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Amusements and Fashions

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Abstract: Youth Should Look Forward—Proper Amusements—Proper Character of Amusements—Social Duties—The Danger of Pleasure Hunting—Harmful Effects of Bad Books—Proper Reading—Raffling and Gambling—Games of Chance—The Evil of-Cards—Wasting Time with Cards—Card Playing—Stop Card Playing—Pernicious Nature of Card Playing—Cards in the Home—Evil Fashions—Improper Fashions—Exclusive Clubs Among Church Members—A Lesson for the Boys

CHAPTER XVII

Amusements and Fashions.

YOUTH SHOULD LOOK FORWARD. Our youth should not be left to spend their time almost entirely in the mad whirl of pleasure and amusement, without a thought of advancing years with the attendant bodily ailments and physical infirmities which are bound to come. They should be given to understand that what are generally considered as the pleasures of youth are on the wing, and will soon pass, leaving in their rear only sad remembrances of wasted opportunities that cannot be recalled. They should not be permitted to waste their time and their parents' substance in frivolous pastime and riotous living, which can only result in vicious or evil habits being formed.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 52, January, 1917, p. 19.

PROPER AMUSEMENTS. Our amusements should be characterized by their wholesome social environments. We should have proper regard to the character of those with whom we associate in places of amusement; and we should be governed by a high sense of responsibility to our parents, to our friends and to the Church. We should know that the pleasures which we enjoy are such as have upon them the stamp of divine approval. They should be endorsed by our parents and by our religious associates, and by those true principles which should always regulate our intercourse with one another in Church membership. Amusements which, in themselves, and in commendable social surroundings, may be proper and wholesome, should be avoided unless associates are unquestionable and the places are reputable and are conducted under proper restraints.

There are limits in our recreations beyond which we

cannot safely go. They should be guarded in character and curtailed in frequency to avoid excess. They should not occupy all, nor even the greater part of our time; indeed, they should be made incidental to the duties and obligations of life, and never be made a controlling motive or factor in our hopes and ambitions. There are so many dangers lurking in those amusements, and the fascination for them which take hold upon the lives of our young people, sometimes to the very possession of them, that they should be carefully guarded and warned against the temptations and evils that are likely to ensnare them, to their destruction.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 49, June, 1914, pp. 380, 381.

PROPER CHARACTER OF AMUSEMENTS. The character and variety of our amusements have so much to do with the welfare and character of our young people that they should be guarded with the utmost jealousy for the preservation of the morals and stamina of the youth of Zion.

In the first place, they should not be excessive; and young people should be discouraged from giving themselves up to the spirit and frivolity of excessive mirth. No Latter-day Saint needs to be told that two or three dances a week for his children are out of all sense of reason. Too frequent dances are not only injurious to stability of character, but they are highly detrimental to good health; and wherever possible other amusements than the ball room should be introduced into the lives of our young people. They should be trained to appreciate more and more amusements of a social and intellectual character. Home parties, concerts that develop the talents of youth, and public amusements that bring together both young and old, are preferable to the excessive practice of dancing.

In the second place, our amusements should be consistent with our religious spirit of fraternity and religious devotion. In too many instances the ball room is devoid of our supplication for Divine protection. Our dancing should be,

as far as possible, under the supervision of some Church organization, and we should be scrupulously careful to open the dance by prayer. * * * The question of amusements is one of such far-reaching importance to the welfare of the Saints that the presiding authorities of every ward should give it their most careful attention and consideration.

In the third place, our amusements should interfere as little as possible with the work of the school-room. It is very desirable that the early education of our young people should be carried on with as little interruption as possible; and frequent dances during the school season are detrimental both to the body and to the mind.

Lastly, it is to be feared that in many homes, parents abandon all regulation respecting the amusement of their children, and set them adrift to find their fun wherever and whenever they can. Parents should never lose control of the amusements of their children during their tender years, and should be scrupulously careful about the companionship of their young people in places of amusement.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 39, March 1, 1904, pp. 144, 145.

SOCIAL DUTIES. The city people have become accustomed to living near neighbors for years without associating together. There are instances where good people, well acquainted in business and upon the street, have lived neighbors for twenty-five or more years, and yet not invited each other to their homes, to take dinner together, nor to have a social hour or evening. They live so near each other that they can almost shake hands, from door to door, yet never call, nor associate together; they are perfectly exclusive. That is not a wise nor a good way, especially when, as Latter-day Saints, we should be looking after the welfare of mankind, by preaching the gospel in word and in deed. Would it not be much better if we arranged a little dinner, or invited our neighbor to come and join us in a little social, to become acquainted and make him feel we are not strang-

ers to him, nor he to us? And let us remember the definition which Christ sanctioned of neighbor, as well as the requirement: He that showeth mercy unto me is my neighbor, and the commandment is: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

I hope we shall do better. But there is really little sociability among us, and there is an exclusiveness that is not in keeping with the warmth of the gospel. We do not think enough of each other; we do not care for each other; we take little or no notice of each other; and finally, we pass each other on the street without the slightest recognition. We scarcely bow to a brother, unless we are really intimate with him. That is not the spirit that belongs to "Mormonism." It is contrary to that friendship and sociability that ought to characterize Latter-day Saints. I believe in the broadest, most charitable, the kindest and most loving spirit that it is possible for broad-minded and big-souled men to exercise or to possess; and that this spirit ought to be the spirit possessed and diffused by the Saints everywhere.

Let us, then, gather in the honest in heart, and treat them and one another with the spirit of warmth and love characteristic of the gospel. Then talk about the unfortunate, the drunken, the weak, the erring! Do not shun them, either. They ought to be saved as well as everybody else; and, if it is possible, let us save them, too, as well as the worthy, the good and the pure. Let us save the sinner, and bring him to a knowledge of the truth, if possible.

Our Mutual Improvement Associations are invited to make a specialty of this social work; the bishops should lend their aid to the officers in selecting and setting apart capable and experienced missionaries, as well as ward teachers, who should devote their energies, among other things, to the development of a more social spirit among the people. The indifferent youth, as well as the stranger and the friendless, in our midst, should be made welcome at our

gatherings, and be induced to feel at home among the people of God. And then, let it be remembered, every family, every person, has a duty in this line. Because men or women are not ward or association officers is no good reason why they should be exempt from the common social amenities of life, nor why they should not be subject to doing good temporally, spiritually and socially.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 7, October, 1904, p. 957.

THE DANGER OF PLEASURE HUNTING. In order that a young man may make up his mind what course in life to take he must pay some thought on where he is going in the long run; what shall be the condition he would like to enjoy through life, and particularly the end towards which he would like to work. Otherwise it will be hard for him to steer his actions from day to day towards the goal of his ambition.

Calmly viewing the hundreds of sayings to be found in good books, and hearing also the experiences and warnings of many more wise men who live in our time and settlements, who are exemplary shepherds of the people in our many Church organizations, and who are constantly giving warning against excessive pleasure-seeking, the thoughtful young man must confess that pleasure is not the goal that he would seek—that the man would seek who desires to make the best out of life.

The wise man is, therefore, going to steer his course away from the living death of pleasure-seeking. He is not going into bondage or debt to buy automobiles and other costly equipages to keep pace with the rush of fashionable pleasure-seeking, in this respect. He is not going to borrow money to satisfy the popular craze for traveling in Europe or in our own country with no purpose in view but pleasure. He is not going to grow nervous and gray in a struggle for means that his wife and daughter, for mere pleasure, may spend the summer at costly, fashionable resorts, or in dis-

tant lands. It is true that there are many in our community who do not appear to be wise, and who are doing just these and other foolish acts for so-called pleasure.

The result of this hunt for pleasure and excitement and for keeping pace with what only the very wealthy can but ought not to do, is that many are forced to undertake all kinds of illegitimate schemes to obtain money to gratify the tendency. Hence the growth of financial immorality. Many underhanded methods are adopted to obtain means, and even cheating and lying and deceiving friends and neighbors are frequently resorted to in order that money may be obtained to gratify this inordinate desire for pleasure. The story is told of one good lady who got flour at her grocer's on credit, and sold it for cash at a bargain to get money to go pleasure-seeking. Thus the morals are corrupted. This applies to rich and poor alike.

You men who are sensible fathers, is this course worth while?

Young men who have a goal in sight, is this the course to take to fit your purpose and to get the best results out of life?

Without discussing wealth and fame, shall we not call a halt in this pleasure craze, and go about the legitimate business of true Latter-day Saints, which is to desire and strive to be of some use in the world? Shall we not instead do something to increase the genuine joy and welfare and virtue of mankind as well as our own by helping to bear the burdens under which the toilers are groaning, by rendering loving, devoted and unselfish service to our fellow men?—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 12, July, 1909, p. 744.

HARMFUL EFFECTS OF BAD BOOKS. It would be difficult to estimate the harmful influences upon the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the young, brought about by the practice of reading dime novels. Books constitute a sort of companionship to everyone who reads, and they create within

the heart feelings either for good or for bad. It sometimes happens that parents are very careful about the company which their children keep and are yet very indifferent about the books they read. In the end the reading of a bad book will bring about evil associates.

It is not only the boy who reads this strange, weird and unnaturally exciting literature that is affected by its influence, but in time he influences others. This literature becomes the mother of all sorts of evil suggestions that ripen into evil practices and bring about an unnatural and debased feeling which is ever crowding out the good in the human heart and giving place to the bad. It was Shelley who said that "strange thoughts beget strange deeds," and when our children are reading books that are creating strange and unusual and undesirable thoughts in their minds we need not be surprised to learn that they have committed some unusual, some strange, or unnatural act. It is in the thoughts and feelings that we have to combat the evils and temptations of the world, and the purification of our thoughts and feelings should be made the special effort of every father and mother. Fuller once wrote, "It seems my soul is like a filthy pond where fish die soon and frogs live long." It is remarkable how easy it is to learn sin and how hard it is to forget it.

A story is told of an English officer in India, who one day went to the book shelf to take down a book. As he reached his hand up over the volume his finger was bitten by an adder. After a few hours the finger began to swell. Later on the swelling went into his arm, and finally the whole body was affected, and in a few days the officer was dead. There are adders concealed in many a cheap and trashy book, and they are always common in dime novels. Their effects upon our souls are poisonous, and in time they are sure to produce a moral and spiritual death. * * *
The influence of these novels is all the more dan-

gerous because the feelings and thoughts which they engender in the heart and mind are more or less hidden, and the evil consequence of such reading frequently does not manifest itself until some overt and horrible act is the result of months and sometimes years of imagination and wonderment. Let the Saints beware of the books that enter their homes, for their influences may be as poisonous and deadly as the adder which brought death to the English officer in India.—*Juvenile Instructor*, May 1, 1902, Vol. 37, p. 275.

PROPER READING. There is altogether too much novel reading of that class of novels which teaches nothing useful, and only tends to the excitement of the emotions. Excessive novel reading we all know is detrimental to the intellectual development of those who engage in it, and the wise and those who seek advancement might well give more time to useful, educational works—books that would enlighten the reader on history, biography, religion, and other important subjects which all well-informed people are expected to understand.

Many of our young people, and some older ones, too, are not familiar with their own religion nor with the beautiful and striking doctrines of the gospel with which it is so laden. This class devote more time to reading useless or sensational books than they do to the study and contemplation of works that would familiarize them with the principles of the gospel. If they were better informed in this line, and understood the saving doctrines and every-day questions of their religion, more than they do, they would not be trapped by false teachings, false leaders, and advocates of cults that are false. They would not be misled as some of them are.—*Improvement Era*, May, 1909, Vol. 12, p. 561.

RAFFLING AND GAMBLING. Is it proper to raffle property for the benefit of missionaries? No; raffling is a game

of chance, and hence leads to gambling; for that reason, if for no other, it should not be encouraged among the young men of the Church. President Young declared raffling to be a modified name of gambling; said that "as Latter-day Saints we cannot afford to sacrifice moral principles to financial gain," and advised the sisters through the *Woman's Exponent* not to raffle. President Lorenzo Snow endorsed and approved of these sentiments; and I have often expressed my unqualified disapproval of raffling; the General Sunday School Board have declared against it; and finally the state law makes it unlawful to raffle with dice; and if it is unlawful with dice, in principle, is it not just as injurious with any other device? With all these objections, should it not be clear to anyone that raffling horses, quilts, bicycles and other property is not sanctioned by the moral law nor approved by the general Church authorities. But it continues just the same, and if you do not believe in it, you should refuse to patronize it, so helping the cause. Now, how shall we aid the missionary who wishes to sell a horse, or what not? Let everybody give a dollar, and let the donors decide, by vote, to what worthy man, not of their number, the horse shall be given. No chance about that—it is pure decision, and it helps the people who wish to buy chances solely for the benefit of the missionary to discourage the gambling propensities of their natures. However, here is an additional thought: The element of chance enters very largely into everything we undertake, and it should be remembered that the spirit in which we do things decides very largely whether we are gambling or are entering into legitimate business enterprises.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 6, February, 1903, p. 308.

GAMES OF CHANCE. *To Whom It May Concern:* Among the vices of the present age gambling is very generally condemned. Gambling under its true name is forbidden by law, and is discountenanced by the self-respecting

elements of society. Nevertheless, in numerous guises the demon of chance is welcomed in the home, in fashionable clubs, and at entertainments for worthy charities, even within the precincts of sacred edifices. Devices for raising money by appealing to the gambling instinct are common accessories at church sociables, ward fairs, and the like.

Whatever may be the condition elsewhere, this custom is not to be sanctioned within this Church; and any organization allowing such is in opposition to the counsel and instruction of the general authorities of the Church.

Without attempting to specify or particularize the many objectionable forms given to this evil practice amongst us, we say again to the people that no kind of chance game, guessing contest, or raffling device can be approved in any entertainment under the auspices of our Church organizations.

The desire to get something of value for little or nothing is pernicious; and any proceeding that strengthens that desire is an effective aid to the gambling spirit, which has proved a veritable demon of destruction to thousands. Risking a dime in the hope of winning a dollar in any game of chance is a species of gambling.

Let it not be thought that raffling articles of value, offering prizes to the winners in guessing-contests, the use of machines of chance, or any other device of the kind is to be allowed or excused because the money so obtained is to be used for a good purpose. The Church is not to be supported in any degree by means obtained through gambling.

Let the attention of stake and ward officers, and those in charge of the auxiliary organizations of the Church be directed to what has been written on this subject and to this present reminder. An article over the signature of the President of the Church was published in the *Juvenile Instructor*, October 1, 1902 (Volume 37, p. 592), in which

were given citations from earlier instruction and advice to the people on this subject. For convenience, part of that article is repeated here. In reply to a question as to whether raffling and games of chance are justifiable when the purposes to be accomplished are good, this was said: "We say emphatically, No. Raffle is only a modified name of gamble."

President Young once said to Sister Eliza R. Snow: "Tell the sisters not to raffle. If the mothers raffle, the children will gamble. Raffling is gambling." Then it is added: "Some say, What shall we do? We have quilts on hand—we cannot sell them, and we need means to supply our treasury, which we can obtain by raffling for the benefit of the poor. Rather let the quilts rot on the shelves than adopt the old adage, 'The end will sanctify the means.' As Latter-day Saints, we cannot afford to sacrifice moral principle to financial gain."—*Improvement Era*, December, 1908, Vol. 12, p. 143.

THE EVIL OF CARDS. But, you say, we must have recreation; what shall we do? Turn to domestic enterprises, and to the gaining of useful knowledge of the gospel. Let the love of reading good and useful books be implanted in the hearts of the young, let them be trained to take pleasure and recreation in history, travel, biography, conversation and classic story. Then there are innocent games, music, songs, and literary recreation. What would you think of the man who would argue for whisky and beer as a common beverage because it is necessary for people to drink? He is perhaps little worse than the man who would place cards in the hands of my children—whereby they would foster the spirit of chance and gambling leading down to destruction—because they must have recreation. I would call the first a vicious enemy, and refer him to water to drink; and the latter an evil spirit in the guise of innocence, and refer him

to recreation containing no germs of spiritual disease leading to the devil!

Let our evenings be devoted to innocent amusements in the home, and let all chance games be banished from our families, and only recreation indulged in that is free from gambling and the gambling spirit. And let excessive card-playing, and the person who strolls about among neighbors at all hours of the night and day encouraging the evil, be put far from us. Just as sure as we encourage this evil it will bring other grievous troubles in its wake, and those who indulge excessively will lose the spirit of the gospel, and go to temporal and spiritual ruin.

Young people in their recreations should strive to form a love for that which will not be injurious. It is not true that only that recreation can be enjoyed that is detrimental to the body and spirit. We should train ourselves to find pleasure in that which invigorates, not stupefies and destroys the body; that which leads upward and not down; that which brightens, not dulls and stunts the intellect; that which elevates and exalts the spirit, not that clogs and depresses it. So shall we please the Lord, enhance our own enjoyment, and save ourselves and our children from impending sins, at the root of which, like the evil genius, lurks the spirit of cards and gaming.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 14, June, 1911, pp. 735-8.

WASTING TIME WITH CARDS. It is no uncommon thing for women, young and middle-aged, to spend whole afternoons, and many of them, evenings as well, in playing cards, thus wasting hours and days of precious time in this useless and unprofitable way. Yet those same people, when approached, declare they have no time to spend as teachers in the Sabbath schools, and no time to attend either Sunday schools or meetings. Their church duties are neglected for lack of time, yet they spend hours, day after day, at cards. They have thereby encouraged and become possessed of a

spirit of indolence, and their minds are filled with the vile drunkenness, hallucination, charm and fascination, that take possession of the habitual card-player to the exclusion of all spiritual and religious feeling. Such a spirit detracts from all sacred thought and sentiment. These players at length do not quite know whether they are Jews, Gentiles, or Saints, and they do not care a fig.

While a simple game of cards in itself may be harmless, it is a fact that by immoderate repetition it ends in an infatuation for chance schemes, in habits of excess, in waste of precious time, in a dulling and stupor of the mind, and in the complete destruction of religious feeling. These are serious results, evils that should and must be avoided by the Latter-day Saints. Then again, there is the grave danger that lurks in persistent card playing, which begets the spirit of gambling, of speculation, and that awakens the dangerous desire to get something for nothing.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 6, August, 1903, p. 779.

CARD PLAYING. One's character may be determined in some measure by the quality of one's amusements. Men and women of industrious, business-like, and thoughtful habits care little for frivolous pastimes, for pleasures that are sought for their own sake. It is not easy to imagine that leading men in the Church could find any pleasure that was either inspiring or helpful at the card table; indeed the announcement that a president of a stake, bishop of a ward, or other leading official of the Church was fond of card playing would be a shock to every sense of propriety even among young people who are not seriously inclined to the duties and responsibilities of life. Such a practice would be looked upon as incompatible with the duties and responsibilities of a religious life. Even business men, as a rule, are distrustful of business associates whose inclinations engage them in frequent card playing.

But it may be said that the same objections do not hold good in respect to young people who do not take life so seriously; but the evil is that young people who indulge in the frivolous and vicious pastime of card playing are never likely to take life seriously unless they forsake such questionable pleasures early in life. It is the serious and thoughtful man and woman who are most likely to assume the higher and nobler responsibilities of life, and their tastes and pleasures are never satisfied by means of a deck of cards.

Card playing is an excessive pleasure; it is intoxicating and, therefore, in the nature of a vice. It is generally the companion of the cigarette and the wine glass, and the latter lead to the poolroom and the gambling hall. Few men and women indulge in the dangerous pastime of the card table without compromising the business affairs and the higher responsibilities of life. Tell me what amusements you like best and whether your amusements have become a ruling passion in your life, and I will tell you what you are. Few indulge frequently in card playing in whose lives it does not become a ruling passion.

Cards are the most perfect and common instrumentalities of the gambler that have been devised, and the companionship of cards, unlike the companionship of most other games, is that of the gambling den and the saloon. But cards do not stand alone in their enticement to evil. Any game that ultimately leads to questionable society, because it is the chief pleasures of such society, should be excluded from the home. There are innocent games enough to satisfy the required pleasures of the home without encouraging card playing.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 38, September 1, 1903, p. 529.

STOP CARD PLAYING. I am told that the prevalence of card parties in the homes of the Latter-day Saints is much greater than is supposed by those whom society people never think of inviting to make the card table the source of an

evening's pastime. The presiding authorities are not invited to these card parties, and, as a rule, are not permitted to witness them, simply because those who give such parties feel that a deck of cards in the hands of a faithful servant of God is a satire upon religion.

I have heard that some who are called to officiate in holy ordinances have, when absent from the House of the Lord or when tardy in arriving, excused themselves because of the time occupied in giving or attending a card party. Those who thus indulge are not fit to administer in sacred ordinances. They are no more worthy than others who violate good morals in any respect. They should be excused.

I am told that young people offer as an excuse for such questionable pastime the accusation that cards are played in the homes of certain leading men in the Church. Bishops, however, ought never to be deterred in their efforts to suppress the evil by counter complaints of this kind. The bishop has the same right to inquire, through the means of his teachers, into the pleasures of the homes of the highest authorities of the Church as he has into those of its most humble members. If it be true that card playing is prevalent in the Church, the bishops are charged with the responsibility of the evil, and it is their duty to see that it is abolished, or that men and women who encourage it be brought to account before their brethren and sisters for the pernicious example they are setting before the youth of Zion. Certainly no bishop can report his ward in good condition where such a practice prevails.

Presidents of stakes are not without their responsibility in this matter, and at the general priesthood meetings of the stakes they should make searching inquiry of the bishops concerning card parties in the homes of the Saints. It is an easy matter for every bishop to know through the medium of the ward teachers, whether there are any practices in the homes of the people inconsistent with the mission of "Mor-

monism," and card playing is certainly inconsistent with that mission. No man who is addicted to card playing should be called to act as a ward teacher, such men cannot be consistent advocates of that which they do not themselves practice.

The card table has been the scene of too many quarrels, the birthplace of too many hatreds, the occasion of too many murders to admit one word of justification for the lying, cheating spirit which it too often engenders in the hearts of its devotees.

My frequent and emphatic expressions on this subject are the result of the alarm I have felt over the well founded reports that have come to me concerning the prevalence of card playing in the homes of some who profess to be Latter-day Saints. Upon every officer in the Church responsibility in any way for the dangers of the card table is placed, and placed heavily, the duty of doing all that he or she possibly can in a prayerful and earnest manner to eradicate the evil. Let us be fully conscious of the old adage which says that "The devil likes to souse whatever is wet," and stop card playing in the home before it reaches the gamblers' table.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 38, Sept. 15, 1903, p. 561.

PERNICIOUS NATURE OF CARD PLAYING. Card playing is a game of chance, and because it is a game of chance it has its tricks. It encourages tricks; its devotees measure their success at the table by their ability through devious and dark ways to win. It creates a spirit of cunning and devises hidden and secret means, and cheating at cards is almost synonymous with playing at cards.

Again, cards have a bad reputation and they are the known companions of bad men. If no other reason existed for shunning the card table, its reputation alone should serve as a warning. It may be conceded that superb skill is often acquired in this game of chance, but this skill itself endan-

gers the moral qualities of the possessor and leads him on to questionable practices.

Such games as checkers and chess are games more of fixed rules, whose application are open and freer from cunning devices. Such games do not intoxicate like cards and other games of chance.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 38, October 1, 1903, p. 591.

CARDS IN THE HOME. But if cards are played in the home and under the eye of an anxious and loving parent, what harm can come from it all? is asked. Most vices in the beginning take on attractive and innocent appearing garbs, and a careful examination of the career of many an unfortunate man will reveal the first step of his misfortune in some "innocent pastime" whose vice rarely manifests itself in its infancy. There are different spirits in the world and the gambling spirit is one of them, and cards have been from time immemorial the most common and universal means of gratifying that spirit. An "innocent game of cards" is the innocent companion of an innocent glass of wine and the playmate of tricksters.

Again, all amusements become pernicious when pursued excessively. No game in the world has been played a thousandth part of the time, aye all the games in the world have not consumed a thousandth part of the time, that cards have taken. The game itself leads to excessiveness; it is the enemy of industry; it is the foe of economy; and the boon companion of the Sabbath-breaker. The best possible excuse that any one can render for playing cards is that there is a possible escape from the dangers to which it leads; and the best explanation that people can give for such a vice is the adventurous spirit of man that delights in that which is hazardous to his physical and moral safety.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 38, Oct. 1, 1903, p. 593.

EVIL FASHIONS. In my sight the present-day fashions

are abominable, suggestive of evil, calculated to arouse base passion and lust, and to engender lasciviousness, in the hearts of those who follow the fashions, and of those who tolerate them. Why? Because women are imitating the very customs of a class of women who have resorted to that means to aid them to sell their souls. It is infamous, and I hope the daughters of Zion will not descend to these pernicious ways, customs and fashions, for they are demoralizing and damnable in their effect.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1913, p. 8.

IMPROPER FASHIONS. Please set the example before your sisters that God would have them follow. When we teach people to observe the laws of God and to honor the gifts that are bestowed upon them in the covenants of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we don't want you teachers to go out and set an example before your sisters that will destroy their faith in our teachings. I hope you will take that to heart, for it has a meaning to it. I am talking to the teachers among the sisters. We hear it reported, from time to time, that some of the teachers that are sent out among our sisters not only do not set the example that they ought to set, but they set the example that they should not set for our sisters; they teach them by example to break the word of wisdom, rather than to keep it. They teach them to mutilate their garments, rather than to keep them holy and undefiled, by setting the example before them, and we can tell you the names if you want to know. I am not scolding; I don't want it to be understood that I am finding fault. I am only telling a solemn truth, and I am sorry that I have it to say, but I want it to be distinctly understood. We see some of our good sisters coming here to the temple occasionally decorated in the latest and most ridiculous fashions that ever disgraced the human form divine. They do not seem to realize that they are coming to the house of God, and we have to forbid them entrance, or find fault with them, and they go away grieved and say sometimes, "We don't want to go there any more."

Why? Because they come unprepared, like the man who was found at the feast without the wedding garment, who also had to be turned out (Matt. 22:1-14). We have to turn them out occasionally, because they will not hearken to the counsel that has been given to them.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1914, p. 130.

EXCLUSIVE CLUBS AMONG CHURCH MEMBERS. There is no need of exclusive clubs among the Latter-day Saints. The many auxiliary organizations should be made to supply every legitimate public, and social amusement of the young people, and, in addition to the regular Church and quorum meetings, should meet every religious and ethical educational need of our community.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 12, February, 1909, p. 313.

A LESSON FOR THE BOYS. Self-respect requires, among other things, that one shall behave like a true gentleman, in a house of worship. No self-respecting person will go to a house devoted to the service of God to whisper, gossip and visit; rather, it is one's duty to put on self-restraint, to give one's undivided attention to the speaker, and concentrate the mind upon his words that his thoughts may be grasped to our benefit and profit.

Among the strong helps to gain self-respect are personal purity and proper thoughts which are the basis of all proper action. I wish that all young men could appreciate the value there is in this practice, and in giving their youthful days to the service of the Lord. Growth, development, progress, self-respect, the esteem and admiration of men naturally follow such a course in youth. The Savior set a striking example in this matter, and was early about his Father's business. He did not leave it until his older years, but even as early as twelve he had developed so far in this line that he was able to teach men of wisdom and doctors of knowledge in the temple. Samuel, the prophet, had so prepared himself by a pure, self-respecting childhood that he

was perfectly attuned to the whisperings of God. The shepherd youth David was chosen above his older brethren to serve in high places in the Master's cause. Other great characters in history were also selected early in life; and the best men in all ages gave their young manhood to the service of God who honored them abundantly with commendation and approval. In more modern times the Lord chose Joseph Smith in early youth to be the founder of the new and glorious dispensation of the gospel. Brigham Young was but a youth when he determined to devote his life to the Church; John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, and in fact all the early founders of the Church devoted their youth and manhood to the cause of Zion. You may look around you today, and who are the leaders among the people but those who early and zealously devoted themselves to the faith? And you may foretell who are to be the leaders by observing the boys who show self-respect and purity and who are earnest in all good works. The Lord will not choose men from any other class of his people and exalt them into prominence. The opposite course, waiting to serve the Lord until the wild oats of youth are sown, is reprehensible. There is always something lacking in the man who spends his youth in wickedness and sin, and then turns to righteousness in later years. Of course, the Lord honors his repentance, and it is better far that a man should late turn from evil than to continue in sin all his days, but the fact is clear that the best part of his life and strength are wasted, and there remains only poor, broken service to offer the Lord. There are regrets and heartburnings in repenting late in life from the follies and sins of youth, but there are consolation and rich reward in serving the Lord in the vigorous days of early manhood.

Self-respect, deference for sacred things, and personal purity are the beginnings and the essence of wisdom. The doctrines of the gospel, the Church restraint, are like school-

masters to keep us in the line of duty. If it were not for these schoolmasters, we would perish and be overcome by the evil about us. We see men who have freed themselves from Church restraint and from the precious doctrines of the gospel, who perish about us every day! They boast of freedom, but are the slaves of sin.

Let me admonish you to permit the gospel schoolmaster to teach you self-respect and to keep you pure and free from secret sins that bring not only physical punishment, but sure spiritual death. You cannot hide the penalty which God has affixed to them—a penalty often worse than death. It is the loss of self-respect, it is physical debility, it is insanity, indifference to all powers that are good and noble—all these follow in the wake of the sinner in secret, and of the unchaste. Unchastity, furthermore, not only fixes its penalty on the one who transgresses, but reaches out unerring punishment to the third and fourth generation, making not only the transgressor a wreck, but mayhap involving scores of people in his direct line of relationship, disrupting family ties, breaking the hearts of parents, and causing a black stream of sorrow to overwhelm their lives.

Such a seeming simple thing, then, as proper conduct in a house of worship leads to good results in many respects. Good conduct leads to self-respect, which creates purity of thought and action. Pure thought and noble action lead to a desire to serve God in the strength of manhood and to become subservient to the schoolmasters, Church restraint, and the doctrines of the gospel of Christ.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 9, 1905-6, pp. 337-339.