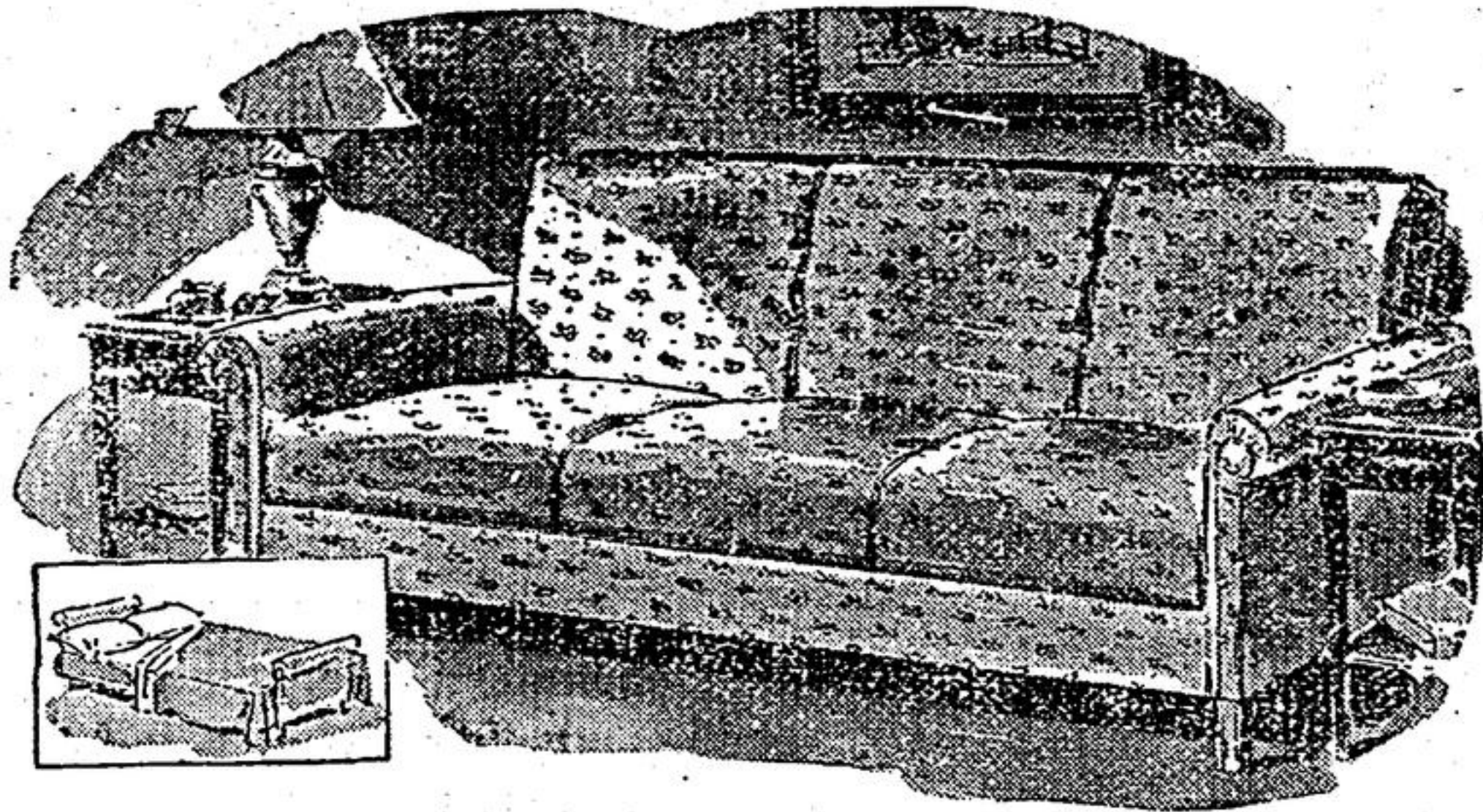


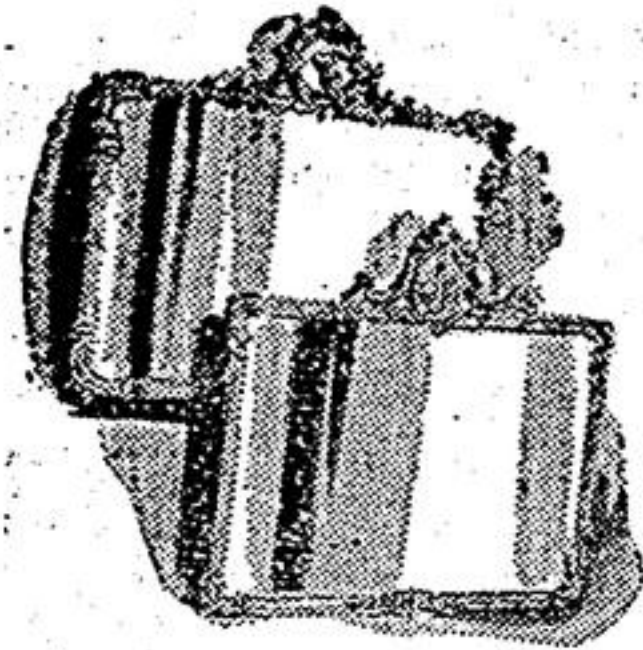
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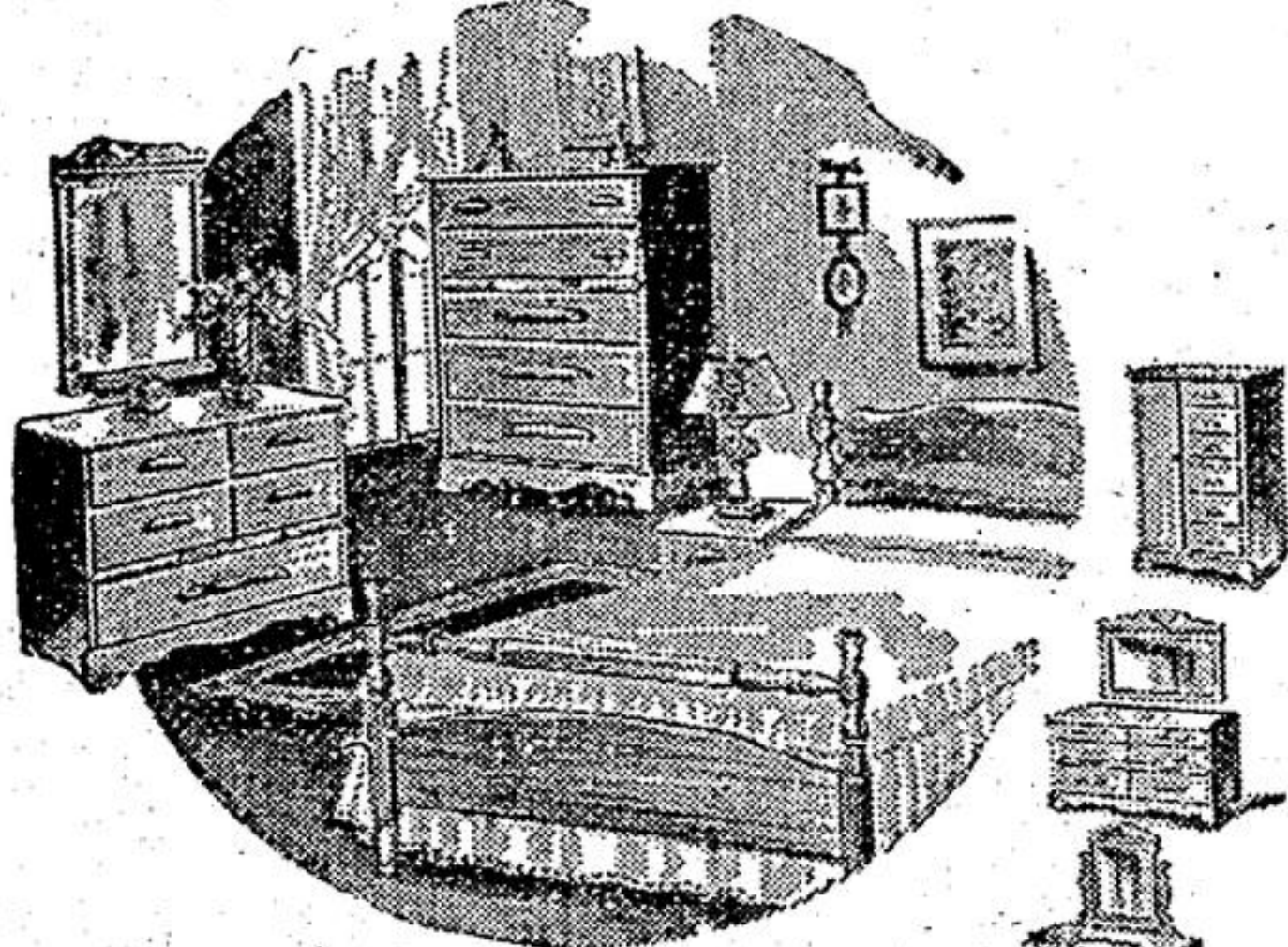
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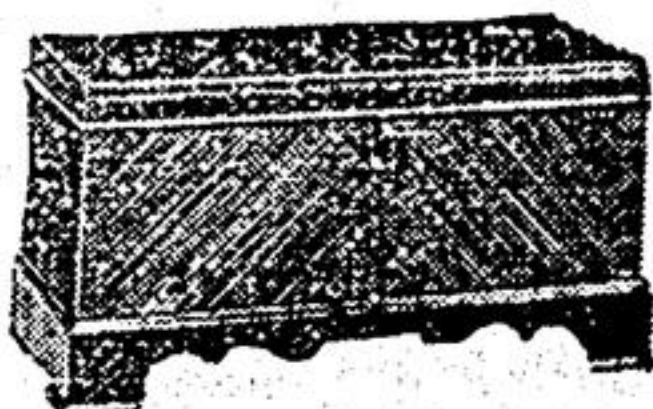
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To Smoke or Not to Smoke

Vaughan Township Sunday School Association's criticism of cigarette-smoking Sunday School teachers found a mixed reaction among Toronto's clergy and Sunday School officials today. Some endorsed the stand but many held it was not a spiritual problem and was a matter for individual decision.

Said Rev. David P. Rowland, moderator of West Toronto Presbytery and overseas padre of the Irish Regiment of Canada: "I don't intend to tell people not to smoke." "There is no ecclesiastical law saying a man should not smoke," he said. "If an individual feels that he is a better Christian for not smoking, so much the better, but it is purely a private matter."

Capt. Rowland laughed when he recounted the story of a noted clergyman who was chided by his friends for smoking. "You are paying tribute to an idol," they told him. To which the clergyman replied: "I'm not paying tribute to an idol, I'm burning it."

"We should strive for moderation in living," Capt. Rowland added. "But, it is definitely a negative approach to tell a man he can't smoke."

Rev. Robert Hamilton, moderator of the Toronto Baptist Association, said he agreed with the substance of the Vaughan Township Sunday School Association resolution.

Moderator of the United Church in Canada, Rt. Rev. Willard Brewster, said he had no particular interest in the smoking question and "they can smoke away if they like."

In convention at Maple, the association passed a resolution deploring the increasing use of tobacco by men, women, boys and girls, contending that this was not only injurious to health, but was not in keeping with the high standards demanded of Sunday School teachers. The resolution called upon all Sunday School officials and youth leaders to set an example to their young charges and refrain from using tobacco.

Up to individual "I believe in the freedom of Christian man," said Rev. Dr. Joseph Wasson, minister of Calvin Presbyterian Church. "It is up to the individual to make the decision; we should not legislate for others."

"I don't think the use of tobacco has anything to do with spirituality or the lack of it," commented Rev. Ray McCleary, pastor of Woodgreen United Church and guiding figure in the Woodgreen Community Centre.

He admitted that he did not smoke, and that he liked to tell the boys and girls of the Woodgreen Centre he was a non-smoker. It was his opinion Sunday School teachers could not have much influence on youngsters who wanted to smoke.

Salvation Army regulations forbid smoking by all officers and "members with a position," which includes Sunday school teachers. As Capt. Arnold Brown puts it: "The regulations do permit other members to smoke—but we don't know any who do."

Holy Blossom Temple doesn't know whether religious school teachers smoke. Says Rabbi Abraham L. Feinberg: "We've never inquired (about smoking) and I don't think I would, as long as they don't smoke in class."

Outside of class, he said, "We consider their personal right—as long as they don't impair their health or mental faculties through smoking, and I never heard of any

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WOLF, FOX BOUNTIES INCREASING

Only five wolf bounties have been claimed so far this year in Ontario County. Three brush wolf pelts have been sent in by Morley Nicholson of Sebright. Bounty is \$35 per pelt although some of the township add their own bounty payment as well. F. C. Wilkinson of Whitby accounted for one and H. Fontaine shot the fifth. However 1949 will be a record year for payment of fox bounties. Determined to eradicate this nuisance, the county council fixed a \$5 bounty late last year, with the result that pelts have been pouring in all year. So far this month, over \$200 'kills' have been listed and over \$1,000 paid out to the hunters. Total for the year is approaching \$7,000.

who did."

"We wouldn't have a teacher in our Bible school who smokes," said the associate pastor of Jarvis St. Baptist Church, Rev. H. C. Slade.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Lesson for December 11 Approach to the Lesson

A better title for this lesson would be "Jeremiah Teaches Practical Godliness or Piety." It is true that religion means to bind back—that is, to tie man up to the God from whom he has wandered. But as the word is used ordinarily it covers any system of faith and practice that aims to link man with the supernatural, no matter how opposed it may be to the plain teaching of Holy Scripture. It is used only five times in our authorized version of the Bible—and only once in a good sense (Jas. 1:27). In the other instances it speaks of a legal system from which the grace of God gives deliverance (Acts 20:5; Gal. 1:13, 14).

It is easy to go along the line of least resistance and so to attempt to substitute formal religious observances and careful attention to legal rules and lifeless ceremonies or ordinances for vital godliness and conscientious obedience.

But even though such ordinances have been prescribed by God Himself. He will never accept such observances in place of that practical piety which means more to Him than all rites and ceremonies. Of old, the people of Israel were inclined to attach more value to sacrifice and offerings and the services of the Temple than to godly living. And in Christendom there are many who make the same mistake and suppose that God has more delight in careful attention to details in what are commonly called the sacraments than to heart devotion to Christ and true love for God and our fellow men. We need ever to be reminded that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15:22). Ordinances are of value only as they symbolize great spiritual realities. They should never be substituted for these.

The Historical Setting There had been a great spiritual revival in Judah, under the godly King Josiah, shortly before Jeremiah began his ministry. But declension soon set in and the prophet was called upon to denounce the cold formality which characterized the mass of the people, who had become careless as to the importance of truth in the inward parts, which results in integrity of heart and life, based on love to God and man.

Verse by Verse Jer. 8:4—"Shall they fall, and not arise?" It is ever the will of God that His failing people should be called back to the path of obedience, and not wander on into deeper sin and more grievous backsliding. He is always ready to forgive failure when repented of, and to restore the souls of those who come to Him acknowledging their sin and seeking to get right with Him.

Verse 5—"A perpetual backsliding . . . they refuse to return." Instead of yielding obedience to the prophet's call, Judah persisted in the evil course they had chosen. They turned their backs upon Him even though they pretended to honor His name by attendance upon the Temple and participation in its services.

Verse 6—"No man repented him of his wickedness." Stubbornly they continued to ignore the entreaties of Jehovah and brazenly asked the question, "What have I done?" as though they had nothing to confess, or of which to repent.

Chap. 31:29—"The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." Judah used this proverb to justify themselves, intimating that the sufferings they were enduring were the penalty, not of their own sins, but, of the wrongdoing of their fathers in former days. God repudiated this and declared they would be chastened for their own failures.

Verse 30—"Every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." In righteous judgment God was about to visit each man's sin upon the guilty one—so that each should "die in his own iniquity."

Verse 31—"A new covenant with the house of Israel, and . . . of Judah." The Old Covenant, made at Sinai, was based upon obedience. The New Covenant is of pure grace. God will put the desire in His people's hearts to delight in His Word.

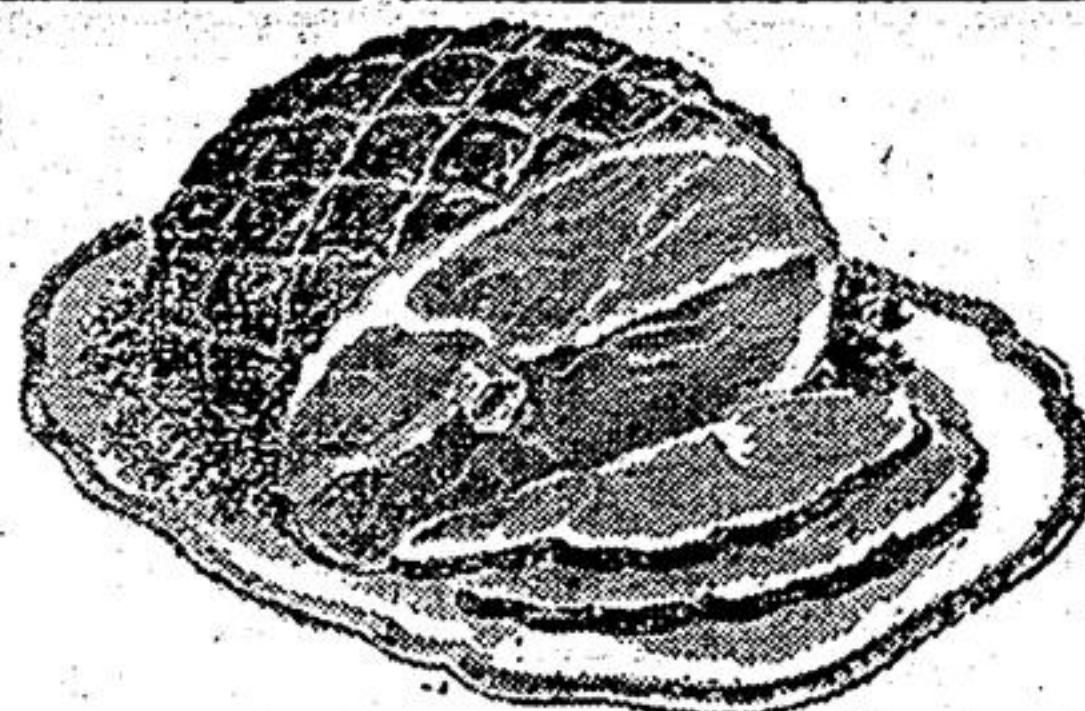
Verse 32—"Which my covenant they brake." All blessing under that Old Covenant depended on the ability and readiness of Israel to obey its injunctions. In this they failed utterly—so forfeited the promised blessing.

Verse 33—"I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." This involves the new birth. When Israel and Judah shall be regenerated they will delight in the Law of the Lord, and His Word will be precious to their souls.

Verse 34—"They shall all know me." This will be in the day of Messiah's return to deliver His people. Then "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26) and enjoy the blessedness of knowing that their sins and iniquities shall be remembered no more.

The Heart of the Lesson

God cannot be satisfied with mere religious formality. He looks for loving obedience to His Word on the part of those who profess to believe in His name. Israel and Judah both failed as to this in the past. In the coming day of Christ's return the nation will be united in the land of Palestine and will be regenerated individually, and so, as a collective company, will be united to the Lord under the New Covenant.



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