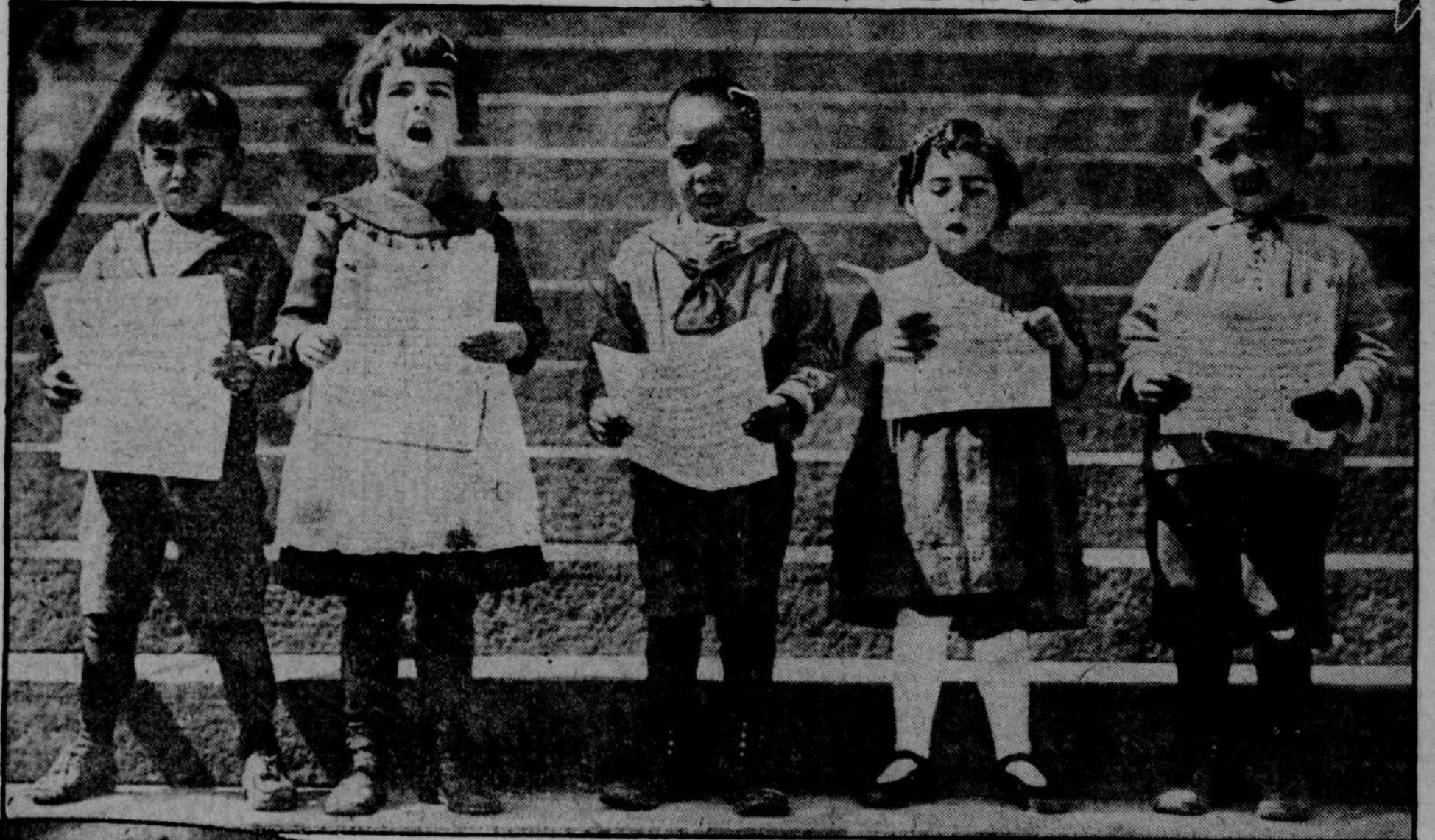


The Rev. Dr. Russell H. Conwell and His Model City

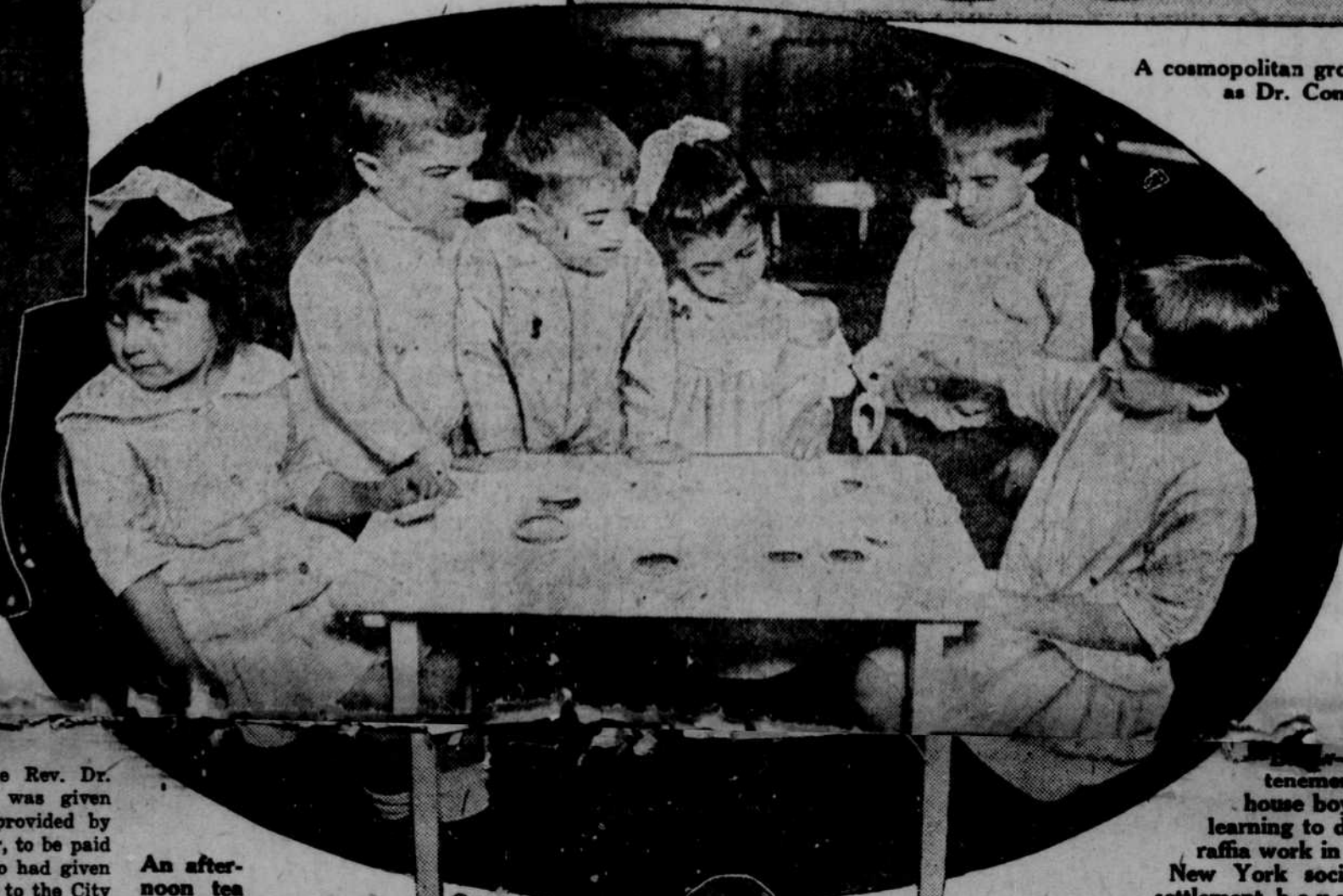
The Distinguished Lecturer, Clergyman and Philanthropist Explains What He Would Do to Make Every Community, Large or Small, a Place Where Vice Would Have No "Customers"



The Rev. Dr. Russell H. Conwell



A cosmopolitan group of city children—types of the boys and girls who often go wrong because, as Dr. Conwell points out, they "haven't been shown anything better to do"



An afternoon tea in one of the play and educational centers for young and old which Dr. Conwell would open in every neighborhood where bootleggers thrive

Settlement house boys learning to do raffia work in a New York social settlement house



FEW weeks ago the Rev. Dr. Russell H. Conwell was given the \$10,000 award provided by Edward W. Bok, noted editor, to be paid each year to that citizen who had given the most outstanding service to the City of Philadelphia.

Dr. Conwell is eighty years of age. He is the pastor of Grace Baptist Temple, the largest church of its denomination in Philadelphia and one of the largest in the country, but he is chiefly known as the founder of Temple University and as the world's most active lecturer. His most famous lecture, "Acres of Diamonds," has been heard by millions in every part of the country and in many foreign lands.

Throughout the United States interest has been aroused in the Philadelphia award by men and women who had never heard of it through its being given to Dr. Conwell. In their opinion there could be no more fitting recipient, since for fully sixty years Dr. Conwell has been devoting practically all of his time to expounding his ideals for the betterment of towns, cities and other communities.

"Acres of Diamonds," as its title indicates, is a word picture designed to show what can be accomplished by great vision. In many of his lectures valuable advice is given about the problems of modern civilization that crop up in the cities.

For these reasons and others that will appear Dr. Conwell was asked to give a specific outline of what he would do to make every city in the nation a model one. He was asked also to explain what he thinks are the greatest evils at the present time in the municipal life of the United States, and how he would go about providing a remedy for them.

It should be explained that, in spite of his age, Dr. Conwell is still adhering to a lecture schedule that calls him to the platform 210 nights a year. In addition to that, he has undertaken to write the authorized biography of the late John Wanamaker, who was his close personal friend. It will consist of three volumes, each containing 175,000 words—a truly monumental work.

"My program for any community," says Dr. Conwell, "is based on the Biblical injunction to overcome evil by good. I am convinced that, since you cannot make people good by law or by any other form of force, the only way to do it is

to make the good attractive. Vice could not exist in a model community. It would not have any customers.

"Vision is the first essential in any plan of betterment, whether for the individual, the village or the city. It must be a large vision. It should look far into the future. It should take into consideration the needs and desires of all classes of citizens. It should be big—but it cannot be big unless it begins with little things.

"Let me illustrate by an outline of the evils of modern civilization as I see them. I do not intend to run over a list of the vices to which man falls victim. To my mind they are the effect, rather than the cause. The real evil is the shortsightedness and lack of common sense among men that permits such things to be.

"For thousands of years, in varying social conditions, man has been trying to correct effects by law. He has never succeeded. I do not mean to decry the value of laws, or to say anything that will be construed as advice against obedience to law. But one becomes impatient with the loss of money and valuable effort in a futile undertaking.

"The outstanding example is prohibition. Its lack of enforcement is one of the greatest evils to-day in American life, and one that does not seem to have abated in the least as the forces of enforcement have been increased and the funds available have grown. Drink has been driven into the cellar. It has been surrounded with a certain glamour that it never had before for many men and women.

"The way to kill the drink habit is not by law. The way to enforce prohibition is to make people temperate.

"In my opinion, the government of the United States would make more effective headway against the bootleggers by spending its prohibition enforcement

fund for the construction of civic centers. They are needed everywhere. The funds spent in trying to run down bootleggers could be better invested by giving the people something more attractive than illicit drinking.

"To me it is a simple problem. I would build such centers in the neighborhoods where the bootleggers thrive. I would have the government go into competition with them, offering something better and of enduring worth.

"Books, music, dancing, social affairs, clean entertainment, cheaper education, wider opportunities for all men and women, every boy and girl. Wherever they have been placed within the reach of the people those opportunities are snatched up; the institutions offering them are forced to turn the people away

for lack of room. The bulk of all evil in the cities and elsewhere finds its success among those who haven't been shown anything better to do."

It should be explained at this point that, although Dr. Conwell is a clergyman, he does not mean religion when he speaks of good. He makes that point clear at all times. To him the broadest religious doctrine is a doctrine of common sense. "Be reasonable," is his precept to ministers of the Gospel and to all other religious workers.

"Cranks do more harm to religion than is done by all of the forces of evil," he continued. "They close the doors to millions who would come into the churches and religious institutions if they understood. The attitude of the crank who tries to make people good by

law is taken as the attitude of all religion.

"People become religious when they discover that the doctrine of common sense is the most profitable and satisfying doctrine. And that is what the cities must do if they wish to attain an ideal.

"There is nothing far-fetched about this program. Let us boil it down to essentials.

"It would probably be possible to find many cities where the grocers, for instance, are at war with one another, taking every unfair advantage, a prey to suspicion and mistrust. The history of just such conditions rectified in a score of trades and industries in a thousand towns and cities shows that the solution to the problem is simple.

"Let us suppose that those grocers could be brought together to discuss their problems in an atmosphere of mutual good will, every man leaving his suspicions outside and agreeing to do his best to reach a settlement. It has never been impossible in a commercial agreement, a field in which all could operate.

"The grocers could make terms and rules. Such rules would be as binding as those in baseball, stating certain things that might not be done and leaving open a tremendous field in which each man could profit according to his ability and opportunity. There need be no stifling of competition. That element would be stronger than ever, but it would be in a spirit of fair play and good nature.

"The history of commerce and industry has shown that if such an agreement is brought about in any one field it brings tremendous advantages, far beyond the dreams of its originators. The whole country learns of what has been done. Business is attracted. The spirit of fair play extends into other industries.

"To make a model city it is necessary to have in mind that ideal of fair play. But it is not necessary for any community to wait until all its elements have adopted such rules of common sense. If it wants to grow it should call together its citizens for the purpose of planning its growth.

"As the vision of the plan is extended to all classes of the population it will have the effect of a city-wide inspiration. People and groups who had never thought of making rules for the conduct of their lives and business will get together.

"The builders often overlook the force of inspiration. They are afraid to expand. But I do not know of any failures of such plans, even where they have been made on a scale that seemed too large.

"If the citizens of a small town get together and make plans calling for ar-

tistic and beautiful use of future growth running five or six miles out into the country their town will grow to its vision, for it will attract men of courage and inspiration from outside.

"The community problem is the problem of the individual magnified many times. Think of the growth of an individual with the courage to set himself an ideal, and multiply that by the tremendous force of the many in any town or city, and you will begin to catch a glimpse of the possibilities.

"I would not have it thought that I believe in ignoring evils. But neither do I believe in advertising them. It does little good to preach against evil unless you offer something better. My idea of individual and community betterment is constructive.

"I would not waste time in calling names. Think of the awful waste of human brain power which, in attacking evil, in reality takes the defensive. I would have all that earnestness of purpose devoted to the effort to create something more attractive.

Dr. Conwell's own life furnishes an illustration of what he has in mind. It is estimated that he has earned more than \$5,000,000 on the lecture platform, all of which has gone either to Temple University or to pay the expenses of sending young men through college.

During its lifetime Temple University has educated 125,000 young men. Each of them is carrying to others the Conwell message of common sense and tolerance, of constructive accomplishment.

But the real point of interest lies in the fact that if it had not been for Temple University few of those men and women would have had an education. It is the poor man's college, the university of the worker. Various surveys have shown that 80 to 90 per cent of all its classes are working. Nearly every student makes special arrangements as to his hours so as not to interfere with the work by which he must earn his living.

For fully sixty years Dr. Conwell has been devoting practically all of his time to expounding his ideals for the betterment of towns, cities and other communities. Because he gave the great bulk of the wealth he earned from his lectures, books and in other ways, to the education of needy but ambitious young men and women, the Rev. Dr. Conwell has long been known as the "penniless millionaire."

His greatest popularity was gained as a lecturer. There is hardly a town of any size in the United States in which he has not been heard at least once, and his lecture tours have also taken him into every part of the civilized world.

Although he has discussed many topics during his fifty-four years on the lecture platform, the lecture the public liked best of all was the one called "Acres of Diamonds." He has delivered this more than six thousand times, and from it alone has earned more than \$4,000,000.

The Rev. Dr. Conwell is a native of Massachusetts and a graduate of Yale. He saw active service during the Civil War and rose to the rank of Colonel. After the war he practiced law and later founded a newspaper in Minnesota.

During the Franco-Prussian War he went to Europe as correspondent for "The New York Tribune" and obtained notable interviews with Bismarck and Emperor William I.

He entered the ministry in 1879. After a few years at a church in Lexington, Mass., he went to Philadelphia to begin what has proved one of the longest and most successful pastorates in the history of any denomination.