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For Father and Mother

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For Sister or Sweetheart

Toilet Sets, Manicure Sets, Perfumes, Post Card Albums, Finest Crocodile Hand Bags, Stationery, Candies and Novelties.

For Brother or Friend

Cigars, Cigar Jars and Boxes, Razors, Fountain Pens, Military Sets, Shaving Sets.

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We are selling Dolls, Sleds, Toys, Books and Novelties at Cost as long as they last. See our COST Counter.

R. W. KREISER,

The Rexall Store

North Oak Street

Watertown, S. D.

Chats With Young Men.

(BY FATHER TWOHIG.)

DETRACTION

Young men, I am going to speak to you this week about a very bad vice and one which is frequently committed. It causes much sorrow and grief, and pain, and sadness, and affliction of spirit. It is the great and harmful vice of detraction. I speak to you as one who has suffered much from the hell-inspired tongues of detractors and calumniators; and as one who has borne his full share of sorrow and grief because of this abominable vice.

I am willing to admit that very often the vice is committed thru thoughtlessness rather than thru malice. But no matter how committed it always leaves a sting behind that may not be healed perhaps till the day of Judgment. Many a poor crushed spirit has gone down to its grave severely wounded by the tongue of the detractor. Many a time have the brightness and joyfulness and hopefulness of life been blurred and deadened by the vice of detraction. Many are the poor hapless people whose hearts and souls are crushed by the weight of sorrow and woe from detraction, who have despaired of ever being set right before the world.

The tongue is one of the smallest members of the human body. Comparatively it is seemingly insignificant. The head, the shoulders, the arms, the feet are much larger and more imposing. But the field of their activity pales in comparison with that of the tongue. The tongue is capable of exercising untold influence for good; and sad to say it is likewise capable of exercising untold influence for evil. The tongue of the detractor becomes such that no man can tame. It becomes filled with deadly poison that soon defiles the whole body.

The vice of detraction is so common that it is not confined to any age or sex or class of persons. Men and women, old and young, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, virtuous and degraded are its unhappy victims. Oh, it were well that people were generally more reserved in the noble gift of speech! An ancient writer says: "I often was sorry that I spoke much, but never was sorry that I was silent."

When the detractor meets you, he is, as a rule, very communicative. He is too cunning to abruptly introduce the subject about which he wished to speak. That may not be good policy. He may for the moment appear to be reserved. Gradually however, and in an imperceptible manner he approaches the subject. His method is to attribute a bad intention to an action that is otherwise good and innocent, or to exaggerate and misconstrue trivial faults.

That business man says the detractor, failed in order to defraud his creditors. Such a man, he asserts, had his house burned down in order to get the insurance. That clerk is spending a great deal of money, therefore, the detractor reasons, he must have stolen it. That young lady, Miss Blank, was seen in the company of such a person, who does not bear a good reputation; consequently, the detractor concludes, she is not virtuous. Every public man, according to the detractor, is a self-seeker, and is prompted in the actions of his public and private life by most unworthy motives.

All the above might have been absolutely honest and above board. The business man may have had no control over his failure. The man whose house burned may not have known anything about it. The clerk may have had other means of getting money. The young lady, Miss Blank, may have met that person in the most accidental manner. The man may have acted always from honorable motives. Till now those people have borne the good reputation and have enjoyed the confidence of their neighbors, but because of the tongue of the detractors their good names have been taken away, their prospects ruined, their lives blighted.

Calumny and detraction are grievous crimes, being both against charity and justice. They are frequently the cause of anger, hatred, animosities, quarrels, and spring from a depraved and malicious heart. Calumniators and detractors are so given to those crimes that as soon as they have heard anything against their neighbors off they go, and—under a promise of secrecy—"Have you heard what such a one has done? I could not have believed it but I fear it is too true. It is too bad. I am sorry." Then out it comes, under the guise of solicitation for the neighbor's welfare, and the neighbor's character and good name are murdered.

When they know no evil of their neighbor, or hear him praised for some good which they cannot deny: "Ah! well! (they will say) he is not the man the world takes him to be. For my part I could tell a good many things; but I will say nothing; for the least said is easiest mended." Or they will shake their head and put on a significant smile, with, "I could say something if I chose."

This is most uncharitable, unjust and malicious for they have whetted their tongues like a sword. They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent, and the venom of asps is under their lips. Their words are smoother than oil, but the same are darts. They betray a corrupted heart, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Sometimes detractors and calumniators will even pretend esteem but only to give greater effect to their detraction. Thus they say "He is a person for whom I have a great esteem, for he has some good qualities, BUT I am sorry to find he is given to such and such." "I always looked upon him as a good man, BUT it is a pity he is not more on his guard against such practice." These BUTS at the end are like the sting at the end of a serpent's tail. They carry venom and poison with them.

Sometimes we may and even ought to speak of a neighbor's faults or make them known to others. For example: we may speak of our neighbor's fault for the sake of correction to those whose duty or business it is to correct them. We may speak of them when it is necessary to guard others against injury. We may likewise speak of them when the evil is quite public, and we speak of it as a public event. This happens when we speak of things we see in public print.

Outside the case of necessity or the case of correction we should be very guarded against the evil of calumny and detraction. By it the neighbor's reputation and good name may be ruined perhaps for life. Poverty and affliction, and sorrow, and misfortune may come to all of us and we may be stripped of everything, but our good name is the one thing above all else that should stand by us. We have a right to that, and no man has any right to deprive us of it. Shakespeare says: "He who steals my purse steals trash. 'Tis nothing. 'Twas mine. 'Twas his. Has been slaves to thousands. But he who steals my good name robs me of all I have."

Calumniators and detractors who by their evil speaking have lessened the reputation of others or have caused them to suffer any other loss, are obliged to make satisfaction by retracting what they have said, if it were false, and by repairing the whole injury in whatever way they can. This obligation, together with the injustice and uncharitableness of these evils, young men, should lead you to avoid them with the greatest care, and should make you ready even "to melt down your gold and silver to make a balance for your words and a just bribe for your tongue."

Not only should you not take part in detraction, but you should not even listen to detractors. Hedge in thy ears with thorns, and hear not a wicked tongue. If ever obliged to hear detraction, then take the part of the person against whom detraction is directed. Reprove the detractor or show displeasure, or turn aside or introduce some other subject of conversation, which if done abruptly will serve as an admonition to the detractor.

Young men, no doubt, many of you have suffered from the tongues of detractors and calumniators. I have many times and very much. So as you have felt the sorrow and anguish of spirit coming from unjust accusations or unjust interpretations, make up your minds that you will not cause that same sorrow to others. You cannot see a man's heart and soul, hence cannot always know the motives that prompted his words or actions, therefore you ought not to judge. Put yourself in the neighbor's place and maybe you would not do as well as he did.

Do not form hasty or rash judgments about your neighbor's actions in important matters. If a thing is so public that you cannot excuse the word or the action, at least be fair enough to try and excuse his motives. Judge not that you may not be judged. Condemn not and you shall not be condemned. Why seest thou the mote in thy brother's eye, but not the beam in thine own eye? Wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself.

Young men, be manly and straightforward and honest and above

board always. There are in the world thousands of poor, unfortunate people that have for years labored under heavy loads of grief and sorrow, which has been caused by the tongues of detractors and calumniators. Friends have drifted apart because of detraction. While families have had bitter quarrels and strifes and animosities because of detraction. Men have been ruined in business and reputation because of detraction. People have gone down into their graves with broken hearts and wounded souls because of detraction. Be not the unmanly coward to cast a stone against your neighbor. Speak well of your neighbor and protect his good name. If you cannot do this do not speak at all. Remember that as you measure out to others so it may be measured out to you.

FATHER TWOHIG



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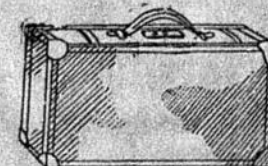
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