

A DOUBTING WORLD CHALLENGES FAITH

IN THE Scriptures, Genesis 4: 5-7, we read that when the disobedient and carnal Cain brought his offering to the Lord and it was not accepted, "his countenance fell." The Lord said: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." Cain's grief was brought on by the violation of God's law, and so is the calamity of individuals and nations. Few men, and fewer nations, seem willing to admit that sin lies at the door.

It has been pointed out that civilian life in France has been steadily disintegrating. "When you remove both the framework that upholds law and the acceptance of the rightness of law, anything can happen." That is precisely what is taking place in our own beloved country in its civic life and in its spiritual life. The knowledge of God's law is neglected, and the rightness of that law is questioned; and in America, as in France, "anything can happen" and is happening.

"Baby Gangsters"

"Baby gangsters" — boys of nine to 16 — operated in France and are operating in our country today. A young boy of 15 had a "speakeasy" for selling beer and whiskey to his juvenile friends. Two young girls were arrested for delinquency. They said they could get liquor in "any tavern they entered." The judge blamed the parents, the parents blamed the city authorities, and the city authorities no doubt blamed the voters; and perhaps that is just where the blame belongs.

On October 1 of last year, the head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation said that America had a crime army of 4,600,000. The average age of the criminals is 19.

The Federal Bureau chief said also that 1,350,000 girls are employed to handle the liquor trade. That is how "Christian America" is protecting her youth!

A Philadelphia doctor who belongs to a country club made the statement that "the men have been crowded out of the clubhouse bar by mothers and daughters drinking hard liquor. The men have to drink it downstairs in the locker room."

Ungodly Homes

There are about 34,000,000 boys and girls in our country between the ages of four and 18. Four years ago it was found that less than half of them received religious instruction. In the past four years 20 per cent less are in Sunday Schools. Sunday-School attendance alone does not guarantee against sin, but it does seem to be a powerful deterrent. A New York judge, and other judges too, have said that about 97 per cent of the young people convicted of crime had had no religious training.

A judge related an incident in his court: "As the executioner was about to place the noose around a young murderer's neck, the youth, pointing to his father huddled in a corner of the room, exclaimed: 'Because you, my father, failed to give me any religious training, because you allowed me to grow up like a heathen, I am hanging on the gallows. This noose should be placed around your neck, for you are the real criminal.'"

Indecent Literature

The chairman of a child welfare committee said that "among the factors contributing to the increase of youthful criminals, now an army of 4,600,000, is indecent reading. Simultaneous with the unrestricted publication of corrupt literature is a wave of sex crimes." In one city an apparently conscientious police commissioner banned a million copies of 43 indecent magazines. But a United States senator has sought to take out of the hands of postal authorities the power to ban from the mails "obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, and indecent printed or written matter."

Indecent motion pictures, indecent magazines, indecent conversations, and unsavoury jokes in high-grade magazines are fed to young people while millions of dollars are spent to "cure" juvenile delinquency.

The Human Smokestack

In an article appearing in a recent popular magazine a former tobacco slave tells of his experience as a "chain-smoker" who hammered a nail into his coffin every ten minutes. He said the expense of the habit was so "fantastic" that he could not believe it.

It could not have stated facts more truthfully than to say that tobacco "gets tied up" with everything smokers do, even to smoking in bed and "setting themselves on fire." Three years after he had stopped the filthy habit he could look back and recall the years when his mouth tasted like a "limeburner's wig," and his "overstuffed sinuses ached under the sledge-hammer assault of a two-pack day." After he stopped smoking, his appetite began to rise; he enjoyed his food; his heart pumped quietly; insomnia cleared out of his bedroom; his nerves stopped jerking; and joy filled his day's work.

That is a testimony to which other human smokestacks would do well to give heed, and enjoy the physical, moral, and spiritual benefits of a "tobacco-free life."

When Our Heroes Come Home

Much is said and written today concerning the time when the boys will come back from the front. Many will be broken in body and in spirit, and the question is: What will be their attitude toward society? What will be society's attitude toward them? What will be the attitude of the home toward them?

Some of them have learned to love the Lord, love His Word, love to pray. When they come back to a godless home and a godless circle of friends what will be their reaction? They are looking forward to the time when it will be easier for them to hear the Word, to read it, to worship the Lord with Christians, in the atmosphere of peace instead of slaughter. Will they find praying and God-fearing parents in that home?

A soldier tells of his own heart-breaking disappointment. He said he went home on furlough and thought it might be his last one. He said he knew his parents had not been Christians, they never had family prayers, but they went to church and "claimed to be Christians." He hoped that that would be different now: "I felt sure that this war with all that it is bringing would make Mother and Dad really live for the Lord." He said he hoped they would talk to him about being a Christian and would help him to "get right with the Lord."

He said he was sure his mother would be interested in the spiritual condition of her boy, for he had always thought his mother was the "finest woman in the world" and he had been very proud of her. "Oh, how I wanted Mother to pray for me and how I wanted Dad to talk to me!" But his mother or father never once mentioned religion to him. And one day when he smelled cigarette smoke on his mother's breath he said he knew she needed someone to pray for her as much as her son did. His father seemed to be interested only in the big salary he was getting, saying, "Oh, well, I just might as well get my part out of this war!"

The soldier pled with his pastor to warn the godless fathers and mothers of America to wake up and realize that they have sons and daughters who need to be saved, and parents must help them to be saved.

Can Human Nature Be Changed?

It has been said that the central question of our time is: Can human nature be changed? If this is the central question of our time there must be a general impression that the change is needful.

Psychiatrists are studying human behavior more intensely than ever before, and are trying to discover what man needs to prop him up and send him forward. The crime situation, the juvenile problem, the physical unfitness which the army has revealed, the neurotic condition of a large part of our population, the "perplexed" state of men's minds concerning spiritual things, are ailments calling loudly for help, and psychiatrists are rushing to an attempted rescue.

But there is an old, tried, and infallible cure for human nature's ills. Unlike the medical science that reverses itself about every ten years, the cure is as effective today as it was when it was announced 2000 years ago, and earlier. "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: who forgiven' all thine iniquities; who healeth, all thy

diseases" (Psalm 103: 2, 3). For our encouragement to seek the Lord and have our "iniquities" forgiven we have the promise that "no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84: 11).

And in the New Testament, II Corinthians 5:17, we have the perfect transformation promised: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Human nature can be changed, and must be changed, not through psychiatry, not through evolution, but through the Blood of Jesus Christ.