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LONDON, SATURDAY, FEB. 21, 1925

THE CHIEF AIM OF EDUCATION

Testimony follows testimony from all sorts and conditions of thoughtful and observant men that the divorce of education from religion is producing results that can no longer be ignored. Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis are now speaking of conditions in the terms long used almost exclusively by Catholic priests. But the chorus is swelled by many who have to do with our ever-increasing criminal population. Judges and social welfare workers, officials of prisons and of juvenile courts, statesmen and students of sociology, all are emphasizing the need of the influence of religion to remedy admitted deficiency in education that is purely secular. Again, those of every and of no religion whose life work is education are beginning to transfer the emphasis from scholarly attainments and even mental development to the formation of character as the chief aim of education. Not all of these recognize the necessity or importance of religion in the great educational process of character formation. But it is no small measure of progress, of revolutionary progress; for it has hitherto been taken for granted that scholarly attainments, mental development, intellectuality, covered the whole field of education. Physical development and character development in the past received some incidental consideration; but incidental only. The examinations, the tests of educational results, were always purely and exclusively intellectual. Witness the loathsome murderers Leopold and Loeb. Their lack of character did not in any way hinder them from being regarded as highly educated; guaranteed, indeed, as such under the hand and seal of a great university.

H. O. Rittenhouse in the New York Times writes:

"Character is the chief aim of education, and without it all other attainment is futile."

He points out that "our ancestral homes supplemented the Church in bringing moral instruction to the fruitage of character. Homes then were industrial and economic units whose activities furnished the field of duty for children and youth." But he maintains they are no longer such. "In our large cities the home is little other than a shelter for eating and sleeping, with few of any responsible duties for youth."

That is unfortunately in large measure true. But even in cities homes differ from homes. The wise mother sees to it that her daughters are not deprived of the invaluable discipline of domestic duties honestly, conscientiously and thoroughly performed; involving, as it necessarily does, the practice of the character-forming Christian virtues of self-denial and mutual service. And the sensible father will find work affording a similar discipline for otherwise flabby sons. Unfortunately there are too many silly mothers and spineless fathers who have neither the intelligence nor the strength of will to insist on this all-important part of the education of their children. And here, be it emphasized, the farm home has still the supreme advantages of "our ancestral homes" which brought "moral instruction into the fruitage of character," and "whose activities furnished the field of duty for children and youth." It is deeply to be regretted that too often nowadays the materialistic view of life has penetrated even the farm home, and the unique educational opportunities it affords are not appreciated because they can not be measured in dollars and cents. The writer whom we are quoting holds that for city children, at least, "the school has become the logical and competent agency to administer

the character drill that the home has lost the power to contribute."

His views are refreshing and illuminating. They mark, as we have intimated before, a revolutionary change in the educational point of view.

He continues:

"The duties of the pupil are to give unstinted effort to his scholarship tasks, comply willingly with the administrative measures of the school and manifest such fundamentals of the moral code as truthfulness and honesty in his school contacts. Pupils ten years of age and over have ample home and school instruction relative to these duties and should be held responsible for their performance. There can be no better pupil in a school than one who faithfully meets these requirements, whatever scholarship grade he may reach. Such pupil is deserving of the highest commendation that can be conferred by any school authority."

"The loss of moral drill in the home and the supremacy of the scholarship aim in our schools have led recent successive generations, unintentionally of course, to regard the accomplished scholar as the highest and most worthy embodiment of the human product. While such error persists the inferior ideals found in materialism and intellectuality will still engage the interests of our youth to the exclusion of the moral virtues indispensable to any civilization."

Mr. Rittenhouse is not an advocate of religious instruction in the schools; but, apart from the question of religion as a necessary basis for moral training, he is suggestive and helpful for those who have to do with children in or out of school.

And, with some reserve, the same may be said of the following though it is susceptible of an interpretation with which we should have to disagree:

"Any so-called religious or moral training that does not put its emphasis on the doing of the deed is a deceptive misnomer that vitiates sound discussion. Religious instruction, whether given within the church or elsewhere, is not religious training."

That may be interpreted in the words of St. James: (I, 22-3.) "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Or in the words of our Lord Himself: (Matt. vii, 24-26.)

"Everyone therefore that heareth these my words, and doth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock. . . . And everyone that heareth these my words and doth them not shall be likened to a foolish man that built his house upon the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house and it fell, and great was the fall thereof."

Briefly and to the point we may illustrate the contention by an example; a boy may be instructed in the Ten Commandments; what is commanded and what is forbidden by each; so well instructed that he passes a perfect examination when required. But that same boy may be habitually untruthful, dishonest and cowardly. Evidently he has religious instruction without religious training. It is more important that he have the moral courage to be habitually truthful and honest than to have a perfect verbal knowledge of the seventh and eighth commandments. This will not be disputed; and yet catechetics is often more deeply concerned with religious instruction than with religious training; with moral teaching than with moral development.

In this connection an article published in THE CATHOLIC RECORD of January 24 is right to the point. It is very gratifying that some of our own religious teachers are leading the way on this all-important phase of education. Sister Mary, of the Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, is head of the Department of Sociology at St. Mary's College, Monroe, Michigan. She holds the degrees of B. A. from the University of Michigan, M. A. from the University of Pittsburgh, and Ph. D. from the Catholic University of America, Washington. Her essay for the doctorate was of such scientific value that it was published in the Psychological Review, the most important psychological journal in America. This led to her being invited to address a section of the famous American Association for the Advancement of Science.

It was only then that it was learned that the scholarly writer was a nun. The invitation was, however, none the less cordially extended. Sister Mary accepted and addressed the Education Section of the Association on the subject: "Some Research Findings on the Moral Development of Children." It is to be hoped that Sister Mary's work will be made available to all interested in the education of children. There are intelligent teachers, parents and priests who would eagerly welcome such help in a phase of education so vitally important as that which the learned Sister has made the subject of scientific study and research.

Be it clearly understood that we believe whole-heartedly and unreservedly in the Catholic teaching that the Christian religion must be the basis and the sanction of moral teaching. The question is one of pedagogy, not one of faith; how best to solve the problem not only of religious instruction but of moral training. The Catholic child who is compelled to examine his conscience in order to confess his sins, who is obliged to make a firm purpose of amendment of life and of avoidance of the occasion of sin, is constantly stimulated to make moral effort go hand in hand with moral instruction. Yet there is much that the intelligent teacher or parent may do toward the chief aim of education, the development of character.

As we have often remarked, Catholics are always more or less influenced by the spirit of the age. And few who have been in touch with schools will deny that the prevailing view of education as a purely intellectual matter has influenced Catholic as well as other schools. The insistence on religion in education has been of incalculable advantage in counteracting this influence; but it did not, and does not exclude it altogether.

Now that the best minds outside the Church are rightly placing character development above mere mental training, educational aims and methods may be expected—slowly perhaps but surely—to be modified accordingly. Likewise, we may confidently hope Catholic schools and homes will transfer the emphasis from religious instruction to religious training; not, indeed, by any slackening of the former; but by giving the latter its true coordinate importance and place in the school and in the home.

A TEMPEST IN A TEAPOT

The plebiscite on the Ontario Temperance Act resulted in its being sustained by a small majority. Premier Ferguson declared that he would abide by the result and honestly endeavor to enforce the Act, though the enormous falling off in popular support would make the task more difficult than ever. It is the custom of prohibitionists to represent the "liquor interests" as solidly against them. Why should they be against Prohibition? The distilleries sell more than ever they did in pre-Prohibition days. The excise duties prove that. Then Government Control would not have restored the bars to hotels; so they were not interested. But the new and thriving bootlegging industry depends for its prosperity on the maintenance of the O. T. A. So it is quite certain that the vote and influence of this Prohibition-by-product went to sustain the O. T. A. Without that powerful support Government Control would have replaced the Ontario Temperance Act. Again, most of the cities voted overwhelmingly against the O. T. A. That naturally made the city population resentful of rural interference with municipal home rule. They wanted local option.

The Government faced a difficult situation. Without the moral support of the great majority of the people it is difficult to enforce any legislation. In face of the active hostility of half the people this difficulty is greatly enhanced. Obviously if that hostility could be lessened, if the sense of grievance could in a measure be allayed, the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act would be facilitated.

We have not the slightest knowledge of the deliberations of those to whom the people of the province entrusted the duties of government. But we have no reason to think that they were swayed by any less worthy motive than the one we have set forth in the foregoing paragraph.

The O. T. A. allows beer of 24% alcoholic strength by volume. What is there so sacrosanct about this arbitrary percentage? In the United States it is by law decreed that anything over one-half of one per cent. of alcohol constitutes an intoxicating drink. It is not true. It is absurd. But by legislative enactment our American cousins have enshrined this absurd lie in their statute-books. Across the line our 24% near beer is an intoxicating drink, as by law established. But everyone knows that it is nothing of the sort. No legislative lie can make the insipid stuff any better or worse than what it is.

The Ontario Government proposes to allow beer of 24% alcoholic strength by weight, or 4.44% by volume to be sold instead of the old limit of 24% by volume. They propose to substitute for the insipid drink now allowed, but not drunk, a temperance beverage presumably refreshing and palatable. Thus they hope hostility may be lessened and the sense of grievance allayed. If so the O. T. A. will become less difficult of enforcement.

Immediately there is a little tempest in the prohibition teapot. We have been reading the protests; but we note that no one touches on the vital point as to whether or not this beverage is intoxicating. Wine of much greater alcoholic strength may now be legally sold.

Again we ask why is 24% the absolute and unalterable limit for beer?

Our prohibitionist friends say that this question was not submitted to the people at the plebiscite. Unless the people were given generous samples of the 4.44% beer they could not pass an intelligent judgment on the question. The protestors excitedly call it "strong beer." That is silly; it is a very light beer. Is it intoxicating? That we think is a matter to be decided neither by prejudice nor plebiscite, but by competent medical authority. There must be some reasonable definition of terms. The present near beer would doubtless be intoxicating if consumed in sufficient quantities.

This question of light beer was not, it is true, submitted to the people at the plebiscite. But neither was the question of more severe penalties for infractions of the Ontario Temperance Act submitted to the people. And yet our prohibitionist friends have no scruple in demanding drastic amendments along this line. We have representative government; it is well to remember that. The people of Ontario emphatically and unmistakably gave those who are now in power the mandate to govern. They did not go to the people as extreme prohibitionists. Indeed they were charged in the press and from pulpit and platform with being "wet." It is now their duty as well as their undoubted right to use their best judgment in the matter of amending the O. T. A. or any other act. It is absurdly inconsistent to grant them the right to make the Act more drastic if they judge it expedient to do so, but to deny their right to modify it in any other way.

We are not prophets nor the sons of prophets. But we have been in countries where light beer is freely drunk and strong drink is practically unknown except at hotels for tourists; where the temperance problem is solved; or rather where the problem, as we know it, is nonexistent.

It is not unreasonable to hope that a refreshing, palatable and satisfying beverage, such as the proposed light beer, may do more for temperance in Ontario than the extreme prohibitionists could ever do by extreme legislative measures.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Much press comment on Mussolini's decree that Freemasons must give up their membership in this secret society or resign from the civil service is misleading and savors of wilful calumny. To say that Freemasons are outlawed or compelled to disband in Italy is to assert what has no foundation in fact. We have published the legislative measure, word for word, that relates to the Masonic society. It simply gives the Government the right to demand the membership roll of the Masonic or any other secret society. It must be remembered that the Freemasons in Italy are intensely political in their activities. On this continent they are a fraternal society; not a society that

is primarily political or one that is unduly active in promoting political aims under cover of secrecy. In Italy political liberty for all demands that secret political societies come out into the open and not plot in secret. That is the contention. Rather than do that, or even to disclose their membership, the Italian Freemasons make a pretence of dissolving their lodges. In the United States similar measures have been proposed and adopted with regard to the Ku Klux Klan which is also political in its activities and aims. In Ireland under English rule all secret societies were strictly forbidden to the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary except the Freemasons. What is sauce for the Fenian goose ought to be sauce for the Masonic gander.

And this morning we have this despatch in the papers:

"Dublin, Feb. 13.—Drastic provisions are made against secret societies in the army or police force. It provides penal servitude of two years' imprisonment for any member of the military or police force who joins a secret society, which is defined as any association whose members are bound by an oath or other engagement not to disclose the proceedings of the association. This definition is wide enough to include Free Masons as well as members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood."

The object is clear. The safety of the state in Ireland demands that secret societies aiming at the subversion of the Government or of the Free State itself should not be allowed "to bore from within" in the army or police force. A like consideration influences the Government of Italy with regard to the Freemasons and the bureaucracy.

It is admitted that the Freemasons are bitterly hostile to the Fascist party now in power in Italy. The Italian Government says to civil servants: give up membership in this hostile political society or give up the civil service. That is made to look like an outrage. And yet, right here in Canada, active political partisans have been dismissed from the civil service wholesale by both the great political parties; and it is still an accepted principle that those employed in the civil service should abstain from active participation in partisan politics even though they should do so openly and aboveboard.

Another malicious intimation is sedulously suggested. That is that there is such a revulsion of feeling against Mussolini that his Government is likely to be overthrown and that political disorders are likely to follow. This is intended to deter pilgrims from going to Rome to participate in the ceremonies of the Holy Year.

We have the most reliable assurance that there is not the remotest likelihood of any such thing. Italy and Rome are enjoying peace and security undisturbed by the slightest fear of political turmoil. There is not a more stable government in Europe than that headed by the Fascist Premier Mussolini, which has a firm hold of the reins of power, but whose greatest strength lies in the confidence, the trust and the affection of the vast majority of the Italian people.

IF A MILL STONE WERE HANGED ABOUT THEIR NECKS

By THE OBSERVER

The front of a picture theatre: Before it a group of eager eyed children: The attention eagerly fastened on the pictures on the bill boards: And what are the pictures? A woman in short skirts kicks her heels in the air; a man's arms are about her waist; the man holds a glass high above his head; and reckless devilry is portrayed on the faces of the pictured heroine and hero; the eager eyed and inquisitive minded children are invited to come in and see the portrayal of the devilries of evil men and women. Will they go? Yes, of course they will. That is what the picture millionaires are doing for the children of this country.

It were better for them that a mill stone were hanged about their necks and that they were drowned in the depths of the sea. God Himself has said so. But meantime their punishment is deferred; and meantime the souls of innocent children are being blackened and ruined; childish imaginations are being corrupted and childish consciences hardened. What do the picture millionaires care about

that? They want the money; they do not need the money, but they want it.

This sort of thing is becoming so common that we are in some danger of taking it as a matter of course, and as a thing that we cannot help; and we are in grave danger of losing sight of our responsibilities in regard to this wholesale corruption of innocence. What are we going to do in the matter? How many parents ever even inquire what sort of pictures their children see? How many even of the small number who make such inquiries, ever say a word that will reach the proprietor of the picture theatre by way of protest? We have Catholic societies in considerable numbers. Are they doing anything to lessen this wholesale scandal to the young? How many people care how much filth is soaked up by the childish minds?

If there are any considerable number of people who care, it is high time that they made themselves heard. Call up the proprietor of the picture theatre. Ask him if he has a decent picture to show this week. Ask him whether it is cleaner than the picture he had last week, and tell him that he had better get clean pictures if he wants your custom. If a grocer gave you bad goods, if the butcher gave you rotten meat, you would not hesitate to call him on the telephone and tell him what you thought of it. Why not show as much readiness to protest against the rottenness of the pictures which are searing the souls of your young folks with the fire of hell; for lust is of hell as surely as there is a hell.

No man has the right to place before the eyes of the young—or the old for that matter—attractively gotten-up pictures of men and women tempting each other to sexual sin. Are there not enough inevitable temptations to sin in this world without deliberately manufacturing them with every art of the camera and the printing press? It were better for them that a mill stone were hanged about their necks and that they were drowned in the depth of the sea. They will be drowned in hell for all eternity; but that will not save the poor souls they are attracting into the power of the devil. We are not worrying about the picture millionaires. They will get what is coming to them for their trafficking in souls. We are concerned for the poor unsuspecting innocents who are being lured into the power of Satan by deliberate methods, that millionaires may make more millions, and that a few theatre proprietors may make a comfortable living; comfortable at least to those of them who have no consciences.

It is not easy to see how a man can sleep comfortably, if he has a conscience, when he knows that he has set youthful imaginations wallowing in scenes of lust. How can a man with a conscience be content with himself when he knows that he fills the thoughts of the children of his home town with the ideas of lust? Have those who conduct picture theatres become so case-hardened as to be without sensibility in a matter which, one would suppose, would appeal to the conscience of a barbarian in the center of Africa?

How are they going to answer to the Lord Jesus, when He comes to judge all mankind, for their systematic corruption of the souls of His children? Will they tell Him they needed the money? Will they say to the All Holy God that they were following a business custom of the time and the place in which they lived? Do they imagine that such excuses and subterfuges will avail them on The Day when all pretences, all selfishness, all considerations of profit and pleasure and habit and business will take on their true proportions and the God who gave the world His warning against scandal to His little ones, will deliver His judgments?

It were better for them that a mill stone were hanged about their neck and that they were drowned in the depths of the sea.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

It has been estimated that 100,000 new laws will be enacted in the United States this year, which prospect elicits from a morning paper the apt remark that the more laws there are the less law-abiding people become. May not Prohibition be cited as a case in point?

APROPPOS THE above, and the working of the Volstead Act, the ejaculation of Frenchman on

entering New York harbor may be recalled. An American acquaintance had called his attention to the statue of Liberty as emblematic of the spirit of his country. "Ah!" exclaimed the French visitor, "You too I see erect monuments to your illustrious dead."

"LITERARY CRIMINALS are assassins," writes a contributor to the Calcutta Herald. "Not the kind you see in the docks of the High Court; not the ruffians who with their finger on the trigger demand your money or your life. The literary assassin is a well dressed, well-groomed individual, seated in a luxurious study with palms and statues and pictures. Men call him 'the great novelist,' but before God he is only an assassin of the soul." Are not most of the popular magazines to be seen on every news stand in this category? But Governments are too busy enforcing Prohibition to give attention to a trifle of this kind.

"OUR BOOKSTALLS are filled with poisoned books," says the same writer, "books that a heathen nation would be ashamed to own. There is a rush for best sellers, and the more shameless the books, the more eagerly are they bought. There is no outcry. It is literature" save the mark. "Books for men, books for women, books for children—each with its proportionate dose of poison. Books blaspheming God, calumniating all that is holy and sacred; books lowering man and woman below the level of the brute, and books poisoning the minds of little innocents who stumble over the spelling; books to suit all pockets, editions de luxe for the millionaire and cheap ones for the poor, but all with the same dose of poison." Here surely is work for the real reformer!

IN FURTHER illustration of the progress of "Catholic" sentiment in the Church of England, touched upon in these columns last week, an English letter dating back more than a year has come to the surface and, bearing directly as it does upon the issues of the moment, may be cited with profit. Since the latest Anglo-Catholic Congress the reunionists have in this writer's judgment been getting more and more down to hard facts, and, putting aside the mass of sentimentality which has hitherto beclouded the real issue, shown a disposition to come to close quarters. The interview of some of their leaders with Cardinal Mercier has from all accounts served to foster this tendency.

ON THE whole, we are told, the average notion as to reunion with Rome has been to the effect that if Rome could be induced to abandon its "stiff-necked attitude" as to the validity of Anglican orders, the way to reunion would at once be cleared. Now they are beginning to grasp the fact that even if their orders were recognized by Rome (of which there seems little or no possibility) reunion would be as far off as ever. Lord Halifax, who for fifty years was President of the English Church Union, and whose high character has as much as any thing else been the sustaining power of the reunion movement, has again warned his fellow High Churchmen that the question really at issue is not the validity of Anglican orders, but the supremacy and universal pastorate of the Pope, which the noble Lord unequivocally calls the "Primacy conferred on St. Peter." And Lord Halifax further reminds them, the fundamental question which Anglicans must ask themselves is whether this privilege of St. Peter is secured to his successors by divine law. The hopeful character of subsequent developments is that the advanced Anglican school are seriously considering this question.

MOTHER SEES SON'S KILLING PICTURED

By Mgr. Enrico Pucci

Rome, Italy.—A group of peasants from the little village of Cave in the Province of Rome came recently to visit the Missionary Exhibition. A picture representing the massacre of missionaries and Christians in Armenia was pointed out to them. One of the women suddenly cried out and fell to her knees sobbing. "There he is—my son!" she said, brokenly.

She was the mother of an humble Franciscan monk who had been killed in the last massacre in Armenia.