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## Miscellanea

P. E. Kretzmann

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

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deinem Wandel? Wie steht es mit unserer Gemeinde? Üben wir einen guten Einfluß aus auf die ganze Umgegend? Wenn Streit und Zwietracht, Parteiwesen usw. in der Gemeinde herrschen, wenn Glieder nicht nach Gottes Wort handeln, dann merkt die Welt dies bald. Wie steht es mit uns als Synode? Hundert Jahre lang hat der Sauertheg des göttlichen Wortes seine Kraft im Leben und Wandel unserer Gemeinden bewiesen. Wird dies auch im nächsten Jahrhundert der Fall sein? Joh. 8, 31. 32. Nur wenn wir am Wort festhalten, nur wenn wir diesen reinigenden göttlichen Sauertheg alles durchdringen lassen, werden wir auch in der Zukunft Gott und seinem Reiche dienen, wie wir in der Vergangenheit ihm gedient haben. Das gebe Gott aus Gnaden! Amen.

E. L. Rosche

## Miscellanea

### What's Wrong with Gambling?

Gambling is contrary to the spirit of brotherhood because it is motivated by covetousness, the desire for that which is our brother's. As Herbert Spencer says: "It is a kind of action by which pleasure is obtained at the cost of pain to another." The fact that it is the result of mutual agreement does not change the principle. The loser gives us what he has lost, not from any love of the winner, but because he took a chance in the hope of winning something; it is a sort of reciprocal covetousness; each wants something from the other without paying for it, and they enter into an agreement to decide by chance whose covetous desire shall be gratified. Two wrong motives do not make a right act. It is the very opposite of a gift; our Lord said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive"; but no gambler ever said: "It is more blessed to lose than to win." There can be no gambling between men who truly love each other; they cannot take from each other, they cannot seek pleasure at the cost of pain to another nor covet each other's money. They would rather share than gamble.

Gambling is thus a form of stealing; for it is seeking to get something from another without paying for it in goods or service. It is stealing by mutual agreement, but it is still stealing, and it proceeds from the same motive. Dueling is murder by mutual agreement, but the whole world recognizes that it is not less truly murder. So gambling is not less truly stealing because it is by mutual agreement.

Gambling is also a sin against God because it is contrary to the spirit of stewardship. It is contrary to the principle of the stewardship of money. The gambler says: "My money is mine to do with as I like; if I want to gamble it away, that's my affair." But a man's money is not his; it is God's, and he is only the trustee. He may not do with it as he likes; he must use it in a constructive, brotherly way and to God's glory. Some day he will be brought to account for his use of that money. It is common to read of a bank cashier or some other per-

son in a place of financial trust "borrowing" the funds committed to him to gamble in the hope of recouping previous losses. That is a scandalous misuse of the money of others, a scandalous abuse of stewardship. But every gamble is just as truly an abuse of stewardship; it is misusing that which belongs to God.

But it is a deeper sin than that; for gambling is contrary to the principle of the stewardship of life. The stewardship of life means that each man has a service to render society, under God, and as he renders that service is entitled to a return from society for the provision of his needs. "From every man according to his ability, to every man according to his need." But no man is entitled to a return from society except as he contributes, according to his ability, to the sum total of social wealth, material and spiritual. Gambling runs directly counter to this basic principle. It is an attempt to get a return from society without making any contribution. It is a desire to get "something for nothing," and that desire is not only folly, it is sin.

It may seem a little silly to apply these principles to "pitching pennies." But principles apply in small things as well as in great. If it is wrong to gamble with large sums, it is wrong to gamble with pennies. We see that clearly enough in stealing. The boy who "snitches" an apple from the grocery store may protest, "Aw, nobody'll miss it!" And that is true enough, but it is stealing just the same. So that fact that no one will lose very much "pitching pennies" must not be allowed to obscure the more important fact that it is gambling and contrary to the principles of brotherhood and stewardship.

It may be objected that a great deal of business violates, in spirit, these same principles. Many a man is in business seeking to take business away from another man, seeking profit in such a way that it will mean loss to his competitors. He is in business, not as a "public servant," but frankly to make money; he is not concerned with the question of whether he is rendering society a service which warrants the profit he is making. The "profit motive," divorced from brotherhood and stewardship and service, is only too prominent in modern business. But this does not justify gambling; it condemns that spirit of business. If our condemnation of gambling strikes a blow at some kinds of business, we must not "pull our punches"; what's wrong is wrong, whether public opinion justifies it or not.

If gambling is sin, as we have seen that it is, then Christians must avoid it with all circumspectness. Above all, churches and Christian organizations must avoid money-raising schemes which involve in any way the element of gambling. When the Church has cleaned up its own yard and Christians have clear moral convictions on the subject, then we can attack with greater liberty the plague of gambling in society.

REV. BANES ANDERSON, in the *Presbyterian*

### Joshua 11:13

Dr. G. Ernest Wright, editor of the *Biblical Archeologist*, offers the following interesting information on this verse:

"The King James Version of Josh. 11:13 reads as follows: 'But as for

the cities that stood still in their strength (marginal reading: on their heap), Israel burned none of them save Hazor only.' The Hebrew word here translated 'strength' is one of the oldest words in the human language. It is *tell* and means a mound made up of the ruins of many cities, long since destroyed. The Joshua passage therefore would best be translated: 'the cities that stood on their *tells*,' that is, on the mounds made up of ruins which were centuries in accumulating. Not only does the word *tell* exist today in modern Arabic with the same meaning, but it existed long before the days of the Israelites in Babylonia. As early as 2000 B. C. there were deserted mounds in Babylonia, made up of the ruins of many cities long since disappeared.

"It is scarcely surprising that the translators of the Authorized Version did not understand what this word means (the Revised Version translates it correctly); for a *tell* is a phenomenon of Western Asia, appearing nowhere else. In its most typical form a *tell* is a truncated cone, the sides of which are kept regular by the stumps of old city walls still remaining in them. One city was destroyed; another was erected out of its ruins, and thus a little higher up than the last; and so on. The description of Ai in Josh. 8:28 is therefore an eloquent one: 'And Joshua burned Ai and made it a *tell* forever, even a desolation unto this day.'" (Vol. II, No. 1, p. 12.)\*

P. E. K.

\* It is interesting to note that Luther translated, in chap. 11:13: "Doch verbrannten die Kinder Israel keine Staedte, die auf *Huegeln* stunden."

