



**By President
David O. McKay
(1873–1970)**
Ninth President of
the Church

A LESSON FROM DANDY

*Like some young people, my horse
Dandy resented restraint.*

I once owned and had great pleasure in training [a well-bred colt named Dandy]. He had a good disposition, a clean, well-rounded eye, was well proportioned, and all in all, a choice [animal]. Under the saddle he was as willing, responsive, and cooperative as a horse could be. He and my dog Scotty were real companions. I liked the way he would go up to something of which he was afraid. He had confidence that if he would do as I bade him, he would not be injured.

But Dandy resented restraint. He was ill-contented when tied and would nibble at the tie rope until he was free. He would not run away; he just wanted to be free. Thinking other horses felt the same, he would proceed to untie their ropes. He hated to be confined in the pasture, and if he could find a place in the fence where there was only smooth wire,



he would paw the wire carefully with his feet until he could step over to freedom. More than once my neighbors were kind enough to put him back in the field. He learned even to push open the gate. Though [he often did damage that was] provoking and sometimes expensive, I admired his intelligence and ingenuity.

But his curiosity and desire to explore the neighborhood led him and me into trouble. Once on the highway he was hit by an automobile, resulting in a demolished machine, injury to the horse, and slight, though not serious, injury to the driver.

Recovering from that, and still impelled with a feeling of wanderlust, he inspected the fence throughout the entire boundary. He found even the gates wired. So for a while we thought we had Dandy secure in the pasture.

One day, however, somebody left the gate unwired. Detecting this, Dandy unlatched it, took [another horse] with him, and together they visited the neighbor's field. They went to an old house used for storage. Dandy's curiosity prompted him to push open the door. Just as he had surmised, there was a sack of grain. What a find! Yes, and what a tragedy! The grain was poison bait for rodents! In a few minutes Dandy and his companion were in spasmodic pain, and shortly both were dead.

How like Dandy are many of our youth! They are not bad; they do not even intend to do wrong; but they are impulsive, full of life, full of curiosity, and they long to do something. They too are [restless] under restraint, but if they are kept busy, guided carefully and rightly, they prove to be responsive and capable; if left to wander unguided, they all too frequently violate principles of right, which often leads to snares of evil, disaster, and even death. ■

From Conference Report, Oct. 1968, 87; punctuation and capitalization modernized.