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Minister Doubts Youth 'Going to Dogs'

But Admits Also That Youth Has Problem to Solve

(Editor's note—Modern youth is not perfect. Neither is it "going to the dogs." The Rev. Joseph A. Mears, minister of the United Presbyterian Church, tells in this week's Forum, contribution what he thinks of the boy and girl of 1940.)

By JOSEPH A. MEARS

"This generation of young people is the best group that America has ever presented to the world. From coast to coast and from the lakes to the gulf we see the picture of the most promising future citizenship that this nation, or any other country has had in the office."

What an absurd statement to make about our present day young people, is the first criticism to be hurled heading at the above sentiment. It smacks of some preacher's study or of any other idealist's pen who looks at the world through rose colored glasses and who believes that since God is in His Heaven that all's right with the young people. And in addition, it's the job of the preacher to say all the good things he possibly can in defense of our youth. But, if he would just step out of his own world and mingle with people as they are, he certainly would never make any such statement.

The Other Viewpoint
"Well, I declare! If the present young people aren't Hell-bent-for-destruction, I don't know anything. Or even hear of them? Why, when I was young, we never did do such stunts. My father and mother wouldn't stand for it. No, sir, not for one minute! Something ought to be done about it!"

The foregoing sentiment has been voiced loudly and often and is as extreme in its judgment as the opinion's sentence in this discussion. And when a minister of the church lets loose a similar barrage, but not in quite such homespun language, once again the reaction, in some such fashion:

Mother: Why, I never knew our minister to be so bitter. He simply played the young people. Father: Yes, he must have had a case of indigestion. Son: Oh, the old kill-joy. He don't know anything about a good time!

Daughter: Yes, and his own children are just as bad as we are. Maybe worse.

Leads Two Articles
All of which brings us to remark that there are two articles in the magazine worth the time and energy to read and think about. One is an editorial in "The American" for January by the religious teacher, Jessie Burrall Eubank, titled, "What Do You Mean, Religion?" The second is in the Dec. 9 issue of the Saturday Evening Post, an article by Louis

ON LARCHLEA DRIVE



Mr. and Mrs. M. Sylvester Klein, together with their daughter, Stephanie, have taken up residence in this new Colonial home at 369 Larchlea Drive, in Taliaferro Estates. Mr. and Mrs. Klein stated that they did not have to live in Birmingham long to discover that it was the ideal community in which to make their permanent home. Snyder, Buck & Bennett made the sale.

Adamic titled: "They Came From Pomerania."

(The writer of this article has met Mrs. Eubank and has heard her teach and lecture. Also, being reared in Pittsburgh, he is familiar with the part of the background of Mr. Adamic's story. The last page of his story is a revelation to me. We should read and profit by it.)

On the editorial page of the Free Press for Dec. 12 in Bingay's column there is a remarkable illustration of the eyes of youth. A 16-year-old Polish girl, Arcadia Dyczewski, of Saginaw High School, contributes a prose poem which should be an inspiration to all young people in our country. (The writer would do well to publish the same.)

Any one worth his salt today knows that there are some spots in the body politic and youth comes in for its share of criticism. The age of criminality was never so low. Those who deal specifically with this phase of our life have been laboring with a gigantic task since the close of the World War. It cannot fall within the scope of this discussion to detail the various circumstances and contributory causes to the juvenile delinquency which is most certainly appalling.

Doing Their Utmost
The public school system, our colleges and universities, the church, the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls and other similar groups, the C. C. movement are all doing their utmost to stand by the young people of America. Their work is not perfect and never will be, and their methods and technique and curricula are constantly changing to meet new conditions.

One thing which we must keep in mind as we discuss the relative goodness or badness of our youth is that all young people are in the period of adolescence. Another thing to remember is that adults are very prone to forget that they themselves were once-upon-a-time young people and had to go through the selfsame period of physical and mental adjustment. And I, for one, and I know I speak for many, want to be sympathetic and as understanding as possible in all my contacts with young people.

There is a short, compressed definition, in the encyclopedia, of adolescence—"It is marked by active growth, especially in the osseous and muscular systems, and certain vascular tissues. The reproductive organs reach their full maturity during the latter part of the period, at which time there is a partial cessation of the exaggerated nutritive activity prevailing throughout the earlier part. The mind becomes conscious of new capabilities; self-assurance and constructive and originating tendencies become apparent. It is apparent that the sexual and mental development occurring during this

period render proper training and influence of the utmost importance."

Period of Stress
In short, this period extending from puberty to 21 in young women and 25 in young men is one of the greatest and severest stress and strain. Now, if physical production were the only role in human life, it would be well enough to mate and then forget as some animals do—a physical gratification being sufficient incentive and reward. But, if we are to preserve the family from extinction, we must preserve the gains of civilization. And parental care is exceedingly important and necessary in the period of youth.

One of our own, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, gives us these cogent lines:

"We build our future, thought by thought,
Or good or bad, and know it not—
Yet so the universe is wrought.
Thought is another name for fate,
Chance, then, thy destiny, and wait—
For love brings love, and hate brings hate."

The story is told of a certain man of no great learning who fell heir to a ship. He knew nothing of the sea or of navigation but the notion seized him to take an ocean voyage and command his own ship. Getting under way was so full of details that the owner was somewhat confused, but once out in the open he began to notice what was going on. He saw a man turning a wheel this way and then that and he exclaimed, "What in the world is that fellow doing?"

"STEERING THE SHIP"

"That is the helmsman. He is steering the ship."
"Well, I don't see any use in his fiddling away his time doing that. There's nothing but water ahead. When land comes in sight he'll be coming in view then we'll have some one to do that steering. Hoist all the sails and let her go!"

The owner orders how obeyed. But the survivors of the wreck that followed had plenty cause to remember the man who thought a ship could steer itself. You say that no such man ever existed? Well, that's probably true. But that does not say that there is not a great deal of foolishness existing in this world. Each individual is a ship on the sea of life. There are far too many shipwrecks. Too many tramp steamers. Too many drifters. The young person is an inexperienced sailor. He must learn the ropes. Only after learning how can he bring our ship into a sure harbor of happiness, peace and success.

Someone has said: "If parents would teach their children thought-control instead of laying so much stress upon—and enforcing obedience to—parental authority, the problem of the rising generation would be simplified and a much higher order of human beings would soon appear upon (Continued on Page 4, Part 2)"

Green River Ban On Sales Works by Discrimination

(Editor's note—Last week, a small survey of local public opinion was made by The Eccentric on the advisability of adopting here the proposed "Green River ordinance" which would outlaw all door-to-door selling. To discover how the ordinance has worked in Cheyenne, Wyoming, George R. Averill, publisher of The Eccentric, wrote the publisher of the Wyoming Eagle and Tribune. From the answer printed herewith, it is apparent that the ordinance has worked there because the city has chosen to discriminate between local and "foreign" soliciting—something of doubtful legality.)

"There has been no particular complaint in Cheyenne about the ordinance here some few years ago of the Green River ordinance."

"The merchants here have been quite well pleased with the ordinance. Of course if the city were exceedingly strict in its enforcement of some parts of the ordinance it might not work so well. However, when local companies have sent solicitors on house to house campaigns no objection has been raised by the city. In other words the attitude of the city has been that the law is designed to prevent outside solicitors and outside firms from grabbing local business. To put it another way the law was designed to aid local merchants who are taxpayers and employers of local labor. Hence the city's permission to local firms to solicit on a house to house basis."

"The law has been upheld by the Wyoming Supreme Court. I do not know for sure that it has been acted upon by the U. S. Supreme Court. It seems to me that it has and that this tribunal also upheld it. But, as I say, I am not certain as to this."

"Tracy S. McCracken,"
Cheyenne Eagle and Tribune.

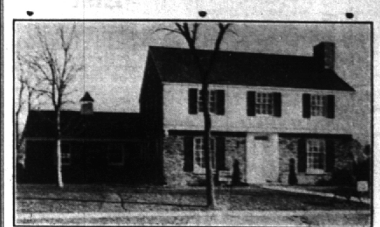
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