

Saturday Night Talks
By Rev. F. E. DAVISON
Rutland, Vt.

THE GOLDEN RULE OF THE KINGDOM.

International Bible Lesson for Feb. 20, '10.—(Matt. 7:1-12).

That there is a vast amount of evil in the world needs no argument. Our eyes, and ears and hearts are assailed by its omnipresence. The question is: What shall be the attitude of the children of the kingdom toward the evil which they cannot but see in the people of the world among whom they live.

In the wonderful Sermon on the Mount which we are still considering, the Christ meets the question and answers it fully, frankly, satisfactorily. He utters two warnings, each against dangers lying in opposite directions, the one, the danger of making too much of the evil we see, or think we see, in others; the other, that of making too little of it.

Censoriousness Rebuked.

The first danger to guard against is censoriousness. His golden rule is "Judge not, that ye be not judged." As if He had said, As you judge, you shall be judged, on the general principle that as you give to others they will give to you, charity for charity, severity for severity, generosity for generosity, uncharitableness for uncharitableness.

Men are socially interdependent, and must have dealings with each other; must meet, know, counsel, help, and bargain with their fellows. It is well then to keep in mind the laws of social intercourse, and always "Put yourself in his place." The law is not, do to others what we would have them do to us, (this might become mere barter) but do to them what we think they would wish to have done to them. Do to them what we would wish to have done to us if we were in their situation. This is the highest and most revolutionary rule in the world.

Now one of the most important reasons for being careful in our judgment of others He points out is that there is so much evil in ourselves. The difficulty with most men is, they pose as occultists and optometrists, discovering notes in the eyes of others, oblivious grafters in their own. Christ says, in effect, if you would be a skillful occultist in spiritual affairs put yourself in the hands of a divine practitioner and allow him to extract the beam from your own eye, then you will see clearly. The trouble with most of us is we are afflicted with such personal strabismus that we think the beam is in the eyes of the other fellow. The consciousness of our own imperfections should moderate our personal judgments.

Here is the fault of many a reformer—so-called. He is zealous to reform his neighbor, but indifferent respecting himself. So that men who are strong on one particular line of improvement of others may be as far off from personal righteousness themselves, in some other direction. The golden rule of the kingdom will save us from using a spy-glass on other people and refusing to gaze into the looking glass ourselves. We shall not carry the sins of our neighbors in front of us and those of ourselves behind us. There are very few people who are as merciless in judgment of their own sins as of those of their fellow men. What we call errors of judgment in ourselves are criminal actions when committed by others. Hence we have soft words for our own sins, and blistering condemnation for the sins of others. It is against the spirit of harsh, and unrelenting criticism of other people that this lesson utters its loudest warning.

Discrimination Urged.

But there is another side to the subject, as there is to all subjects and it is this: In our attitude toward the evil in the world we should not make too little of it. Though we may not judge, we should discriminate. We must not go so far to the other extreme as to insist that there are no such things as notes and beams, in other words that sin is all in your eye. There are dogs and swine, and Christ says, You are to be careful not to cast your pearls before swine, nor give that which is holy into the dogs. Swine are swine and no amount of washing and attention will convert them into sheep. We are under no obligation to insist that black is white and that there is no difference between the holy and the unholy.

Not Judgment but Caution.

Some things there are which are too holy and sacred to be thrown out carelessly among those who would surely reject them with contempt and savage hatred. If you do not want your pearls to be trodden under foot of men keep them under lock and key. When sinners turn swine, and we are in danger of being rent by them, Christ gives us a permission to cease our attentions. We may not judge, but we must be cautious. We may not condemn arbitrarily, but we must distinguish between the false and the true, and in our desire to be gentle and kind we must not go to the other extreme and treat all men alike. Adaptation requires judgment. Censoriousness on the one hand and indiscriminate on the other are equally to be avoided. Between these two extremes is the golden rule of the Kingdom, Happy are they who find and practice it.

VALUE OF SPECULATION.

Mental Process That Does Much Toward Mitigating Life's Woes.

We are all somewhat in the habit of divorcing the idea of speculative thought from that of usefulness, and of considering it a dreamer's vagary without which the world would progress along its accustomed and predestined route. It is particularly the habit of set and elderly persons to speak with scorn of schools of thought, methods of careful preparation for life, and of abstract consideration of values. They insist that the world was better off when people did things and thought less about them.

The difficulty in leaving ourselves to act without preparatory thought is, that it finds us prepared only for such events as have taken place before within our experience or within the experience of those we have talked with or read of; whereas we are likely to be plunged at any moment into a new set of circumstances or given a new lot of conditions and motives which alter the most apparently similar cases. Then, indeed, for lack of the habit of speculative thought, of weighing motives and values, we are apt to drown in our own absurdities or worse, commit hideous injustice.

Odd as it may seem, the end of speculation is practice, says Harper's Weekly. The process may seem wasteful and futile, but the results, if one examine them, are worth the energy spent; and the lives we see about us, lived without the directing of abstract thought, are warnings accepting the cheap and easy ways of life.

To turn back to the value of speculative thought, its first use is to teach the body its place in the trinity, which is a human being. It looks at life with new eyes and weighs values; it undertakes to find out what is truly the heart's desire—wine, laughter, lust, longing, prayer, hope or peace.

Once we know what object we are pursuing, once we have turned speculative thought free upon the universe, and made up our minds what is worth while, then, with our sense of values fixed, we know where to direct effort; what makes for the end is worth while, and what gives mere momentary ease is negligible.

This search for the real aim, this close examination into the trend of our thoughts, this speculative attitude toward proportionate values do much toward mitigating the woes of life, for they open the doors to love and wisdom, the dominators of destiny. Love and wisdom annihilate melodrama, avert tragedy, soften grief, rob joy of selfish and aggressive noise; they regulate conduct so that it ceases to be self-seeking and injurious; they widen the mental horizon, and infuse tolerance and justice. And when love and wisdom stand upon the threshold, letting their light shine in upon the little turmoil of life, how small and silly see our cowering fears, our greed and cruelty and selfwill as they lurk in the corners, eager to escape the light.

Speaking Through the Nose.

The offensiveness of the present defect could not be exaggerated, perhaps, but it is best to guard against exaggeration in dealing with it, writes William Dean Howells, in Harper's Bazaar. Not long ago we talked with an observant Englishman, who was hardly the most willing of witnesses, but a just as well as a gentle spirit, and we asked him if he had been much struck by our far-famed nasality since coming among us.

No, he said, not half so much as he had expected; but what he had noticed was that we spoke drawlingly, draggingly, in tones that weakly and tardily did their office.

It seemed to use, when we thought the matter over, that there was a great deal of truth in what he said, and we now commend his remark, together with our own less lenient accusations, to the attention of the American Woman's Speech Reformers.

What they want to get at is the average offense, and not to err as to its precise nature.

There is no doubt that certain of our women twang, and whine, and whiffle, and whinny, but possibly close inquiry might develop the fact that, after all, it may be lazy and careless mismanagement of the voice in the sort suggested which is most to be corrected.

Crescent Shaped Viennese Bread.

The origin of that Viennese bread shaped like a crescent, which is found in most places on the continent, dates back to 1683. At that time the Austrian capital was being besieged by the Turks under the terrible Grand Vizier Kara Mustapha, and as they failed to take the city by assault they decided to dig a passage under the walls, and so penetrate into the town.

In the daytime the noise of the tunneling inaudible and at night time the defenders of the place were asleep, all but the sentries and the bakers. It was the bakers who, as they baked the bread for the garrison, heard the pickaxes of the miners coming nearer and nearer and gave the alarm. In the fighting of the Bakers' Association took their share with the utmost bravery, and as a reward for their services the emperor gave them permission to make a special cake shaped like the Turkish crescent.

Ivy does not make a house damp; on the contrary, its small roots extract every particle of moisture from the brick or stone to which it clings.

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