EDUCATION AND CHARACTER

By LEONARD A. BARRETT

Beside railway crossings in many of our small towns, there is stationed a watchman whose responsibility is to signal traffic in case of an approaching train. In the daytime he displays a sign "Stop"; in the night, he swings a red lantern. If the watchman should fail to give his signal and an accident occur, it would not be so difficult to win a damage suit against the railway company. If an accident should occur when the watchman had given his signal, the probability of winning a suit would be rather remote.

The placement of responsibility is one of the most difficult tasks confronting our entire social life. It is also, in many cases, the most important question for courts to determine. Was the watchman faithful to his duty? Did he give the warning? One of the most popular criminal cases in recent years was decided on the merit of this single question. Was the criminal warned of the peril of wrong doing? The young son of a rich merchant pleaded guilty of murder. His attorney argued that his father neglected his duty in moral and religious training. The young man had never been taught the necessity of restraining his emotions. He had plenty of money and lived a riotous life. The court held that the young man was not wholly responsible and substituted life imprisonment for the electric chair.

We are spending enormous sums of money on education, religion, and on the development of all cultural arts; but when we estimate the results, how much has actually helped our youth to live a better and cleaner moral life? The most dangerous factor in our social life today is the educated characterless individual.

If our splendid educational facilities drug the watchman at the tower instead of causing him to give the warning that safeguards from destruction, it has hopelessly failed in its high purpose.

Every teacher from the kindergarten to the university, like every parent, very largely determines the status of public morals. They are like the watchman who, holding up his signal, says— "Just so far, and no farther." As a "watchman" guarding the safety of our American youth stand the home, the church, the university and the cathedral whose highest responsibility is not only to train the mind but the heart also. Education without character is dynamite.

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GABBY GERTIE

"Anybody can stop at an exclusive watering place in these days of the 400 filling stations."

My Neighbor Says:

A cup of grated cheese added to the white sauce that is served with cauliflower improves its flavor.

• • •

Garbage will not freeze to the can during the winter if coarse fine salt is scattered over the bottom of can when it is empty.

• • •

Use two strands of dental floss instead of one when restringing beads. Beads are not so likely to cut through two strands.

• • •

If two tablespoons of shortening are added to the batter when making griddle cakes it will not be necessary to grease griddle.

• • •

Two or three layers of newspapers placed on top of a wire spring and under mattress makes a bed much warmer. This makes a great difference when there is no box spring on the bed.

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POTPOURRI

Crow's Classy Relatives

The birds of paradise, of which there are some fifty species, are related to the crows. Contrasted to the latter's plain and uninviting appearance, the bird of paradise perhaps has more splendor than any other winged creature. They are native in the forests of Australia, New Guinea and other Pacific islands.

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Subscribe for The Plaindealer.

Old Timers' Club

"STRETCHER" JOINS THE CLUB
1045 Fauquier St.,
St. Paul, Minn.,
Dec. 3, 1935

Editor, McHenry Plaindealer:-
Dear Sir:

I just arrived home from Stockholm, Wis., and my brother, Frank, handed me a stack of Plaindealers. You sure have a most valuable paper, in fact, the best country weekly it has been my pleasure to read. The Old Timers' Club of course, interested me just as it interests all the old timers, and the young timers, too. I have always had a soft spot in my heart for the old town. I wish to join the Old Timers' Club.

Dear Old Timers:-

Just a line to let you know that I am well and kicking. We enjoy your letters very much. I can close my eyes and see each one of you, just as you were in the good old days, and what wonderful days they were, so carefree and full of hope. I know nothing of the tragic sixties. I was born in the exact middle of the silly seventies, and came to McHenry with my parents, L. E. Bennett, mother, Anna E. Bennett, and brother, Frank, sister, Alice, and sister, Clara. We arrived in McHenry Jan. 28, 1881. Frank Wightman hauled us over from Waukegan. We can still remember the old curduroy road over which we traveled and it was a sea of mud after the January thaw. We moved into the Howe block, just across from the McHenry House. I was just turned six years old, and to me life began at six. I was guardian of my kid brother, Frank. We soon got acquainted with all the kids in the neighborhood, Harry Wightman, the Hollys, the Kargas boys, and Will "Bree" Karges, the Colbys, Storeys, the Engelns, and such jolly good neighbors we had.

It was the winter of the big snows and I can remember trudging to school. Netty Page was our teacher and we liked her very much.

Streaming by the old town was the river. Just imagine old Fox River of a half century ago, its clear waters flowing past groves of hard wood timber, the natural shore line of colored willows and green pastures, and its swirling waters just teeming with fish.

Well, in the spring we moved down to Boone Creek, across the road from Chet Howard's and George Beckwith's; farther down the street lived Oliver Owen and at the foot of the street lived Chauncey Beckwith, such good neighbors and many are the pleasant memories. We can remember when Ray Owen got his big high-wheel bicycle, the large wheel was in front. The wheel in that time was a marvel, but one had to be careful going down hill for he might pitch over the handle bars. The next improvement had the small wheel in front.

Can also remember when Jim Perry got one of the first Columbia bicycles made. The Columbia was costly and heavy in those days. I can remember the first night we spent in the house by the creek. Frank and I slept in the front bedroom, crawling to bed about 9 p. m. Brother Frank was already asleep. I heard a scratching on the window, then all was quiet. Pretty soon more scratchings. I began to get scared. Jumping out of bed, I walked slowly toward the window. It was bright moonlight, and what I saw nearly congealed my blood. There, staring at me were two eyes, just like balls of fire. Just above were two ugly looking horns. For one fleeting moment I thought it was the devil, but the beast slowly turned its head and there stood our old brindle cow, chewing on a rosebush. I believe that most of our fears are imaginary.

The next morning I prepared for my first fishing trip. Arming myself with an old hoop, with pink mosquito netting attached, I sallied forth into the pasture, rather fearsome, but I found most of the cows took little notice of me, but one old brindle cow looked askance. Soon I saw that she was slowly following me. Beating a hasty retreat, after dropping the pink net, I climbed through the old rail fence and was safe.

Boone creek in the early days was simply wonderful, flowing through water-bogged pastures. Just north of this beautiful creek was another creek running from the mill race. The two creeks join before reaching the river. After the spring rains, which often taxed the capacity of the old mill dam, the creeks would overflow the banks, and the fish would start their annual run up from the river. You old timers will remember the good fishing. Each deep hole or bend in the creek was a favorite spot, and a veritable hodge-podge, both as to variety and size of fish waiting to be caught.

Two years ago I met an old sailor at Stockholm, Wis., on beautiful Lake Pepin. He was a transient, just passing through the village. We began talking about old times and our travels. Gosh, I thought that I had been around some, but this fellow had been all over the world. Finally I asked him what spot in the world he would rather live. Without hesitation he said: "The South Sea Islands; you need little or no clothing; when night comes you lie under a bread-fruit tree and in the morning a bread-fruit will fall and hit you on the nose and wake you; get up and eat it, go down to the sea, take a line out of your pocket, catch your fish, go back and dig some yams and cook your dinner. Yes, sir, I wish I was back there now."

Well, I don't think the South Sea Islanders had anything on us old timers of the olden days. We all had our patch of potatoes and vegetable gardens and plenty of fish.

All of us old timers should figure on visiting McHenry during the McHenry centennial. Not only will it be a mecca for old timers, but a centennial always attracts thousands of visitors. Time is fleeting, another year is drawing to a close.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. With kindest regards to all,

Your friend,
HERBERT L. BENNETT,
("Stretcher")

"COME ON, YOU!"

St. Paul, Nov. 28, 1935.

I know how it is. There is hardly any Old Timer but would like to join the club and more than once have sat down with pen and ink and then the memories, somehow, would not take shape, and, after writing half a page, would quit in disgust.

Now, let me tell you how to go about it. Let's pick some old landmark and you all go along and see just how to do it. What shall we select for a background?

Amy Owen says, "Let's go over by the big tree at the foot of Cristy's Hill, just where the lane turns down to the mill pond."

All right, come on. That tree was at least 200 years old, fifty years ago. No doubt but it was a meeting place for Indians long before the white settlers came in. It saw us in our mothers' arms and saw our first toddling steps and watched us through youth and saw the faltering steps as senescence crept upon us. Feel the bark and notice how deep the fingers can go into the cracks. See the patches of moss here and there. Now look up and there on the north side is where the wind twisted a huge limb. Big branches reach out to the south and southeast. Pretty fine, heh?

See how the big roots have pushed up the sod and the footpath detours around the tree. Here comes "Old" Ed Owen up the lane. Let's be quiet now, as he meets Col. Nash with his cane. Mr. Owen is talking. He has the flat voice of the deaf.

"Morning, Colonel, how are you? Is your leg feeling a little better? Pretty dam tough to be lame. Nice day for this time of the year. Good-bye! Good-bye! Be gad, oh, be gad! Come, on, Mary Lou, let's go and see Uncle 'OL.' Come on, don't look back."

Almost brings the tears, Amy, for you had a grand old Dad.

Now, let's stand with our back to the tree and look around. To the east is Owen's Hill. Scattered oaks sparsely cover it. We can see the dam and the cheese factory. Boone creek winds its crooked way to the river. Let's look at the hill and see if we can conjure something. Yes! See that grayish outline taking form? It grows, takes shape. Sure enough, it is a big tent surrounded by gay wagons with iron bars running up and down. You see it?

GOLMAR BROS. GREAT SHOWS!

Don't you thrill to it? The wild animals. The blatant band and the "barkers."

Now that was all easy to see, because it was all written on our youthful brain tissue.

Let's close our eyes for a moment and dispel this scene and conjure another.

Ah! There are a bunch of teepees; a large tent in front and Indians dancing and singing a medicine song. Wana hear it? Listen:

"Go, na, go, a na guah,
Dunna, yun, yun, yun yeah.
Do na go oney gay, nay guah,
Donnie yun, yun, yun yeah,
Donnie gay a na guah.
Dunnie yay ohny, yay, ahny guah."

Remember that? How can it be forgotten? I don't think I have ever seen a show to equal it.

Let's go down a little closer and see who is talking in this "free" show Gee, there is Litz and "Peggy" Feltz. John and Will Krause, Ed Granger, Nick Colby, Mrs. Frisby, John Buss, and Martin Bickler. You pick 'em out The "barker" or "professor" is harangueing the crowd. He has a bottle of Kickapoo Indian Sagwa in his hand. Listen to him: "Ladies an' gentlemen. I have here a bottle of that great remedy. Made from roots, herbs and berries and barks, known only to this famous tribe of Indians and used by them for centuries to purify the blood. Take home a bottle. Take as according to directions and you will feel better after the first dose, or money refunded."

Look, there is Grandma Quinn down in front nodding to everything he says and having a huge time. The "professor" spies her and says, as he points in her general direction: "Now there is a lady down there who bought a bottle of this famous medicine two nights ago. She has taken it faithfully until tonight, but tonight she forgot to take it. I can tell by her eye that she forgot. Is it not so?" and "Grandma," not knowing that he had singled her out, keeps on nodding and smiling. The crowd is convinced and sales are brisk.

Now, that wasn't hard to remember, was it, Old Timers? You saw it all and there isn't a spot in and around the old town that isn't full of memories.

Will someone please tell us how that 350-lb. cannon came to be in McHenry? It was said to have been in the war with Mexico. We boys shot it off on the Fourth of July for several years. It was a good shooter all right. One time we loaded it up with a goodly charge of black powder and pounded down a heavy wad of paper, using the family axe and a piece of broken fork handle. Then we put in whatever scrap iron we could find and wadded that down. When everything was ready, we, from across the street, aimed it at the schoolhouse woodshed, across from Grimolby's barn on John street.

When we fired it, it turned more somersaults than old Doc Brady. Missed the wood-shed but next morning, while I was in the trapeze, I heard a crash on the north side of the big willow tree and when we investigated found embedded, a chunk of iron that we had put in the cannon the day before. It sure was, because we had sold that same piece several times to the Jews and knew our stuff.

Now, Mr. Stoffel, will you join? If you don't, I'll start picking on your brother, John.

Don't forget the 100th anniversary next year. Big doings.

And, Loretta Walsh, you were right about the Old Timers waiting until the "golf season" was over.

Hey? Mable Ford and John Claxton! What say?

Be seein' you!

REMEMBER WAY BACK WHEN—

We learned to recite the following verse before we could read it in the Fourth or Fifth Reader?

"The lilacs are in blossom,
The cherry flowers are white,
I hear a sound below me, of
Twitter and delight.
It is my friend, the robin,
As sure as I'm alive,
I am very glad to see you, sir,
Pray when did you arrive?"

In primary grade, in 1885, Alvina Block recited the following?

"A blue jay sat on a hickory limb,
He winked at me and I winked at him.
I picked up a stone and hit
Him in the shins and he said,
Now you old fellow,
Don't you do that again.

Tom and Lolla Walsh sang at Democratic political rallies, and made a fine background for Dick Bishop's hell and damnation speeches? One song that they sang ended, "We'd like to, but England won't let us," which had a great element of truth in it.

William Jennings Bryan was called "The Boy Orator of the Platte?"

When Cleveland was campaigning the second time, yours truly smoked part of an election cigar and was as sick as a real sick hen, or something?

There were plenty of flies in the skim milk in the tanks in the cheese factory? The harmless house fly?

Will Stoffel was a handsome hard-working young blade?

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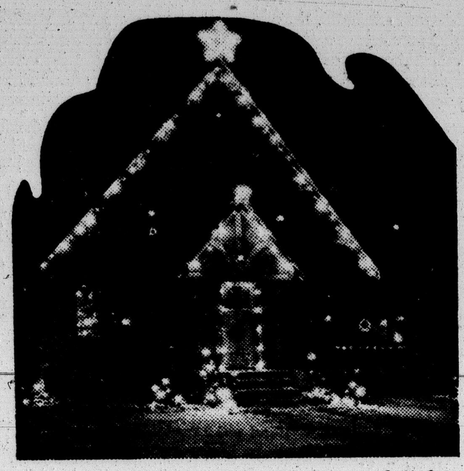
Here's How to Decorate with Christmas Lights

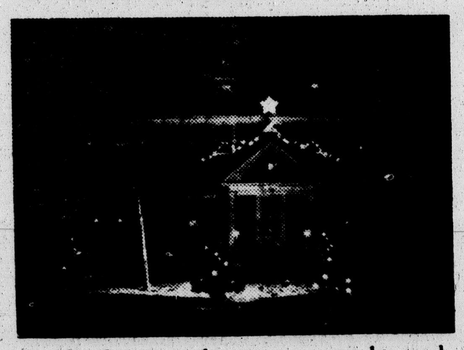
Making the home a shining example of holiday good-will by attractive Christmas lighting decorations has become "just an old American custom". Here are some practical illustrations of what can be done.

The owner of this home used cleverly placed floodlights and silhouette cutouts of Christmas figures, supplemented by beautifully trimmed evergreens at the entrance.



This picture shows how festoons of lights can be used to emphasize the important lines of the house. Indoor decorations in or near the windows add interest.

An ingenious effect is produced by the shadow of a small cutout tree cast by a lamp placed behind it. Colored lamps in the doorway lanterns and colored paper in the upper windows add to the trim, festive appearance.



Candle forms at the entrance can be made of painted tubes of tin or cardboard and a flame-colored lamp. In addition, homes like this with light toned trim are made distinctive with simple floodlighting.

FINED AT WOODSTOCK

Charles Twine of McHenry was fined $10 and costs amounting to $21.40 on a charge of assault and battery before Justice of the Peace, W. S. Battern, Saturday. The complainant, Mrs. Violet Challand, of McHenry, charged that Twine called her names following an argument over two dollars. Twine was a roomer and boarder in the house and she claimed he owed her for rent.

Lowest Perpetual Ice Field

The lowest perpetual ice field in the continental United States is the Carbon Glacier in Mt. Rainier National park, with an elevation of about 4,000 feet.

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