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BISHOP GAILOR'S VICE SLOGAN: "FIGHT!"

Morals Not Aided by Talk, Immodest Dress Bad Taste

Women May Be Spoiling Young Men, Presiding Head of Protestant Episcopal Church Hears, but He Does Not Believe Generalizations About Lax Morality and Is Wholly Hopeful of the Future

The Right Rev. Thomas Frank Gailor, D. D., Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, occupies a dominant position in ecclesiastical circles. Because of this the accompanying message on present day morals is of especial import.

Women's Auxiliary of the Ecumenical Council Starts Nationwide Movement to Raise Moral Standards---Appeals Made to Parents and to Girls to Eliminate "Indecent Dress, Painting of Faces," &c.

WHAT are we to say about the new generation, not the generation of to-morrow but of this afternoon? Are the young men less masculine than their fathers? Are the young women less feminine than their mothers? This is putting the question too politely. Use the words to be heard daily in society, they are brutal but they mean more.

The prevailing feeling among New York society matrons is one of intense disquiet. The following is a fair sample of what they say when they are talking "close to the bone" about their sons and daughters:

"When my daughter receives an invitation to a coming out tea or dance she refrains from accepting until she has canvassed her young men friends for one who will positively be at the party and give her what dances and other attentions she needs in order not to be a wall flower. If she finds one of the youths of her set disengaged it is then incumbent on her to invite him to dine with us on the night of the affair and arrange to take him there in our car or in another her father provides. She orders (and we pay for) her own bouquet, and includes a gardenia for his coat. In a word, and not to dwell on the horrid details, every provision is made to keep him from spending a penny.

"It is the same when my daughter asks a young man to the play or the opera. He gets dined, escorted, suppered, he is always a guest who is not honored (and he certainly is not honored by the chaperon) is feared.

"What do you think of conditions like these as being productive of a strong masculine society? They may seem to be exaggerated. Ask the mother of any girl who came out this year, and if she has confidence in your discretion she will tell you that what I have said falls away below the facts."

With witnesses like these to bolster up prevailing gossip, a NEW YORK HERALD reporter asked for and was accorded an interview with Bishop Gailor to find out if he, as the head of every sort of information stream from the innumerable congregations of a church whose influence is felt around the world, knew what was happening to fashion the character of its younger members in whose hands must lie the future of the church.

The reasons for selecting him as a spokesman and for choosing the Episcopal Church as a leader in any movement to counteract these social tendencies, if there be such a movement, seem obvious as soon as they are stated. The Episcopalians have always granted a great deal of liberty of thought and action to their young people. As a denomination it has never been socially narrow; not so long ago in smaller cities than New York it was criticised for permitting this freedom. This church has never banned innocent card playing; from its first it countenanced dancing and like innocuous amusements. It does not promulgate blue laws and it has kept its skirts from puritanism. But the license of this church has been humanly administered and it realizes that certain ways lead inevitably to destruction.

WHAT you tell me of conditions existing socially in New York has never come under my observation," said Bishop Gailor. "If they do exist, then the young men of to-day must receive a severe lesson. Women are spoiling them, for that's what these tales amount to. Women must be taught to keep their hands off, from no higher motive than policy; they must give these 'accepting' young fellows a lesson in indifference.

"What right-minded woman, even in this age of feminism, would care to have a hand in forming a generation of mollycoddles? These women who set the social success of their daughters above every other consideration will have to be taught.

"But is the new generation one of mollycoddles? I guess not. Think back three or four years—think of the war; were those boys of ours to be stigmatized so?

"I never did believe much in large generalizations. It has been my experience that such things are drawn from a few personal instances. I read that a Bishop has said that European civilization has abandoned Christian ideals and turned to material ideals, owing to the teachings of European universities; I read that civilization in Europe is at the point of death and that it will die surely unless we send it spiritual aid, material aid not being enough to save it; I read that the death of European civilization means the death of Christian civilization in America as elsewhere. I clearly remember to have heard dismal croakings like these before.

Fresh Reports From Women
Who Will Help the Young

"We have just held the annual meeting of the board over which I have the honor to preside. Reports of all sorts have been included in its consideration. They were particularly full from the various large women's societies connected with the church. The tendencies you mention were not taboo, but listened to respectfully and full support and encouragement given to the noble women who outlined their efforts to help our young people, and, indeed, all young people. The Episcopal Church is very jealous of the training of its children.

"Going beyond the immediate spiritual needs of the young and this gossip about their social training, or the lack of it, to the rise itself I have much less use in this broad application than ever to the mouthful of words of the generalizer: 'All men are liars.' The world is going to the devil, &c.

Who knows where the world is going? I pooh-pooh these sayings, which do not appeal to me. We each see our little coterie, and what happens to its members we are apt to think influences the vast globe. That poor lady whose daughter had to buy attention for her child sees nothing but a few of her own hangings, and I fear she exhibits but little dignity.

"For my part I've never had any special experience with the social conditions you outline; all I know is that the Episcopal Church members are spending more money freely for their religion than they ever did before, and this is a straw to show that their interest increases rather than diminishes, because this money is spent altruistically. The pew owner in St. Thomas's or in any other beautiful church who enjoys the cushioned seat, the fine music, all the so-called luxury of his environment, and pays for these things, is getting only his *quid pro quo*. He is not to be censured nor commended. But what he pays in contributions to China, to Japan, Liberia, Hawaii is outside personal comfort, and the money he gives to sustain the social service work of the church represents what he is doing for his religion.

"And the Episcopal Church is spending two and one-half times as much in these ways as it ever did before. Does this indicate less interest or more being taken in the church? Ah, I tell you that when a man speaks in the language of the pocket-book he exhibits a vital interest.

"I don't wish to be considered what I am not—that is, a blind and foolish optimist. But I believe staunchly in the future of this church and I have ample grounds for my belief. The only hopeless condition of human society is the condition of torpid, inert self-complacency.

"The church has to fight and fight all the time. That's the law of her life. When she stops fighting she won't be alive.

"But when there's a serious end before her, a true battle with possible conquest at the end, when there is a movement toward some point, when she embarks upon a new spiritual and intellectual adventure, feels out for new things (not always meeting with universal approval in her reachings), then the church is alive. Then she recognizes evils in whatever strange and new forms they appear and she starts out to combat them. She does this unselfishly and as if inviting trouble; she wants difficulty and trouble and does not want supineness and ease. I prefer the militant attitude.

"The motive and inspiration of the



BISHOP THOMAS F. GAILOR

church is an eternal discontent with things as they are.

"This is my view of the responsibility of the church—a responsibility not to be shirked in these glorious stirring times. We live in a marvellous epoch, where things happen. There never was an epoch so splendid in opportunity unless it was the age of Elizabeth. Then, too, there were chances to do things as there are now; then there was fighting in the world, fighting to be had against doers of evil; they are present to-day in other ways. In such a time of spiritual conflict I want to play the man and get in it.

"And I should tremble for the church as some of my clerical friends seem to be doing if she, too, did not get into the thick of the fight. But let their knees knock together as they will, they can't keep the church out."

Bishop Gailor lit a cigar and said that he thought he had said enough, that, in fact, he had already said more than he intended to at the beginning. Yet when he was asked to prove his preference for particulars by instancing a few he amiably did so.

"The world is not a bit more wicked than it has been several times before," he said, "and in fact, since what people call wickedness and attribute to the war's after effects is being fought against, I should call the world improved, or likely soon to be so.

"And here is one sign of vast improvement—people do openly to-day things that they used to do in secret."

"What things do you refer to?"

"Well, many things that were hidden from motives of hypocrisy, or because they were not considered respectable or what is called 'done by nice people.' These are trifles in themselves, but the fact that few men are ashamed nowadays of a degree of honest poverty means something of growth of personal honesty. Men in general make few pretences, I find, and I think this openness admirable and encouraging for other things. Men no longer feel that they must assume piety when they have it not. I find that sort of spiritual independence the best ground to work in.

"Perhaps we are not yet accustomed to changes that have been wrought for us suddenly. One of these is the success of the feminist movement. Certain old fogies like myself are waiting to see what it will bring. I have no doubt of the harvest. I never joined the chorus of those who feared that it would shake the foundations of society, but I am still awakening to its effects. However, I try to view all the aspects of the new position of woman with equanimity, and it is easy for me to do so because I have great admiration for and confidence in woman.

"That admiration will never change. Never will it change in any real man. The girls of to-day are as fine and as high minded as any girls ever were, and that is saying much. I've got two mighty fine

and habits of women largely shape the destiny of mankind.

We believe that the position and character of American women have been a great asset in the life of this nation, and that, through increasing opportunities to express her ideals, the American woman has a still greater contribution to make.

At this moment of our history, however, partly as a result of the world upheaval, we are facing a condition which is not only deplorable but one which reflects unpleasantly on the general character of our womanhood and calls for denouncement and correction by all right thinking women.

Reality, we are told, is the note of this

Recall Incidents 30 Years Ago
And the Seelye Dinner Furore

"It would be easy to show the really cleaner moral atmosphere of this particular city by referring to several dirty incidents that happened here thirty years ago. There was then a tremendous noise made over these unpleasant incidents and the effect has apparently not worn away. A good many now living remember how a young man celebrating his bachelor supper treated his guests to the spectacle of a naked girl dancing on a table. That has not been repeated in the years since, and society of late years has distinctly frowned on such scandalous things.

"Bad taste is actually the real foundation of much of the latter day social criticism, and not bad morality. A girl smokes; that's her bad taste. She wears too low cut a gown; again bad taste. I might go on, but it is useless since I speak only in particulars.

"Let me emphasize my dislike of a condition that I think very capable of being changed, at least in a degree and in our large cities; it is the present homeless state of families, using the word in its old and true sense. Parents who might afford houses and prefer to occupy flats are, in my opinion, cheating their children. There are many such families in New York. And there are many sections of the city where houses may be rented for less money than flats in other exclusive neighborhoods. If the European broadness of vision appertained to one's neighborhood in this country these less expensive sections of a city would be pleasantly occupied and the daughters of the family could receive their friends there and even give small dances, which would, to judge by these things in the past, afford as much but a different

kind of enjoyment than is furnished by the semi-public affairs.

"Are you acquainted with a book by William Law, a profound religious teacher, the noblest perhaps that our English tongue has produced?"

The answer to this question was a shame-faced one that the person addressed had never even heard the name of William Law.

The Bishop shook his head sadly over this admission of ignorance, but he brightened at the thought that by a little further elucidation of the author and a comment on his book his hearer might be inspired to seek it out and read it. Said he:

"Law's book: 'A Genuine Call to a Devotional Life,' is, I think, the greatest contribution to religious literature we have in our language. He says in effect that the world will never be drawn to accepting Christianity by fancying that all the world has become Christian, but the world will become so by means of all the persecutions of Christians.

"In other words, assuming that we are living in a Christian country, where all men have accepted the ideals of Christ, is like judging our religion by its popularity. That's the way too many people judge Christianity; if it is successful in filling the churches, then it's a working religion; if it fails, then it isn't. Such persons think that's the whole duty of a clergyman—to keep the church full, and they don't care how he does it, whether by sensational sermons, photo-plays or any other catchpenny device.

"As if a big attendance was the chief, if not the sole, aim of a church! I won't go so far as to say what I think of that kind of snap judgment. My opinion of how a clergyman should do his duty has to do with the fight he puts up against evil. As long as he's doing his duty he's going to be in a fight. When the time comes when all men speak well of him and of the church where he officiates, then there's something the matter with both.

"In the Christian Church, in all denominations of it, there is a whole lot of dead wood. It has to be cut out. There never was a time and it isn't here now when work of this sort hadn't to be done, for despite our heavenly ideals we must remember that our organizations are of the earth. We must keep forward the ideals of the religion of Jesus Christ, and when we deal with earthly things, big things, or little things, like the way our people dance or dress, we must remember that we are not truly doing this when we dilute that religion to suit the public taste.

Enthusiasm Easily Roused,
But Really Means Little

"So when I hear a man say that while people still go to church they have less enthusiasm about their religion, I do not feel that he is putting his hand on the sore place. Enthusiasm is a feeling that can be easily roused and as easily by incorrect methods as by deeper and truer ones. It is passing, not to say ephemeral. We need the things that stay by us to the end, and we get that by fighting for our religion.

"Also when I read that the churches not being so handsomely adorned as formerly reveal the poverty of spirit of the worshippers I develop a pugnacious mood. The church does not need a setting of rich gold and jewels to do its work. It can do it under such luxury but it can do it without any luxury. A costly and beautiful tabernacle and a modest country church are alike the approach to divinity. But neither leads straight there. That is by way of the heart.

"Finally, to revert to the charges made against the young man of to-day. Frankly I don't believe that he has thus derogated from his father's habits and principles. I base my judgment of him on what I know in my own experience. This causes me to think that he is a fine specimen. He has become so chiefly through the influence of the excellent schools that have been established and are flourishing in this country. There are many of them and all doing fine work in educating our boys.

"It is beneficial to every boy that at the age of 14 or so he should be sent away from home to a good school. It is an English system that has always worked well there and is prospering here. I am thoroughly convinced of the great value of these secondary schools and we of the Episcopal Church are lending our influence to develop and increase such schools. They will be sure to counteract any tendencies toward dependence on others such as you describe.

"And now I am even more certain than I was a half hour ago that I have said a great deal more than I intended to say. But it should do no harm. Good day."

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