

THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1916

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THE GIRLS AND BOYS

Recent experiences of the Children's Aid Society of this city reveal the fact that parents cannot be too careful of the company their children keep. This is especially true of young girls. It is amazing how large a number of girls of fourteen and fifteen are permitted to go about in the evenings unattended, and free to make dangerous acquaintances at a critical period in their lives. Nothing can take the place of parental authority and care in such cases, and it is most unfortunate that in so many cases this is lacking. Young girls, ignorant of life and its temptations, go out to learn lessons of evil, and to grow old before their time. If the girl were lifted before the time, it is a self-complacency in this city which would be shattered as by a cyclone. The press cannot deal openly with conditions, but there are records available for any who care to know. Parents who permit their young daughters to go about unattended at night, and without knowledge of their movements, are sinning against their own flesh and blood, and against the welfare of the community. Temptation lurks not only in the shadows, but is there in the glare of the lights on the open street.

And then the boys—the boys in gangs—under no supervision, and with only the inclinations of the strongest mind in the group to direct their activities. Here also parents fail, and the community fails to provide places for recreation and the right expression of boy life.

Too many boys and girls are permitted to leave school before they realize the value and the benefit of education. When they leave there is no connecting link with a well-informed and well-trained young manhood and womanhood. The community suffers because of what they fail to become as producing factors—perhaps because of what they do become in later years as enemies of the public welfare.

When will parents and the community as a whole become awake to a sense of their responsibility?

THE COMMUNITY SPIRIT

The times have very often urged the development of the community spirit in St. John, to the end that needed reforms and improvements might be brought about, and welfare-work given its rightful place in the life of the people. As a result of persistent efforts on the part of those who possess this spirit a good deal of progress has been made during the past ten years. We have adopted town planning. The board of health has been given enlarged powers in regard to housing conditions. There is a free dispensary, and a hospital for advanced cases of tuberculosis has been provided. We have a Children's Protection Act, a Children's Aid Society and Home. There is a Playgrounds Association, and supervised play is recognized as a necessity. We have made some progress in providing permanent streets. Our assessment law is about to be made more efficient. In many directions progress is observable, but much yet remains to be done. The community spirit will find a way, if that spirit can be developed as it should be. What is that spirit? The question is so well answered by an article in the American Lumberman that we gladly quote it in full, and commend it to the thoughtful attention of the people of St. John. The article follows:

"We wonder how many persons realize the meaning of the term 'Community Spirit'. Most of us know the meaning of co-operation, at least so far as it is exemplified in domestic life, and it may be, in business life. But how many of us realize the meaning and significance of the spirit that seeks the good of the whole community at the cost of self-interest and self-sacrifice of the individuals that compose it?"

"Do we consider every public project in the narrow sense only of its effect upon us individually—its effect upon our pocketbooks? If a better school means more taxes, more expense to us, do we oppose it on that ground only? If a public park or playground means a cash contribution from us do we oppose it because of that fact or the fact that we have no children and do not care to use the recreation places ourselves? Are we unwilling to contribute to the cost of paving any streets but those in front of our property? Do we object to permanent road building unless the roads pass our farms?"

"The community spirit may be defined as the sentiment that eliminates from consideration all selfish, personal interests and directs all forces into channels calculated to promote the welfare of the group. It is this spirit that makes an army invincible. Its converse is mutiny and rebellion."

"Many communities are infested with mutineers and rebels—persons who oppose order and progress, who personify darkness instead of light, stagnation instead of activity, narrowness instead of liberality. The community spirit is characteristic of enlightenment; it is the embodiment of enlightened self-interest; it is foresight of the ant, not of the grasshopper variety. It sees in the uplift and enlightenment of the community the surest guaranty of prosperity, security and happiness of the individuals that compose it. Blessed is the community whose citizens are inspired with a common desire to promote the common welfare—that are possessed with the community spirit."

A BROADER FAITH

The war is breaking down religious prejudice in a remarkable way. Rev. R. J. Campbell, after working among the wounded and dying in France, bears this testimony:

"It was impossible to be thrown day after day into the company of chaplains and Christian workers of all denominations without feeling that our common Christianity is indeed a real and blessed fact for which to be profoundly thankful. In presence of such a cataclysm as the war, how comparatively trivial our disagreements appear?"

The following from an English paper gives us the impression made upon a Catholic clergyman by the devotion of men of all creeds to the cause of righteousness in this war:

"Father Nicholas, chaplain to the King of Serbia and Professor of Theology at the University of Belgrade, drew a crowded congregation at Bloomsbury last Sunday morning. The Mayor and Corporation of Holborn attended in state, and Anglican and Nonconformist, Roman Catholic and Greek church, united together to express their hatred of the wrong done to Serbia and their admiration of the heroic self-sacrifice. Mr. Phillips said it was the nearest approach to a reunion of Christendom he had seen. Father Nicholas said that he had been challenged for going to a Baptist church, but the New Testament said where two or three were gathered together in Christ's name there He Himself is present, and he was not afraid of going where His name was."

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He Knew Her Alright.

"But I don't know you, madam," the bank cashier said to the woman who had presented a check. The woman, wrong done to Serbia and their admiration of the heroic self-sacrifice. Mr. Phillips said it was the nearest approach to a reunion of Christendom he had seen. Father Nicholas said that he had been challenged for going to a Baptist church, but the New Testament said where two or three were gathered together in Christ's name there He Himself is present, and he was not afraid of going where His name was."

Father Nicholas made some further remarks which are of special interest. He said he believed: "The English are to be the Pan-Humanists, the reconcilers of the divisions of the world. The German ideal is greatness, the Slav ideal is goodness. Through the fires of suffering they had learnt humility, the hollowing of mere greatness and the worth of virtue. The vision came to the Russian and the Serbian, but the British had also seen it, and were predestined in the future history of the world to be the organizers of goodness."

The men who come back from the greatest war of all time will not split hairs about theology. They have looked both duty and death in the face, and have discovered that the nobler virtues are not confined to the adherents of any one form of sectarian belief. Faith in God is unshaken, but there has been an amazing development of faith in man, regardless of his religious denomination. The world will be the better for the revelation.

Flour, sugar, coal, potatoes, footwear, clothing—how long will the poor man have the price?

The Standard is calling for a symposium on conscription. What are the Standard's own views on the subject?

The war news continues to be of a most encouraging nature, but Sir Sam is right: "It is a long road to Berlin."

Oh! joy. Sir Sam Hughes arrived yesterday in Canada, and the papers are full of him. Life takes on a new interest for us all. "Canada," he says, "must continue to do her duty