DANGER TO HOME IN DEMOCRAIC SPIRIT

Maintenance of Parental Authority Urged By Dr. Rosenau.

"What is the matter with our homes?" was the question asked and answered by Rev. Dr. William Rosenau, a few days ago, in his sermon at the Eutaw Place Temple, Baltimore. The service comprised a part of the regular observance of the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles. Dr. Rosenau's text was chosen from Leviticus, xxiii, 42: "Ye shall dwell in booths." He said, in part:

"As we contemplate the fact that early Israel was in position to occupy only huts on account of their migratory life, and that we reside in well-built and well-furnished dwellings in our settled state, we no doubt are given to rejoicing, and justly so, for many reasons, over our happier lot. And yet, has really the uplift which should come from the home increased among us in the same proportion as our homes have grown in physical endurance and physical comfort? Is the average home nowadays of such a nature that a careful observer by way of analogy to the sentiment of the prophet would be prompted to exclaim: 'How beautiful are thy tents, O Society; thy tabernacles, O Humanity?'.

"You will agree, for you have often heard it said and you have equally often learned it from personal experience, that the average home with the life that is led within its precincts is not deserving of admiration and praise. Unfortunately, most homes have become only places of shelter. They lack that cheer, that glow, that warmth, which should mark their atmosphere. They do not create that mutual encouragement, mutual confidence and mutual helpfulness of which they should be productive for the benefit of preserving the family solidarity.

"This is a fact not only to be deeply regretted but also to be profoundly lamented. Need I tell you the part the home playes in the life of every individual? It is the paradise the entrance toward which should never be guarded against man. Need I tell you the function the home performs in the economy of the state? It is the foundation upon which the fortress of the social order is founded. Need I tell you the office of the home in the spread of civilization? It is the source from which issues the pure stream making for human morality and Godliness. With justice we may dread the future, unless we betake ourselves to remedying existing conditions. As in days gone by, catastrophies have ensued where the family life was neglected, so catastrophies must result in days to come. We need to consider wherein our homes fail in their purpose. We must seek to discover—to put it in a single phase, 'What is the matter with our homes?'

"I believe that the Feast of Tabernacles, with its strange practice of dwelling in booths and with the customs observed during sojourn therein, shall help us in arriving at a knowledge of that which we have cause to bewail.

"Who, that has ever visited a booth constructed on the Feast of Tabernacles, has not been struck by its simplicity? The rules govering its erection call for such a limited expense that the poorest may conform with them. And if, perchance, as is always the case, decoration of the booth is indulged in by the Jew, it is never a decoration which only the richest can afford, but a decoration, which, by its simplicity, adds to the intended sanctity of the booth.

"Society needs to dwell in booths once more to the extent of knowing the bounds to which men should go in the fitting up of the residences they occupy. It is not true that the more palatial one's home, the greater social force it is. The humblest dwelling in narrow alleys often is a healthier moral agency than is the most costly domicile on broad avenues. By our extravagance, so patent in our tastes and desires, we have made the home, too, the sufferer. We are given to overloading the home with luxuries which are calculated to diminish not only the genuine comfort of the family but also to unfit the younger members of the same for the battle of life. Let us, therefore, have more economy—not an economy that will cut off the necessary, but the unnecessary accessories of the home. Society will not be the loser, but the gainer thereby. For what society wants is men and women who, by their virtues, will contribute to the social growth and betterment.

"And again let me direct you to the position of the parents in the booth. The father is expected to supply the material that enters into the booth while the mother looks after the needs of the family when sojourning therein. When once the booth is completed the father consecrates it by religious act. And the mother lends helping hand in the consecration. There they are, seated at the head of the table, honored and respected by their children, not simply as benefactors, but also as supreme authorities. Sons and daughters wait upon their wishes and receive the law from their lips.

"Let us get back once more to the attituded assumed by parents toward children and by children toward parents, which we find in the generation that is passing out of existence and exemplified in the boot of our feast. This backward tendency will work a blessing which few of us can properly estimate."

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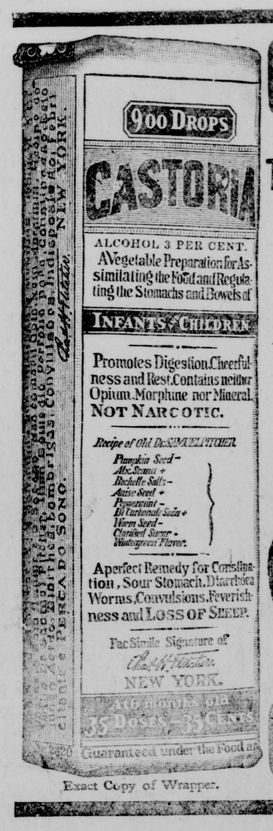

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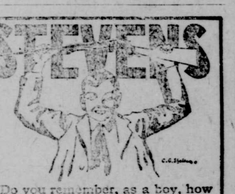

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