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THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR TOPIC

By the Rev. Charles E. Schaeffer, D. D.

June 3rd—My Plans For a Profitable Summer. Mark 6:1-6.

This is one of those topics which each one must work out for him or herself. At best we can only prove suggestive. The plans of one person for a profitable summer may not at all be the plans of another. Few folks know how to plan for and pass a profitable summer. The good, old summertime offers occasion and opportunity for many things, but there are too many people who seem to abuse these opportunities and turn the season into a period for the dissipation of their strength, and the spending of their money, all without any worth-while gains. The motive of spending the summer months is of quite as much importance as the method of it. Is the end enjoyment, self-improvement, or is it the preparation for larger service, or all of these combined? So often the summer vacation is devoted simply to the gratification of the lower nature only. It so frequently fails to minister to those higher and better things for which it offers such abundant opportunities.

Usually city folks plan to spend a part of the summer in the country. They have been shut in between stone walls and offices during the greater part of the year and now their nature craves for an expression of that freedom which only the country can bestow. City folks never see anything or hear anything. Their vision extends only across the street. They have no far-off horizons, no broad outlook. They see no distant hills, no wide, extended plains, no pleasing landscapes. Neither do they hear anything. The turmoil and tumult of traffic, the indescribable din of noises dulls their ears. In the city one can hardly hear the voice of his friend as together you walk down a street. But in the country you get into those great silences where one hears many voices, here one can listen to the stars, the music of the spheres, the song of birds, the babbling of brooks, the whisper of the trees. So it is that city folks have a longing to go to the country in order that they may see and hear what the city walls shut out from them.

Then the country folks should go to the city. They are out with nature all the time and they fail to understand the seething, throbbing life of the city. In the city they will find many things which they have never known existed and they will come to understand life better than if they remain secluded in their rural homes. Probably, however, country folks would do better if they would take their vacation in the city during the wintertime, for summer is the season when both urban and rural folks want to be out in the open country.

A return to nature is always wholesome and profitable. Nature teaches us the great truths of life. It teaches us the value of reality. Everything in the world of nature is real, genuine, sincere. There are no fads and fancies in nature. There is no varnish and make-believe. Life in the city is too often artificial as well as superficial. It does one good, therefore, to get out into nature and come in contact with those elements that stand for and speak of reality. The spirit of honesty and sincerity penetrates the soul of him who goes out into nature and observes its stern reality and righteousness. Likewise nature teaches us the lesson of service. There nothing lives for itself alone. One kingdom loses itself in another. The flowers that bloom, the grass that velvets the earth, the birds that chant their matin lays, the stars that shine in the darkest night, all seem to say—"Not for ourselves alone." "The hand that made us is divine" and our mission is fulfilled in shining and singing and serving for others.'" Let the selfish, greedy, grasping man go out into the world of nature and there learn the great lesson of co-operative unselfish service.

Again, nature teaches us the great truth of growth, of development. "Consider the lilies, how they grow!" "The seed springs up and groweth, one knows not how." There is nothing static in nature. Its garments are never the same and its forms change constantly. Nature is never in a rut. It constantly renews itself. So the man or woman who lives in a treadmill, in a dull, daily monotony of duties, needs to get out into nature where this great truth of growth is everywhere proclaimed. There also one learns the lesson of the abounding life. Nothing is on a small or insignificant scale there. Life overflows, abounds. Our individual resources sometimes run low, but now, when we get in contact with these forces of the universe that represent abounding vitality, our own spirits are renewed and the channels of our life run full once more.

Now, there are three phases of life's development which we should plan for during the summer months.

First—physical. We need to renew our physical energies. Our nerves become jaded. Our physical life becomes exhausted. We need to renew this. Let us, however, not err by leading too strenuous a life during vacation, lest we come back more exhausted than when we went. Some indulge their appetites and waste their strength so that the summer profits them little by way of the building up of the body.

Second—mental. The idea of a vacation is not rest, but change. One does not need to put his mind on the shelf during this period. Indeed the mind ought to be kept as active as ever, consequently a profitable summer will look towards the improvement of the mind. Many opportunities are afforded to make this possible. One ought always to take a small library of well-selected books with him on a vacation. What splendid opportunities these summer days afford for wholesome helpful reading! Plan your reading, select your books wisely. Probably you have a subject that you wish to study. Give yourself to it when there are no distracting forces. Again, travel as well as books will stimulate the mind. Many persons travel abroad or they go west or into new sections of the country and there, with eyes open and minds alert, they learn in a direct manner that which they could not get by indirection. Some young people plan to go to conferences and conventions scheduled during the summer months. These afford opportunity for social contacts, for fellowship, for training, for life service.

Third—spiritual. The spiritual must not be neglected. Sometimes folks imagine that during the vacation period they need not concern themselves about church or stated periods of worship. This is a mistake. There are some others, however, who insist that they will never omit church attendance no matter where their journeys lead them during these summer months. Sometimes, indeed, one's spiritual life during the vacation season expresses itself in somewhat different forms than it regularly does, but the development of the spiritual must not be neglected. It is always a tragedy when the physical or the mental interests of life submerge or crowd out the spiritual.

One should, therefore, plan the development of the full-orbed and well-rounded life. The summer days ought to bring us back to our regular tasks replenished in body, reinvigorated in mind, and renewed in spirit. If you can plan your summer along some of these suggested lines you will find it to be a profitable one for you.



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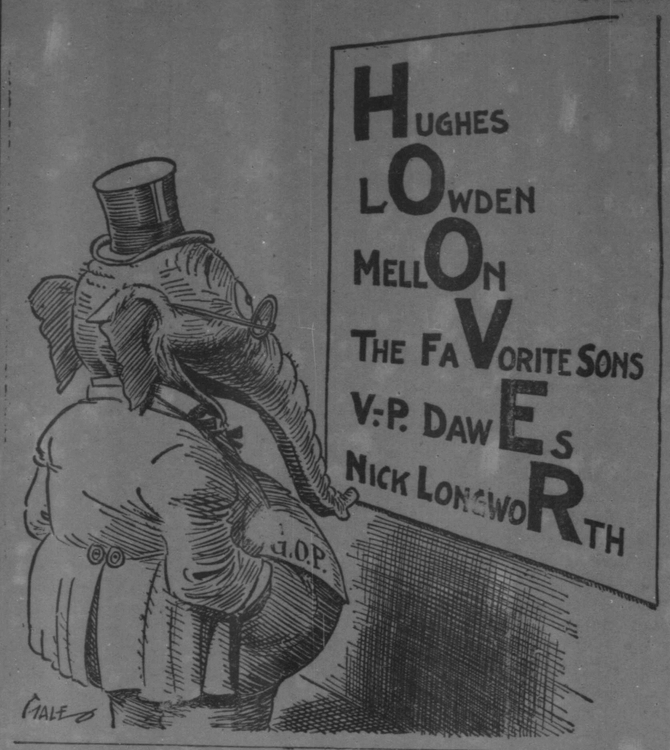
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Reading Between the Lines

Gale in Los Angeles Times



Sweeping the Country

Ralph Yardley in Stockton, Cal., Record



MAY BE FIRST LADY



ELECTING a President's Wife is not the least interesting phase of the approaching campaign. This is a recent portrait study of Mrs. Herbert Hoover, whose philosophy of life is of the outdoor variety. Like her husband, she moves quickly, talks quickly, thinks quickly.

SAYINGS OF HERBERT HOOVER

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We may count food in calories, but we have no way to measure human misery.

If democracy is to survive throughout the world, it must be a success in the United States.

Socialism is a European theory of dispair.

The elimination of waste is a total asset. It has no liabilities.

The greatest governmental experiment in human history was universal free education at public expense—and it has been successful.

It is always the children who are ground in the mills of international disputes, and honest charity inquires no further than that

The most potent force in society is its ideals. But for the next several generations we dare not abandon self-interest as a motive force to leadership and to production, lest we die.

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