

THE SOWER

By Rev. James A. Turner, Pastor M. E. Church

THE CHAINED ELEPHANT.

"Whoever commits a wrong act (continuously) is the slave of the wrong act," says John. That is to say, if a man does something that is wrong, and continues to do it over and over again, he becomes a slave of habit, so that he finds himself unable eventually to rid himself of that act. He becomes a slave bound by the chains he has himself forged upon his own ankles.

Dr. Roy L. Smith tells that "In the great Lincoln Park in Chicago there was an elephant. A great cement platform had been constructed for him with a huge iron stake in the center to which he was held by a chain about fifteen feet in length. He was at liberty to go wherever he pleased within a radius of fifteen feet.

Now, he was a wise old elephant; for a long time he had wearied himself tugging against his chain, and now he knew the uselessness of it. Therefore he never wandered more than fourteen feet, eleven inches aside. His keeper surprised to find the old fellow had become so accustomed to his chain, that even though it might be loosed and he might be actually free, still he would not venture more than fourteen feet, eleven inches.

I have seen other chained elephants—men of tremendous possibilities who were linked to slavery through some wasteful habit or strategic weakness.

Some of them declare that they are perfectly free, but that is because they have never tried to break their chains. They continue enjoying the freedom of fourteen feet, eleven inches! They refuse to be religious because they want to be free, and still they go on tramping 'round and 'round an appetite, a habit, a prejudice, or a weakness.

Habits become either claims or wings. The habit of saving provides for a comfortable old age, the enjoyment of the good things of life, and a certain sense of security, but the habit of wanting means want and destitution.

The habit of using time frugally means the accomplishment of high purpose—the achieving of skill and artistry. But the habit of squandering time leads to poverty and failure.

Yet the psychological principles that underlie both kinds of habits are always the same. First comes the choice of an action, then frequent repetition, and, finally, fixedness. The time to change a habit is in the early stages.

"How a thought, reap an act; How an act, reap a habit; How a habit, reap a character; How a character, reap a destiny." Here, for instance, is a man who saved one little political thought and repudiated the little political idea, leaving to him the political act, and he was a politician. He saved one little idea, and he was a statesman.

How in the piece of the word, "pollitician" but any one of the following words: economic, social, racial, religious, theological, scientific, pleasure, aesthetic, etc., and you have the intellectual grasp and the cad story of a large part of the human race.

How many people do you know who have gotten more than fourteen feet, eleven inches away from some little idea that they have allowed to nest in their minds in the years gone by when they were in other measure or department, busy enough to discover the difference between the truth and some silly superstition that some ignoramus peddled to their credulous sort?

They were so used to circulating around their little idea within the radius of fourteen feet, eleven inches, that they couldn't possibly take in any more territory with any new idea. They were mental slaves, bound to pitifully small limitations by the self-forged chains of their mental laziness and spiritual impotence.

Perhaps they got a little idea that their feelings were injured, and couldn't let it go, and so they made a cesspool of hate and animosity in their minds so that every one who had to listen to them was nearly asphyxiated with the mephitic stench of the vapors of hate and venom that rose out of their soul when they talked, like a noxious vapor out of a noxious maw. And they never went more than fourteen feet, eleven inches from their nasty idea.

Or, perhaps they developed an idea that they didn't like the Church and that it wasn't worth their while to attend and support it, and so they spent the rest of their days pattering around in a fourteen feet, eleven inches radius of trivial, mental tasks and selfish indulgence—a chained slave to be pitied by the angels, chained at by a cynical world, and eventually catapulsed by the Heavenly powers as a tragic failure.

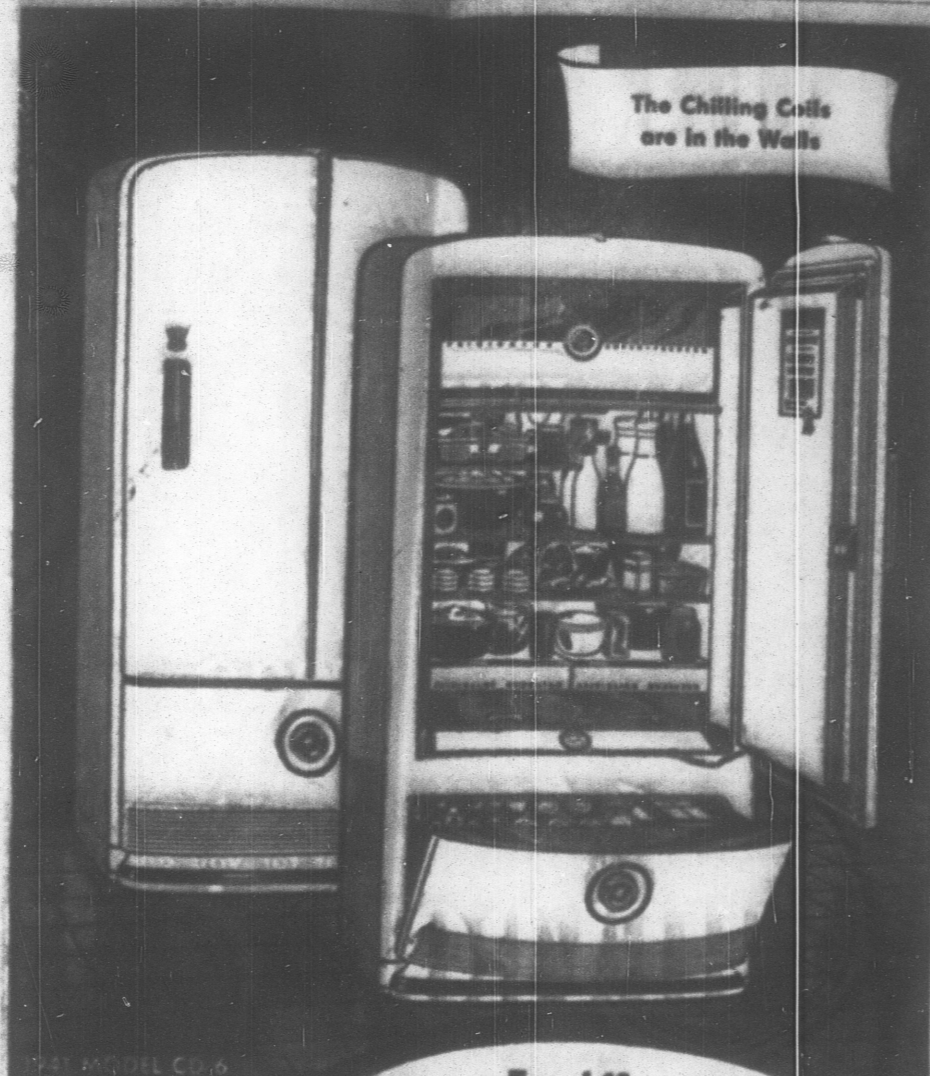
A wrong THOUGHT (about the Church), leading in an ACT of absence therefrom, repeated until it becomes a HABIT of staying away, results in a weakened and perverted CHARACTER, and eventuating in a DESTINY of defeat and damnation.

"No man," concludes Dr. Smith, "ever knows how free he is until he attempts to break a bad habit, to wrestle himself loose from some old prejudice, or to tear up by the roots some old grudge. Then it takes him but a few minutes to discover his chains.

Blessed is the man who sets out to make his habits into wings to rise rather than into chains by which to be bound."

NEW FLAG FLIES OVER GRAVE OF BETSY ROSS A new flag has been placed over the grave of Betsy Ross in Mount Moriah Cemetery in Philadelphia, according to the Press-Examiner of Columbia. The Patriotic Order Sons of America replaced the weather beaten banner at the grave and expects to assume the same responsibility for the future.

Many tourists visit the grave of the woman who made the first flag of the United States and the house in which she lived at 236 Arch Street in Philadelphia. The residence is open to the public from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. daily including Sunday and contains historical relics



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ANTON METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Announcement as to hour of morning services will be made later. Worship service in evening at 7:30. Midweek Bible Class on Wednesday at 7:30 P. M. Epworth League, 8:30 P. M. Professor C. J. Williamson, of Pittsburgh-Johns Seminary, says: 'A life may have such narrow horizon that it can be shut up in a purse or a pocket bag of us keep a prejudice that is like a dog that runs out and barks at any new idea that may come knocking at the door of our mind. And how much we miss by it!

The fish fool looked out on a world and saw nothing but a reflection of himself. He looked out on the same world and cried: 'I am a debtor.' His prejudice has caused untold suffering and wrong in the world. And most of this prejudging is done because we have been so narrow as to condemn a whole class because of a few poor specimens of it that we may have known.

Jesus remained was for our sprints as well as for our bodies when he said, 'Go ye into ALL the world.' To those that disciples it meant including even the Samaritans, against whom they had always held a prejudice.

SELECTIVE NOW WILL BE SURE OF SELF BEFORE HE LEAVES FOR THE SERVICE

There'll be more of those 'saw-ye-ell' fellows for prospective Army selectors who quit their jobs, wind up their personal affairs, kiss everybody goodbye, and then have to come home because the Army turned them down. Many of these fellows are not only unprepared for the service but they are also unprepared for the war.

Under an experimental plan, the War Department will examine persons who are called up as much as a month ahead of their call and then permit them to return home to close up private affairs before going to camp.

The new plan will be in operation in Pennsylvania during this month, as an experiment, and if successful may be extended to the entire country. Physical selection is the method of selecting persons for some time has been the manner of giving physical examinations of the army, navy and air forces.

LABOR IS ABUNDANT

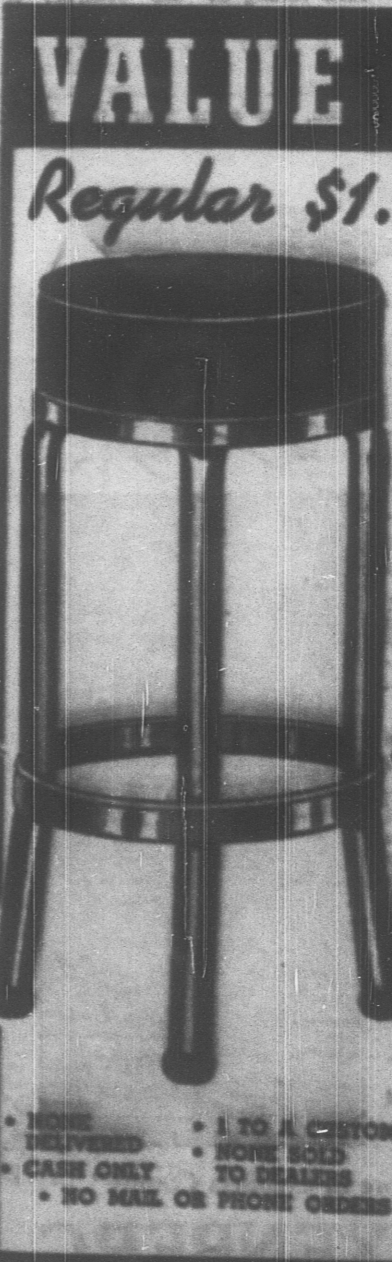
When some cities advertise for new industries, they tabulate the advantages which they offer to prospective industrialists—accessibility of railroads, low land, non-tax, public utility service, schools, churches, and so on—and as a climatic inducement the statement is sometimes made that "labor is abundant." The latter item is presented to be a knock-down argument to convince the prospect that he should make his plant in that particular municipality.

If by the phrase "labor is abundant" they mean that unemployment is a chronic condition in the city—no matter how they may camouflage this fact—then certain other conditions usually exist which might make it an undesirable place in which to locate. For if a large portion of the population is always out of work, it means that some at least, of the following conditions exist: low standards of living, decreased purchasing power, poorly equipped public institutions, meagre cultural life, inadequate home facilities, and a low level of health.

If, on the other hand, the city would advertise for industrial concerns whose practices are such that they would help maintain high standards already obtaining in the community in social, economic and cultural affairs, offering a life and a spirit, which would be a credit to such industrial institutions, it would place a premium upon the privilege which the community had to

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