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## Editorial

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## EDITORIAL

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### TALK QUOTABLY! TALK POSITIVELY!

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A foreman in a paint factory while instructing a new workman pointed to a fire-door and said, "In case of fire do not leave that door open!" There was a fire, black and red, hot and stinking, awesome and frightful. At the inquest the workman testified that he remembered that the foreman had said something about that door being open in case of fire, so he opened it. Psychologically, sociologically, what the foreman should have said was, "In case of fire, SHUT THAT DOOR!"

Talk quotably, talk so what is said is applicable any time, any place, under any circumstance. The recently promoted bank cashier who seeks strength to meet his new temptation will steal if his pastor prays with him for resistance so that he will not steal. They had better have prayed that he be honest. Talk quotably, talk positively about what should be done or said or felt. The subconscious mind poorly handles negatives. Nagging, which is defined as talking (negatively) about the same thing for over two weeks at a time, is not only ineffective but produces opposite and undesired results.

The truth is quotable, weak or offensive as it may be under different circumstances. To call a career criminal a rat is not true, for he is not *Mus Rattus* but is *Homo Sapiens*. He is a hostile man in truth, hostile to the community which if it is to survive must in self-defense be aggressively hostile to him. He is not just a public enemy to be repelled by public officials and permitted to attack again at his favorable moment. And certainly he is not an outlaw, for we with semi-chagrin and semi-approval authorize his attorneys to use and construe the law in his behalf. The appellation "Hostiles" for career criminals is quotable.

One of the penalties of a democracy is the tendency to level, to drag down those who have become distinguished meanwhile attempting to drag up to average those who are inferior. In my time the only public man who has not been berated, besmirched, and bemeaned is General Pershing, but then he never asked for anything, and especially he did not ask for election or re-election. Another of the penalties of a democracy is the bad effect on unwary

listeners of having impinged on their ears and on their personalities the disrespectful comments licensed under freedom of speech and on their eyes inappropriate misuse of the privilege granted by freedom of the press. An observer of human reactions realizes that reactions are in large part based on the stimuli which invoke the reactions; music can not be made by a cat walking on piano keys.

Children are entitled to a good auditory environment. When children hear their own adults speak disrespectfully of other adults the children are conditioned or habituated to take a disrespectful attitude toward those other adults. When children hear their adults berate, besmirch and bemean candidates for election to public office those children can not later be motivated from within to be law abiding, for they can not have respect for the pronouncements of those candidates after they are elected to office in our civil government nor for those appointed by them. In fact, disrespect for our laws and our methods of self government follow, imposing on those of "our" party and despising and disregarding those of the other party if in office. How much better if the children heard their adults say, "Of two good men (or parties or platforms, etc.) I think this one is the better one and will have my vote!"

The essence of child guidance is proper self-guidance of their adults. True, children need guidance, and they also need correction of their mistakes and deleterious trends. Correction may be given politely as well as given firmly. Punishment may sometimes be mercifully withheld. They need just as much encouragement and approval of their acceptable efforts. Most of all they need wholesome, vigorous play and outdoor activity. Playing together, average well-born children grow up to be well rounded and ultimately satisfactorily well behaved and industrious. It is by inadvertent or selfish talk of their preceding generation which contributes to the criminal fraction of each subsequent generation. By self-pity and by group self-pity, by indolence and dependence, adults prevent their children from developing self-respect while they do develop in those children the trait of self-indulgence. Psychiatrically two of the great bases of criminal deviation are self-indulgence and the absence of self-respect.

Self-respect is a trait which has just two bases: good or improving health, and concomitant honest self-evaluation, i. e., think quotably though silently realizing one's own good and weak characteristics. Self-respect automatically engenders three other char-

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acteristics, namely respect from others which is sweet, respect for others including those in authority and in public position, and, what for our thought here is of the greatest significance, viz., respect for the rules and conventions of society, especially of the main herd of society, whether one is under observation or not. That is citizenship: that is the antidote against criminal deviation.

Talk quotably, especially before the next generation, expressing in positive terms what it is desired that they think, and there will be fewer children becoming problems in their adult life.

HAROLD S. HULBERT.