

March 9, 1952

No matter how we live our lives, we are in for criticism and the best way is to do the best we know how and have a deaf ear to others' opinions. The best we know how, covers much territory and begins when we are born.

So it is vital, especially we who are parents to see that we educate our youngsters in the "know how" of good Christian living. Of course, there are various opinions as to what is Christian living. I don't refer to a continual goody-goody existence; but one where children are taught right from wrong and that there is something to fear in the world besides the lack of money and a good time.

Sunday school never hurt any child. There he learns of the ten commandments and how to behave with the other children and perhaps a few added responsibilities he doesn't learn at home. He has his first acquaintance with community singing and learns to be generous and to love his fellow man.

As he gets older, he should be given some responsibility in the community whether it be church or other get-togethers. More young people would attend church if they are given a definite job. Some churches have young people in charge of the services several times a year; and this is a fine idea. Clubs for teenagers should be both work and play. I think each community should have a setup where youth can make something useful and saleable and this money could then in turn be used for their recreation. "To Learn by Doing" is just as practicable in other organizations as it is in 4-H; and certainly could be used more than it is.

Yes, my ideas are in for criticism; but you will agree they have some points that would work if they were tried.

March 10, 1952

We have quite an argument around our house as to what is the right age for a girl to go on dates. Of course, my ideas are very old fashioned and my daughter thinks I must have never gone on any dates. (It is a good thing she can't dig into my past.)

Well, I didn't go on any dates—just the boy and I, until I was sixteen; but I am not saying this would be the same pattern I would set for my daughter; but I do think girls and boys should show that they are of a sensible age. By that, I mean, they have begun to get dry behind the ears and show some inclination to adult reasoning. After they have had two years of high school and show some signs of shedding their awkward age, they should be able to graduate into a few of the responsible ways of life.

The awkward age is explained as too old for teddy bears and too young for wolves. I am watching the progress of our teenager and when I think she can conduct herself with restraint and be a lady, too; she might be permitted to go on dates; providing she can find a tamed wolf.

It seems the parking problems come into the dating issue. Quoting from a magazine, “Most parents don’t know what parking problems are until they have a teenage daughter.” This is so true. Perhaps a set time to be home is a cure for some of those troubles and maybe I should send an alarm clock with my daughter to remind her—heh!

Oh, the penalty we pay for being parents and what our parents must have endured! And our grandparents, too; and so it goes on and on through all the generations.

March 11, 1952

Nostalgic memories pervade all of us who have attended an old country school. I spent very few months of my primary learning in a city school; and remember few of these; but happily recall those wonderful experiences of my country school day.

In the good old days when one graduated from the eighth grade, one had a thoroughly imprinted education; not only from listening year after year to the same thing through all the grades; but also through the rear—if you didn’t pay attention to your business.

School was strictly school and there wasn’t any monkey business or frivolities. We learned the good old sounds and the readin’ n’ writin’ n’ ‘rithmetic; and we had a background to figure things out for ourselves. If you couldn’t learn it in the grade you were in, you got it by listening the next year. Sometimes 4th graders were as smart as an 8th ‘er—according to how he applied himself.

Conveniences were something we read about in the books. The back school yard had its two twin out-houses—set apart by 50 or so feet; and visited only on urgent necessity by one student at a time. The drinking water usually was packed from the spring and each student owned his drinking cup—a collapsible model that fitted perfectly in the pencil box.

Warmth was provided by the pot-belly stove with a jacket for protection. Students of the upper grades and greater muscle had turns bringing in the fuel and stoking the monster. Sometimes the whole school enjoyed soup or stew cooked in a huge kettle on top of the stove. Each pupil provided a vegetable for the luscious dish and toted his own utensils from home.

In warm weather, air conditioning was provided by opening the windows and the door or going out of doors to have school; the latter was a real treat; as nature provided sideline entertainment. Recesses were full of excitement with running games of pitch the picket or hide and seek that had a million places for hiding—trees, old stumps, berry patches, etc. Rainy day recesses we made pictures and had indoor calisthenics and read stories.

Every morning we saluted the flag and sang a few songs accompanied by the old mouse eaten organ.

Those days are gone forever—drowned out by the flood of humanity and modernism. Oh hum! I wonder what my children remember of their school days?

March 12, 1952

These dull, rainy, cold March days I am restless, regardless of how much I have to do, nothing appeals. Most people read and smoke and from the little perusing I do—minus the smoke—I have accumulated some interesting facts.

Just read that 75% of all the men and 40% of all the women in the United States smoke and the Americans consume almost 400,000,000,000 cigarettes each year. Now I can realize why the cigarette companies can spend so much money advertising on radio and TV.

The tobacco companies have a very good racket and never seem to have strikes or labor troubles. Once the smoking habit is established, it must be continued; therefore it supersedes everything else.

In other words, the country has almost gone up in smoke. It is distressing to note the large percentage of teenagers who have the “fag” habit. Money for it must come from some source, which may be the key to some stealing by young people.

Smoking, in my opinion, is an expensive habit and an unhealthy dirty one, too. People who indulge usually are inconsiderate of others and smoke while others are dining and clutter up floors and furniture with ashes. Most babies now are brought up in smoke laden atmosphere and are weak lunged and subject to colds.

This is a bad subject for me to start as I am very much opposed to smoking and especially dislike the habit acquired by women. I think it hardens their feminine features and places them in a class with the weaklings. It aggravates me to see so many older women indulging in such a wasteful habit. Can we blame the young people if they try it, too; when even Grandmother sets such an example?

March 13, 1952

War has become such a profitable enterprise, I wonder if we will ever be without this scourge. As long as money and prestige of money is Lord of humanity, this earth probably will never see peace or good will toward all men.

It takes as much money to run the United States each year as the combined incomes of all the people West of the Mississippi. And the most of this is used for war weapons and propaganda. Just think the good this much money could be used for in building of health and toward education?

Each day we read in the newspapers and hear on the radio of another big scandal in the sale of ships or other war goods. To be sure the greatest percent of the big-wigs of government are padding the home nest and those of their colleagues, too. So many are

involved that most of the guilty wiggle out of the charges; and in the end the government is out, again in cost of lengthy trails.

The workings of government has become so complex that the wisest is caught in loopholes and not even a Philadelphia lawyer is smart enough these days to keep in business--legally.

Thus, through this complexity it is easy for some to cheat their own country; while the greater percentage of the honest are paying for it. In the years past, one could understand somewhat the wheels of justice and government; but today we are groping in the dark trying to find the key to what it is all about.

Mostly, we are all so tired of all the scandal and high taxes, it is hard for the ordinary brain to soak in so many rules and regulations—and now we are faced with another dilemma—election year; with its one hope—of new faces in our government to give us at least new “mugs” in the newspapers and the news reels. And perhaps wealth from government contracts and scandals can be divided up with some new faces.

March 14, 1952

It is always a pleasure to me to go to a program where I can set in the audience and enjoy the proceedings; because these past eight years I have been mostly back stage herding youngsters and prompting; so never actually know what is going on “in front.”

Being an amateur director is most tiring and means many hours and days of hard work; but it has its compensations. For one, I fully appreciate programs by others; realizing now their work and troubles.

Each year the 4-H clubs have an Achievement Day and through skits, demonstrations, song, and revues present the inner workings of 4-H. The youngsters and I spend feverish hours polishing up talents for this night (Day). Trying not to repeat from year to year, is a problem; so much research is involved.

This year's program was a success from every angle. I think the audience enjoyed it; and had a few laughs; and went away knowing more about 4-H. The club members all seemed to have been cast in likeable arts - none of which took much rehearsing or memorizing. Properties were few and simple; and everyone was very cooperative.

We aren't always as fortunate in finding such a desirable program for Achievement night and having as large an audience. Last year was almost a complete failure; so this 1952 was an Achievement in more ways than a program.

Which goes to show, never give up—the next year may be better; anyway, the 4-H'ers really did “Make the Best Better” not only in their program but also with the quality of their work.

March 15, 1952

When there is a teenager in the household, one cannot help absorbing some of their ideas and learning, too, how young people today feel about this crazy world.

Universal Military training has all of them, including, the girls, baffled. It is so unlike the free lives set forth in the history books and under the Constitution. It is contrary to all our concepts of free enterprise.

“What do young people have to look forward to; the boys go to the army soon as high school days are over, and the girls are left without much hopes for homes or happiness?” this is quoted by more than one student.

We have fought wars without compulsory military training and won them. I do not think a boy compelled to fight is a very good soldier. Seems to me the military pay should be so inviting that it would entice men to make a career of it and thus their interest would be in their work.

Some of the people working for this plan are from the goose stepping European countries and would like to bring some of their old country ideas over here. This is another reason all our government heads should be American born. My ancestors came to this country to get away from this compulsory military plan. What parent wants their son to be taken in the prime of his youth and at a time when he is launching life's career, into war and penned up against his will.

If the American people stand for this, they are the biggest fools of the world. Is there any need for such a huge army unless congress plans to send them to a foreign land for cannon fodder? According to the experts, the war of today and tomorrow won't be won with soldiers but with atoms; so everything anyone says on the subject is contrary to the other fellow's opinion.

The old saying, “Everything is fair in love and war”, doesn't hold out and I can't see anything fair about war; and especially taking all our young men out and killing and maiming them. All the old fogies that recommend such should be placed on the battle field--at least they have lived most of their lives and haven't many years left, anyway.
