182—and hope some day to revise them and get them into more permanent form. With the profoundest reverence and respect for the manifest genuineness of the great revival now going on in Wales, and the numerous more human efforts being put forth for the same purpose by Torry and Alexander and other so-called revivalists elsewhere, I firmly believe that is not the kind of a revival that we most need in this country. We do not so much need more converts to Christianity as to make good those we have. Our churches are full of counterfeit Christians who, like the Samaritans of old, "fear the Lord" but continue to "serve their graven images" (2 Kings 17:41). They go to church and listen to the choir, and bear with a 20-minute sermon, but all the remainder of their time is given to worldliness. I don't want to be uncharitable, but I firmly believe there are tens of thousands of people in this country who are in good standing as church members who are nothing but "tares," "chaff," "bad fish," "goats," "foolish virgins," "one-talent" people; people who have "believed," but who have not "continued," "endured"; they are not "abiding in the vine"; and, unless a revival strikes them before they die, by and by, when the Son of Man sends forth his angels, they will be "cast forth as a branch" (John 15:6) and "cast into a furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:41). What we need is a revival in the midst of the churches, among the members, and beginning with the pastors themselves. And it must not be a new-fangled evangelism either, but a mighty working of the spirit of God in the good old way.

It will be remembered, also, that in connection with this, what I called "real revival" movement, I advocated a restoration of the Christian household and a setting up again of household religion. Christian "families" have, as a rule, dwindled down to one or two children at the most, and some couples who pose as "Christians" don't have any, simply because they "don't want them" or "can't afford to have them." And so, instead of this country being populated by the best people of the land, it is being populated by the lowest, the meanest, the most ignorant and the most degraded. These all have large families who are to be the future citizens of this republic.

Some time before President Roosevelt published his philippic against "race suicide" I directed attention to the same subject in these columns. But it is misunderstood. There is no danger of the human race dying out through race suicide; the Almighty has taken care of that. The danger is that the American race, the superior race, the Christian race, will die out. Fr. Crowley, in his book, "The Parochial School," which I reviewed a few weeks ago, claims that the Roman Catholic church in this country has now 30,000,000 less members than it ought to have. Don't think these people have all gone over to Protestantism. That is not it. The truth is, Catholics do not reproduce themselves naturally, let alone multiply as they naturally would if not hindered. To begin with, there are 12,000 priests, who are sworn to celibacy. Then there are, I don't know how many, but thousands of religious men belonging to religious orders who have taken the same vow—not to beget children. To match these, there are perhaps twice as many religious women, nuns of various sorts, who also have vowed not to have children. These all are better fitted to be fathers and mothers of Christian families than are any of the members of that great church. Then it is well known that foreigners belonging to that church speedily become "Americanized" and, notwithstanding the confessional, soon come to believe that children are an encumbrance, and therefore are by no means slow to learn the latest approved methods for preventing their appearance.

As for Protestants, many of them glory in their shame. Boast of their barrenness, and turn up their noses at what they call "beastly big families." The truth is that no brute beast was ever guilty of doing as they do. Let them be sure their sin will find them out, in due time. If a lustful look is adultery in the heart, then foeticide and germicide are murder. I showed in the articles referred to, that if our forbears had acted as some Christians now act, large numbers of the greatest men that ever trod the earth would never have had a being. God only knows how many great men and great women are, so to speak, forbidden an existence, daily.

But I have more to say about this by and by. I have referred to it now because before we can have family religion we must first have families, and I want just to keep up the interest in a revival of family religion. With all due deference to our brethren, the Roman Catholics, who lay so much stress on church attendance as to make neglect of it a mortal sin, I pin my faith rather to religion in the home. I can conceive of people being at church-goers and yet having very little real religion, but I cannot conceive of the father and mother of a family of children meeting together for daily worship and never eating without first returning thanks, unless they are sincerely religious from the heart. The thing, then, that we most need now is a revival of the Christian nurture of Christian children by Christian parents in Christian homes. Give us this, and a real revival in the churches will follow as a matter of course.

* * *

Another important thing that I want to keep alive is the question of Sabbath keeping. It will be seen that I discussed this in numbers 212-214. Every year more and more men and women have to work on Sunday, and as only the Sunday Sabbath is recognized these people live without any Sabbath rest at all. I have shown that the Sabbath of the decalog is not a specific day, but the seventh day following any six days of labor. I have advocated, therefore, a general recognition of the old Saturday Sabbath as co-ordinate with the Sunday Sabbath, so that all who work on Sunday may rest on Saturday, and all who work on Saturday may rest on Sunday. I contend that the decalog is still in force for Christians as well as for Jews, as a rule of life. He that said, "Thou shalt not steal," "Thou shalt not kill," said also, "Remember the Sabbath day." It is a transgression of God's law, then, not to keep one day in every seven holy to the Lord, and transgression of God's law is sin, and the wages of sin is death.

Stumped the Philosophers.

David Hume (1711-1776) was the greatest English philosopher and author of Human Nature in human relations that stumped other philosophers by saying that "reason was never below the rule of passion of all."

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Birmingham is our home.

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KEEP YOUR MONEY WORKING AT HOME

Community Building

ZONING IN INDIANA CAPITAL

Apartments and Hotels Are No Longer to Be Permitted in Sections Allotted to Dwellings.

Indianapolis has decided that there is a place for every type of building, and has passed zoning and height regulations to control development, the investments of its citizens and the health and happiness of its population. A section has been set aside for apartments and hotels, another for business buildings, another for factories and some more for homes of various characters. No building may be erected with an unbroken street elevation of more than 200 feet, which is the maximum height in Washington street, the widest and main business street of the city. Heights on other streets will range up to 180 feet, depending on the width of the street. There will be five such districts in the city, the purpose of this being to spread out the population and eliminate the possibilities of traffic problems and congestions, which seem to be one of the great troubles of the older cities of the country. Here are the five districts as designated in the regulations, according to the Agricultural Report:

(1) Dwelling house, (2) apartment house, (3) business, (4) first industrial and (5) second industrial.

The area regulations are designed to spread out the population, prevent congestion and promote a detached house development.

CALL FOR MORE NUT TREES

According to Chicago Publication, Their Value Has in a Great Degree Been Passed Over.

Some years ago a householder in Portland, one, passed eight seedling Persian walnut trees along the street in front of his residence. Now, he has all the nuts his family can use during the year, divides with the boys of the neighborhood on their own terms, and what he sells are left for almost enough to pay his taxes.

This tale, vouched for by the president of the American Tree association, is told as a preliminary to a question: Do folks of the Middle West, in planting ornamental trees and shrubs, pay enough attention to fruits and nuts, particularly the latter?

One may doubt it. The climatic zone near the lakes does not favor Persian walnuts or pecans, but the black walnut and hickory do well. They make noble trees, as beautiful as the best, and their nuts, though harder to crack than some, are well worth the trouble. The filbert or hazelnut is a beautiful shrub, and when planted in sunny locations yields well. The beech does not take overwell to civilization and town life, but on large suburban places it should do well. Its beauty is of a unique, striking kind, and its curious three-cornered nuts are a joy to the children.

Why not plant nuts?

Country Needs "Home Towns."

This country needs more men from home towns, men who will sound the advantages of living in the small village, with its little industry, its freedom from annoyances, its comforts and delights. And this country needs more home towns, attractive enough in every way to keep within their circle young men and women who, free from ambition to become wealthy, they feel that they must try their luck in our great cities, that is, the great hives of people who have time to read and think and figure out their duty as citizens to the state and nation. Concentrate in them the best in a moral atmosphere which breathed by people of ideals leads them to take positions on the great questions of the day invariably in promotion of the true welfare of the people as a whole.

Lines to Be Remembered.

An honest, sensible and well-read man will not insult his, when his other can.—Pope.

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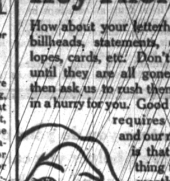
How about your letterheads, billheads, statements, envelopes, cards, etc. Don't wait until they are all gone and then ask us to rush them out in a hurry for you. Good work requires time and our motto is that any thing that's worth doing is worth doing well.



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