

More mail

Compassion for homosexual

Dear Sir,
I feel compelled to write to you in order to express another point of view on the topical concern of homosexuality. A few weeks ago I would have heartily endorsed the thoughts expressed by Rev. Hamilton in your issue of Feb. 23rd, other than the statistics he quotes. So often they can be used to prove whatever the writer wishes. In point of fact the school mentioned is in California, where a notably high percentage of the population is homosexual, due to recent migration of the Gay Society to that area. I would like to mention here that by the time teenagers reach 16, many have been approached by heterosexuals, and a high proportion are already sexually active.

However, my husband and I have been forced to research the question of homosexuality because our son told us recently that he has come to realize for certain that he is a homosexual. You can imagine the heartbreak and trauma this has caused in our family. We are Born again members of a church with a fine son who has made us proud of him in his accomplishments through high school and university. We had no idea he had any problem, and we are now trying to understand why he is different from the majority, and what it will mean in his life and ours. One thing is certain; we will in no way pity him, downgrade him or despise him, but will love him all the more. He will have a very hard road to travel for the rest of his life. Unfortunately society demands this.

Who are like themselves and understand them, and in this way are able to find some measure of happiness and normalcy—hence the term "gay." Homosexuality is not a disease; it is not catching; it is a fact of life and will continue to be. Few homosexuals are child molesters. Most of them love children, for having any of their own is a joy which is denied them, as well as the normal family life we would all desire for our children. For Christians there is the conflict of what the Bible says; but God created man in His own image. He created some black, some white, some heterosexual, some homosexual. Most homosexuals given the choice would rather be heterosexual. With reference to Rev. Hamilton's analogy, to be

honest or dishonest is a matter of choice, but a choice of this kind is not open to the homosexual. Did God intend for some to go through life bearing this burden and their loved ones to suffer along with them? For us the sun will never shine so brightly as it once did. If our child was retarded or had an incurable disease such as leukemia, we would have the concern of relatives and friends. As it is, if it were to become known by the average heterosexual that our son is homosexual, then we would have loathing, disgust and at the best, pity.

Many famous people who were homosexual have made great contributions to society, from Socrates to the former Sec. Gen. of the United Nations Dag Haamerskjoll. Such men have made the world a better place. These were humanitarians—outstanding in their day, and many homosexuals today have great compassion for their fellow men. Let us have understanding and compassion for them, and let us not judge until we have walked a mile in their moccasins. Regrettably the homosexual world has its lunatic fringe as does the heterosexual world, but although again I hate to quote statistics, there is an estimate that almost 10 per cent of the population are homosexuals or have that tendency. Most of them prefer to stay "in the closet" rather than face the harassment and scorn shown them by those who through no choice of their own are "normal."

A MOTHER.

Retirement

THE FOURTH QUARTER

By LESLIE HOLBROOK

If you smoke you are foolish.

If you smoke in bed you really are asking for it.

Canadian figures show that 20 per cent of all deaths in fires with a known cause are due to careless cigarette smoking. Almost 10 per cent of fires of known cause were attributed to smoking. Shocking isn't it?

Next to very young children, elderly people run the greatest risk of being caught in these avoidable fires, particularly if they are physically handicapped. If you live alone the risks are highest.

However, statistics do not influence us nearly as much as a fatal or serious fire accident close to home.

My wife and I were dreadfully shocked to learn of the death by fire of a highly intelligent woman who had travelled with us on an overseas

trip. We liked everything about her save her incessant cigarettes.

Now that fine, friendly woman is dead. It was quite clear that smoking in bed was the cause.

This is not to be an essay on the usual smoking hazards—about shortening your life by five minutes with each cigarette you burn (a heavy life-time smoker likely to lose 10 years of life), about the frightening range of diseases caused or aggravated by smoking.

Rather I urge other oldsters to think about the general hazards of fire in daily activities and to avoid practices likely to end in disaster, such as foolhardy pleasures as that as that last puff in bed. It may truly be your last.

We are in a particularly accident-prone age group. If our clothes

catch fire we may find it difficult to "drop and roll," the recommended technique for putting out apparel fires. We may find it more difficult to get out of a burning room or home.

So be careful and take precautions.

Smoke detectors are recommended (buy from a firm you know). Put an extra one in your bedroom if you smoke there, a safety expert urges.

Have a plan for quick but safe escape from your residence. Note alternate ways of getting out; your usual exits may be blocked by the fire. If a window is to be used, make sure that you can open it and that the screen or storm window can be unattached and pushed out.

Keep a phone next to your bed. Have the fire department and other emergency numbers

nearby, written in large figures.

Wear clothing of fire-retardant materials, particularly for night attire or when working in your kitchen. Don't wear loose-fitting clothes at your stove; long, floppy sleeves can catch fire easily. Flame-retardant fabrics also are available for drapes and other home furnishings.

Call the fire department promptly, even if it doesn't appear to be dangerous. Better they arrive when a fire is out than when it is out of control.

Get out quickly—and stay out! Don't try to save your money or your treasures.

Be a live senior—not a statistic!

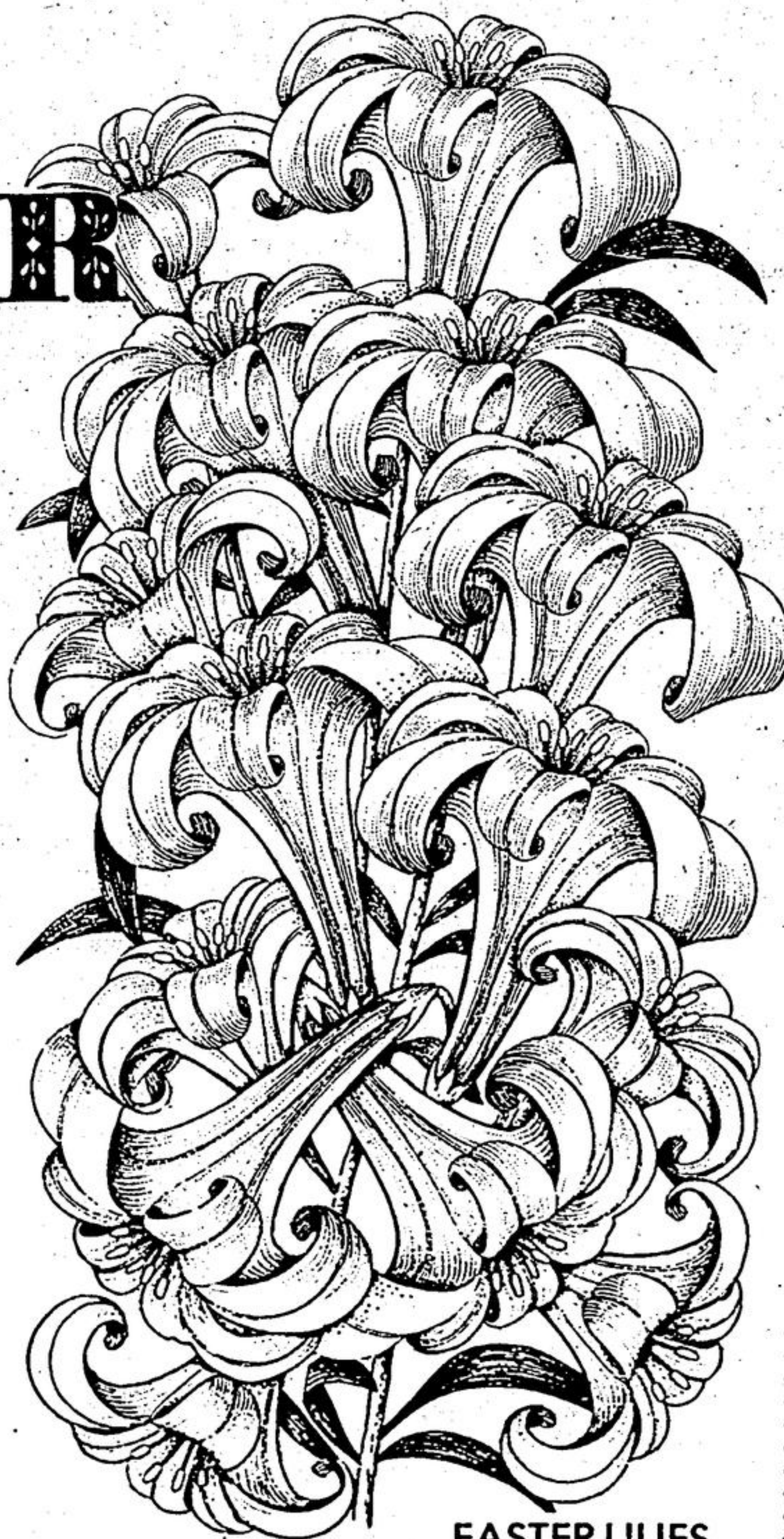
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