

THE SCHOOL QUESTION

Discussed by a Protestant Minister and a Catholic Priest.

An interesting discussion on the school question took place last Tuesday evening before the Nineteenth Century Club at Sherry's, between the Rev. Dr. Lyman Abbott of Plymouth Church, (the successor of Henry Ward Beecher) and the Rev. Thomas McMillan of the Paulist Fathers in this city. A large and appreciative audience, including many of the prominent clergymen of New York and Brooklyn, was present.

The subject discussed was: "How should the moral and religious education of the child be provided for in our American system?"

Horace E. Deming, President of the Nineteenth Century Club, occupied the chair, and made the opening address.

Dr. Lyman Abbott was then introduced. He said:

"The question under consideration assumes, in the first place, that the child is a moral and religious creature. It is taken for granted that he is more than an animal, that he has a moral and religious nature, and that in some way that nature must be provided for.

"The question to be considered, then, is what provision should be made for moral and religious education, under a system which leaves every man to take care of himself? It seems very clear to me that the only system is this—that the community must provide the education of the individual in all those elements necessary to enable him to take care of himself.

"The nation has the right to protect the individual and the community must have the moral judgment and the moral nature so educated as to decide rightly. The people are the supreme court to decide all great public questions and they must be educated in the principles of right and wrong.

"It is clear that the work of education cannot be left to the Church altogether. The Church has her own work to do, and she has all that she can do to fulfill her own special work.

"The first thing to be done is to create a public sentiment throughout the Nation that will secure the preservation of the public-school system as a moral system, not as a workshop or a manufactory. We have first of all to teach the Nation that no system of education is worth what it costs if the nature and purpose of it is not to make men and women understand the principles of right and wrong."

Father McMillan, who is in charge of one of the most successful parochial schools in the country, in connection with the Paulist Fathers' Church, dealt with the subject from the practical standpoint.

"The knowledge gained by many years of work among the children of the masses," said Father McMillan, "may warrant me in claiming the sanction of practical experience, rather than the authority of official decisions of the Catholic Church, for my statement here tonight.

"For some time past, Dr. Lyman Abbott has given to the readers of The Outlook clear and vigorous arguments showing the absolute necessity of moral and religious training. My attention has been directed to an article which appeared with his signature in The Christian Union, Nov. 22, 1888. In that article I find these words:

"Development of intelligence without a concurrent development of the moral nature does not suffice, as has often been pointed out; intelligent wickedness is more dangerous than wickedness that is unintelligent. The devil knows enough. Sending him to a public school will not make a better devil of him. Knowing how to make dynamite without also knowing what are the rights of property and the rights of life will not make the pupil a safe member of society. Skill in speech unaccompanied with conscience gives to us only that product of modern civilization—an educated demagogue."

"It may be safely affirmed that this statement of Dr. Abbott is fully indorsed by all Christians, especially by Pope Leo XIII. His words are: 'In the education of youth he who neglects the will and concentrates all energies on the culture of the intellect succeeds in turning education into a dangerous weapon in the hands of the wicked.'

"The founders of our American Republic were educated in schools under

the control of teachers who taught the truths of religion and morality, together with the secular branches of knowledge. No voice was raised in opposition to Washington when he warned his countrymen to 'beware of the man who attempts to inculcate morality without religion.'

"An ordinance for the government of the Territory northwest of the Ohio River passed July 13, 1787, by the United States in Congress assembled, contains this significant declaration: 'Religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.'

"History does not inform us that any subsequent act of Congress attempted to deny the grand truth expressed in the ordinance of 1787. As a nation America has never denied that religion, morality and knowledge are necessary to good government and the happiness of the human race. The Federal Government has maintained a dignified and becoming attitude in relation to what is called 'our American system' of education, giving large grants of public lands to encourage the growth of free schools.

"Here in America," wrote Father Hecker, 'when Church and State come together, the State says: "I am not competent in ecclesiastical affairs: I leave religion its full liberty." This is what is meant here by separation of Church and State, and that is precisely what Europeans cannot or will not understand. They want to make out that the American State claims to be indifferent to religion. They accuse us of having a theory of government which ignores the moral precepts of the natural law and of the Gospel. Such is not the case, and never has been from the beginning. That is a false interpretation of the American State.'

"With all due respect to the great West and Northwest, the South and the East, I venture to claim that our Empire State of New York fully represents the American system of education.

"By granting charters to universities, colleges, and academies, and other institutions of learning, the State of New York gives the protection of law to the munificent endowments for higher education from individuals and religious bodies. This department is under the management of the Board of Regents. It secures official co-operation with many institutions sustained from sources of revenue not under the control of the State.

"Free tuition in the common schools is provided for by general taxation, leaving to the local trustees extensive power to select the best plans of securing an education for the children of the common people. I can find no evidence that the sovereign people of the Empire State at any time authorized the Board of Education in this city or elsewhere absolutely to prohibit the teaching of the Christian religion.

"Abundant proof is to be found, however, showing that the plan designed for the religious and moral training of the children in this city of New York has proved most unsatisfactory.

"As a Christian and as a teacher, I cannot understand how sincere men ever expected to secure by such a defective plan the positive teaching of the great moral truths which underlie the foundations of law and civilization as embodied in our American institutions. Our young folks have been sent out with minds confused on most important matters. Too much of the work was assigned to the home and the Sunday school; too little attention was given to moral training in the day school. Need we wonder that many have become entirely indifferent to the claims of religion, slaves of vice, advocates of socialism and anarchy, degenerate citizens, unworthy to be called Americans?

"By appointment of the Paulist Fathers I have been for over ten years in charge of large numbers of children attending our day school for the primary branches, and our Sunday school, which has a register of more than 1,600 scholars annually.

"It may be well to state that we who are designated Paulist Fathers represent a collective experience derived from missionary travels in all parts of the United States. We feel that Christian parents are at a disadvantage in training their children, when the environments of their homes and their recreations present to young minds the seductions of vice. This is specially the case in New York, a vast, crowded

city, with twenty families in one house in many of the tenement districts. Incentives to wrong doing are abundant. The home influence cannot produce its most salutary effects.

"Careful observation renders it evident that our Catholic people, as well as their priests, recognize the necessity of safeguarding the moral welfare of their children by positive religious instruction. They feel that industry, temperance, truthfulness, and other virtues should be taught in the schoolroom without fear or favor and without detriment to the secular branches of knowledge. According to their conscientious convictions good Catholics believe that in school and out of school children should be trained to regard obedience to the law of God as a supreme duty. Needless to say that this public assertion of Divine law cannot be adjusted to fit in with a theory of morals which excludes the recognition of an omnipotent law giver.

"We Catholics have no desire to disturb the friendly relations existing among American citizens when we assert our convictions as to the teaching of Christian morality. It is a subject on which we are entitled to form an opinion and to express it vigorously. The good work done in Catholic schools for secular education and for the observance of the moral code demands recognition.

"It is wise statemanship to utilize the volunteer service of men and women consecrated to the work of education for the moral and material advancement of the Nation. The Gerry Society, the Foundling Asylum, the Free Kindergarten Association, the Cooper Institute in this city and the Pratt Institute of Brooklyn illustrate what is meant by the volunteer forces in educational work.

"Catholics would not, if they could, destroy the system now established for popular education in the United States. In common with other citizens, we can see many things to be admired in the common schools and some things to be severely criticised.

"Our American system of education, which is not the same in matters of detail throughout the different States, can be made more effective by a process of addition and subtraction. Take away all that is objectionable to the religious convictions of Christian American citizens, and let there be a full constitutional recognition of liberty of conscience, by which the positive teaching of morality and religion may be added to our common schools.

"In my opinion, the adequate answer to the question proposed for discussion this evening cannot be given by any individual. To have weight, the answer should be given by a tribunal, or commission of experts, after a careful study of all the interests concerned.

"From that commission the theorist, who can never learn anything from the teaching of experience, and the alarmist, whose imagination is ever filled with forebodings of danger, should be rigorously excluded.

"Such a commission was appointed in 1886 to do for England what has not yet been done for this country. They collected the testimony of the most competent teachers as to the changes needed in the existing law. The report of this commission is a treasure house for any one desiring to study the religious question in relation to elementary education."

At the close of Father McMillan's address Dr. Abbott said:

"I have nothing to say in reply. I heartily agree with the propositions that have been set forth by the speaker. I am not sure we agree on all propositions; that is another matter.

"I agree that the public school system is to be maintained intact, and by that I mean a system of popular education maintained by the community as a community.—N. Y. Catholic Review.

Burdock Blood Bitters cure Dyspepsia. Burdock Blood Bitters cure Constipation.

Burdock Blood Bitters cure Biliousness.

Burdock Blood Bitters cure Headache. Burdock Blood Bitters unlock all the clogged secretions of the Bowels, thus curing headaches and similar complaints.

He: Did you ever hear that Jagson's wife speaks two languages? She: Yes. He: What are they? She: The one for company and the other for Jagson.

RELIGIOUS NEWS.

A magnificent new church is to be erected for the German Catholics of the northern section of the city of Pittsburg.

Last Sunday week the Protestant preachers of Sioux City, Ia., united in denouncing the A. P. A. from their pulpits.

The Holy Father after subjecting himself for a day or two to the treatment of Mgr. Kneipp, the Bavarian priest-doctor, was induced to give it up.

The Attorney-General of Illinois has rebuked a bigoted sheriff who refused to allow a prisoner privacy to make his confession, and denounced his action as bigoted and outrageous. The sheriff is an A. P. A.

A Dubuque, Iowa, despatch of March 23 contained the sad intelligence that Mother Mary Joseph Gill, successor of Mother Agatha, who was buried Monday, had died suddenly that night of heart disease. Mother Agnail of Sioux City now becomes superior.

Berlin and its suburbs have a Catholic population of 176,000, in a total population of nearly two millions. There are in the city for the care of all these souls twenty-nine secular priests and seven Dominicans, who attend four churches, properly so called, and seventeen chapels, the greater number of which are small. Besides the want of churches, the Catholics are generally poor.

The new Catholic chapel within the grounds of Bellevue Hospital, New York, is rapidly approaching completion. It has been built of gray stone and is 37 by 130 feet in dimensions. The Chapel will be opened and blessed by Archbishop Corrigan next month. It has been built as a memorial offering by Miss Annie Leary, a sister of the late Arthur Leary. As the hospital receives some 14,000 patients every year, of which number some 11,00 are Catholics, the importance of Miss Leary's charity cannot be overestimated. Protestants through the generosity of the late Mrs. Townsend, have for many years had their own place of worship within Bellevue's grounds.

The Paulist Father Elliott continues to meet with good receptions at the missions which he is preaching to non-Catholics in the Detroit diocese, at Bishop Foley's request. His audiences are invariably large, with the majority of his hearers the people whom he is trying to teach; and as Father Elliott is a potent and persuasive speaker, the results of his sermons have been excellent. His readiness to answer all inquiries regarding Catholic doctrine that are addressed to him, and the skillful manner in which he does this constitute some of the best features of his addresses.

WAITER! BEEFSTEAK, HAM AND EGGS, FOR ONE.

"God gave us meat, but the devil sent us cooks," is a trite saying. From bad cooking, fast eating and overeating, comes a whole train of diseases—indigestion, dyspepsia, biliousness, catarrh of the stomach, headache, dizziness, and the like. God also gave us a brainy man, who compounded the "Golden Medical Discovery," a corrective of all the ills resulting from overeating and bad blood. Dr. Pierce, of Buffalo, has furnished in the "Discovery," a great desideratum in America, where everybody are in such a hurry to make money, they have no time to eat, and scarcely any time to live. It invigorates the liver, cleanses the blood and tones up the system.

Delicate diseases of either sex, however induced, speedily and permanently cured. Book of particulars 10 cents in stamps, mailed sealed in plain envelope. Address, World's Dispensary Medical Association, 683 Main St., Buffalo, N. Y.

Landleigh: That snowstorm you have painted is wonderfully realistic. Daubleigh: It must be. A tramp got into my studio one day, caught sight of the picture, and unconsciously put on my fur overcoat before he went out.

Sirs,—I had such a severe cough that my throat felt as if scraped with a rasp. On taking Norway Pine Syrup I found the first dose gave relief, and the second bottle completely cured me. Miss A.A. DOWNEY, Manotick, Ont.

When is a robber most bird-like? When he is a-robbin'.