

# THE SOWER

A Weekly Department of Religious and Secular Thought Contributed by REV. JAMES A. TURNER, Pastor, M. E. Church, Patton, Pa.

## "FORGETTING THE PAST—AND PRESSING ON."

Some one has said, "Life is what you make it." True! But suppose, in making it, you make a mistake? What, then? The answer is: Life, like a lead pencil, has an eraser on it. That's one of the most beautiful and comforting things about life. If, while writing a letter, you make a mistake, you can turn your pencil over and use the eraser on the mistake, and—go on writing. And if, while living, you make a mistake, you can turn the day, or

year, over, forget the past, and go on living.

One doesn't have to give up and quit because one makes a mistake. Everybody makes mistakes. That's why we have days in the year, and years in the length of life—so we can make quick and frequent changes, and go on to the things that are worth while.

One can't live and grow, without making mistakes. We learn by the trial and error method. In one sense of the word there is no such a thing as a mistake, anyhow. A "mistake" is, after all, only the thing that you thought you ought to do at the time you did it, and therefore the only thing you could do at the time. If it was only till afterward that you discovered that it was a mistake, that doesn't alter the moral quality of the act, for the act was performed in the light of your best understanding at the time, and before the results determined its real character. So we shouldn't worry too much

about our mistakes.

When one comes to KNOW, definitely and finally, without any possibility of doubt or deception, and beyond all argument and debate, that an act is wrong,—then one will definitely delete that act from the curriculum of one's life activities, and it will never bother one again. It is on that principle of action that we grow to perfection.—we try a thing, and if it is right we continue it; if it is wrong, we discontinue it. If there is any uncertainty about the moral quality of any act we stop on experimenting until we KNOW it is either right or wrong beyond any question or argument. Not until then can we have any certainty about the rungs in the ladder of life, or any assurance as to the true nature of the life we are living,—whether we are climbing up, standing still, or sliding down.

Of course people differ very materially in the degree of their perceptive endowments. Some people have keen insight and learn quickly, and act accordingly. Others have to do, or see, or hear a thing over and over again before they are able to determine its true value. It takes them a longer time to come to a knowledge of truth or error than their more highly endowed brethren, and therefore they make more mistakes in a given length of time.

But, sooner or later, and inevitably, they come to a knowledge of the truth,—and to a right way of living. Only they need more time than the more favored.

One should remember, of course, that some people will make a lot of mistakes during a lifetime for the simple reason that they move faster and cover more territory than others. They come into contact with life on a larger scale, touch it at more points, move with it on more fronts, see it in larger segments, fathom it more deeply, and scale it to greater heights than others,—and therefore, of very necessity, run into more chances of error than the common run of people.

Some people are too negative to make any mistakes, too indolent, too circumscribed in heart and mind, too lazy and indifferent, too limited, too small. Big people make big mistakes; little people make little mistakes; hateful people make hateful mistakes, generous people make generous mistakes. Loving people make loving mistakes—everybody make mistakes according to their temperament, constitution and spirit.

A famed preacher of time gone, the great F. W. Robertson, said: "Life, like war, is a series of mistakes, and he is not the best Christian nor the best general who makes the fewest possible false steps. Poor mediocrity may secure that, but he is best who wins the most splendid victories by the retrieval of mistakes."

So the disgrace does not lie in the making of mistakes,—they are inevitable,—it lies in not trying to live life to the full, in not forgetting the things that ought to be forgotten and pressing on. It's a disgrace to stumble through life with a mill stone of un-forgotten mistakes, errors, sorrows, sins, faults, failures, enmities, spites, resentments, losses, bereavements, and sad memories bearing one down and ruining one's happiness and peace, and spoiling one's effectiveness and active participation in all the worthwhile things of life.

Paul made big mistakes, forgot them—and pressed on. So do all big people

who are doing big things, make big mistakes, and press on. A President of the United States makes big mistakes because he is a big man in a big job, doing big things,—while little people in little jobs doing little things sit around and criticize him. If the little people were in the big President's place they would make little mistakes—and do little.

Paul reached forth to the things which were before, pressing forward to the mark for the prize. One must always be climbing. Even the goal is not stagnation, but progress.

There is hope for any person who is dissatisfied with present attainments. Some people do not wish to be bothered by anything or any person that represents struggle or effort.

The expression, "Let us alone," occurs only twice in the Bible. The foolish Israelites said to Moses, "Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians." In the synagogue at Capernaum the devils cried out, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?"

That is what lazy people and the devils of crime and wrong always say—"Let us alone." But the sons of God always reply, "Carry on."

A man once offered himself for service to the Foreign Mission Board, stating that he was entirely consecrated, was fully baptized with the Holy Spirit, and felt wholly qualified for the work required of him. The Board's Secretary's first comment was: "Now what can you do with a man like this? Is there any hope left for such a man?" The trouble with the man was, that he had caught up to his stars. He forgot that an ideal is by hypothesis unreliable. Give us men of the long look and the distant vision.

The Gospel of Christ says that a man may forget his past. Jesus said to the dying thief, "Today, thou shalt be with me in Paradise."—the man's entire past forgotten.

Christianity is the annihilation of yesterday. A man said to Moses, "Aren't you the man who slew the Egyptian yesterday?" A man does not belong to Yesterday. God owns it, and is willing to forget all blood red yesterdays.

Col. Hadley's plan in the Water Street Mission was never to inquire into the record of anyone no matter how dark; for God was willing to forget, and why not he?

The thing that makes any life worth while is to have a goal so high before it that life becomes a continual struggle to attain it. When Wu Ting Fang was in this country, he said that his criticism of Christianity was that it offered an unattainable goal, while Confucianism did not. But this is the blessing of Christianity instead of its curse.

Let the old year die and be buried—and with it everything that should be forgotten. Don't be a rotten morgue with a lot of festering corpses in your soul that should have been buried with the year,—and forgotten. Bury them, and put on the stone: Gone, AND forgotten. Then you can go on free, glad, happy, fresh, and feeling light as the air,—and as sweet. Happy New Year to you.

## "OUT WEST WITH THE HARDYS" COMES HERE SUNDAY AND MONDAY

When the Hardys go Wild West in the wide open spaces, Judge Hardy faces the serious problem of keeping his energetic family properly corralled, but with his usual wisdom and understanding he manages to settle Andy's troubles, prevents Marian from making a hasty marriage and solves the perplexing legal difficulties of an old sweetheart in "Out West With the Hardys," which will be the attraction at the Grand Theatre, Patton on Sunday and Monday next.

This is the 5th of the Hardy pictures and follows them through another action filled episode of their colorful doings, replete with hilarious comedy, human, heart warming pathos, trials and tribulations. It brings new laurels to the favorites millions of motion picture fans have come to know and to love, Lewis Stone as the Judge, Mickey Rooney as Andy, Cecelia Parker as Marian, Fay Holden as Mrs. Hardy, Sara Hayden as Aunt Milly, Ann Rutherford as Andy's "steady girl," Polly and Don Castle as Dennis Hunt, Marian's Carvel boy friend.

It also introduces a new guest star in Virginia Weidler, eleven year old frozen faced comedienne, who gives one of the picture's top performances as Jake Holt the "orniest cowgal in Arizona, who pins Andy's ears back when he gets too cocky. Also new to the cast are Gordon Jones, Ralph Morgan, Nana Bryant, Tom Neal and Anthony Allen.

Given an adventurous background of modern ranch life, the Hardys go to town when they are invited to the ranch of Dora and Bill Northcote. Dora was a former sweetheart of the judge who has read that he is an expert on water rights and asks him to aid her in a battle over a river that is essential to her ranch. Andy immediately clashes with Jake who proves that she is a better "man" than Andy by out-riding him, out-shooting and out-rooping him. Marian falls in love with the handsome ranch foreman, Ray Holt. The judge succeeds in ironing out these difficulties but fails to settle the water rights tangle until Mrs. Hardy comes to his rescue. It all ends gayly and happily.

George B. Seitz, behind-the-scenes father of the Hardys, directed the picture. Like "Love Finds Andy Hardy" and all of the Hardy pictures, it is grand entertainment for the entire family.

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## Do You Know?

Although the public has but recently become familiar with industrial diseases such as silicosis, this condition has been known for centuries. George Agricola, a mining engineer of the 16th Century, described dust conditions in dry mines and warned that dust "penetrates into the windpipe" and "ease" away the lungs and implants consumption in the body.

The trained nurse is believed to have first entered industry in 1895 when Ada M. Stewart was engaged by the Vermont Marble Company to visit homes and care for the sick workers and their families.

About 500 unclaimed wild horses were rounded up by airplane in Oregon last year and removed from grazing districts.

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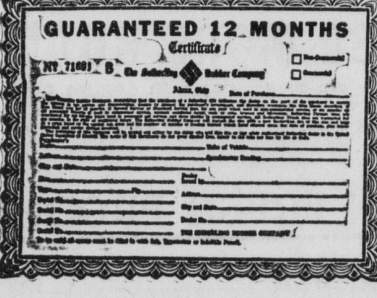
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