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EDITORIAL

A Chapel Talk given by Mr. Frederick R. Kneeland, who came to "Pasquaney" in 1895 and served the camp for many years thereafter.

I wonder how many of you boys have had the opportunity of seeing a bridge, especially a suspension bridge, being built. Some years ago when Mr. Ned was sick in the Presbyterian Hospital in New York, the George Washington Bridge was being built, and from the roof where Mr. Ned used to sit, I watched its progress from week to week. First the great piers rose on each side of the river and, while they were being erected, the great anchors which were to hold the cables were being set deep in the riverbanks. Then one wire was strung with much labor from the anchor on one side to the top of the pier, then across the river to the other pier, and down to the opposite anchor. Then a spool of wire was hung from the wire and commenced its travels backwards and forwards, having each time one more wire attached to the anchors until the wires had grown to a great cable, capable of supporting the weight of the bridge and all the traffic which could be crowded on it. Watch a spider spin a web, and you'll see that man has copied his methods in building suspension bridges.

Now the purpose of all bridges is to make travel quicker, easier, and safer for all who pass that way; they are one of the most important helps to modern life as we know it, and every man from the chief engineer to the humblest laborer who does this kind of work is a bridge builder, and as such is doing his part in

making life this kind of work is a bridge builder, and as such is doing his part in making life easier, happier, and better for all who come after.

In a similar way, any man who by his life—no matter what his life may be— makes the world a happier, better place for those who follow, is a bridge builder.

Let us think for a moment of some of those who have done this. Marconi, who died this week, through his discovery and development of the radio, built one of the great bridges. Edison; the doctors who through their work, often at the risk of their own lives, are working to prevent or cure diseases; all the unknown scientists toiling in laboratories—these are men contributing their bit in building bridges for posterity. And in another field such men and women as Lincoln, Dr. Grenfell, Florence Nightingale, and Gandhi, through their lives, have built or are building bridges which have made this world a happier, better place for millions.

Every man in this world, no matter what he does, falls into one of three classes. He is either:

1. A builder—someone who is doing his bit to make this world a better one, or,
2. A traveler—one who just jogs along through life, crossing the bridges built by others but too lazy and selfish to contribute anything for the good of those who follow; and to this class belong the great majority of people, or
3. A destroyer—a small class to which criminals belong and all who by their lives deliberately tear down the bridges built by others.

Every boy here today is going to either be a bridge builder, a traveler, or a destroyer. Which is it to be? You boys, who are probably all going to have every advantage in the way of education, both in school and college, have a tremendous responsibility; for the more advantages you have, the more will be expected and required, and anyone who does not make the most of his opportunities is a shirker.

Why are you boys here at “Pasquaney?” Perhaps your fathers were here as boys, perhaps your parents knew the fathers and mothers of other “Pasquaney” boys, or perhaps you had a friend here. You probably think that that is the reason, but it is only a small part. The real reason is that your parents realized that “Pasquaney” is not just a summer camp; it’s a place where you can get more to help you make real men of yourselves, men whose lives will count for good in the world, than any place I know. I like to think of camp as a school of bridge builders, founded by Mr. Ned in 1895 and carried on by him and his counsellors for more than forty years, and now doing the same work under Mr. Teddy’s leadership, aided by the men now on the Council.

Just how does “Pasquaney” help train boys to be bridge builders? Take the duties, for instance, of police. You’re taught to do your work thoroughly; not just to have it pass inspection, but to make you reliable and considerate of others. No boy who does not learn these lessons can be a builder. Then you are trained to be good-tempered, unselfish, and, above all, to have the spirit of love for one another, for without that all the training in the world won’t make you a bridge builder. You’ve got to have the great motive of caring so much for others that you have to do something for them.

Many of you say, “What can I do? I can’t do anything that will really count.” Well, I’m going to tell you the story of the life of a man who was one of the greatest

Well, I'm going to tell you the story of the life of a man who was one of the greatest bridge builders. He was born of poor parents, working people, in a little village where he grew up with only a grammar school education. Every now and then his parents took him to a big city where he saw city life, and everywhere he was struck with the unhappiness and injustice of life, the awful poverty, unnecessary disease, cruelty toward others, selfishness, greed, war. He made up his mind while he was still a boy that he would spend his life doing what he could to make things better.

So he began his training. He realized that it was going to be a hard fight and that, if he was going to do anything, he would have to be strong physically, mentally, and morally. He took advantage of every opportunity to build up a strong physique, to develop his mind so that he would be able to compete with the sharpest minds of his day, and to develop himself morally, for he knew that when he started his crusade he would make enemies who would attack him, and unless he lived the life he preached, his whole life would be a failure. He realized the saying, "What you are speaks so loudly that I can't hear what you are saying." During his training he realized that one thing, and one thing only, could cure all the troubles of the world, and that thing was Love. Finally he was ready, but how was he to get his message across? There were no newspapers, no telegraph, no radio in his day, so he got together a little group of friends, to whom he taught his ideas, with whom he lived, and with whom he traveled about his country, preaching that love would set every- thing aright and practicing what he preached.

In those days religion had become a mere matter of ritual and law which meant hypocrisy, and he would stand for no sham; and, as the rulers of the country were the leaders of the church, he made them his bitter enemies, for they realized that if he got his message across, it would mean the end of their power. So they framed him, pulled him into court on faked charges and, when they realized that they could not convict him, appealed to the governor who had the final powers, saying that he was preaching treason. The governor examined him and could find him guilty of nothing, but the leaders stirred up a riot and got the people to demand his death. The governor, being a coward, gave in. So they killed him. You boys probably know that I have been telling you the story of Jesus' life, the story of the life of the greatest bridge builder the world has ever known; for his life changed the world as no other ever has. But the bridge he started is not yet finished. The world has not yet realized that love will solve all its problems. So it's left to you boys to help finish that bridge. Are you going to do it?

As a help to remembering some of the essential characteristics of everyone who would build a bridge, I've made up an anagram, which contains the most important ones.

B—bravery, courage

U—unselfishness

I—indifference to others when you know you are right

L—love for mankind

D—determination to carry on

E—energy, giving all you have

R—reliability, trustworthiness

And in closing let me give you this verse, which gave me the thought for this talk.

"There followeth after me today

A boy whose feet must pass this way,

The tide has been full swift for me
And for that boy too strong may be.
Before I reach the twilight dim
I think I'll build a bridge for him."