

sharp, the mandate of the Great Educator—"Call no man teacher, for One is ever Teacher, God."

Of course no one has ever denied that capable tutors, men and women, may convey and have conveyed the knowledge of many facts and many principles to others less learned or less skillful than themselves; but all whose paedagogical studies have kept pace with the educational strides made by our country in recent years, must have gained a far deeper insight into the teacher's duty than that which was once had. Time was when, to many minds, drill in what has been pointedly styled, "the American educational trinity," reading, writing and arithmetic, was supposed to be the sum total of a teacher's obligations towards his pupils. But now, thank God! a whole avalanche of protests is rushing in upon us from the four winds. Educators are indignantly raising their voices against any unworthy appreciation of their noble profession and of their divine vocation. They wish it to be distinctly understood that they are by no means devoting their untiring energies to the mere editing of human encyclopaedias with gilt edges, or to the manufacture of walking bureaus of information, more or less accurate. Education, they loudly proclaim, is not mechanics, it is dynamics. It is not the transferring of certain dry facts from books to brains: education is not drill, it is fertilization, it is the stimulating and the evolving of the mighty forces dormant in the human soul—in a word, education is life.

From the higher educational plateau now reached, the words of Our Lord, "Call no man teacher," do not sound as startling as they did at first. And in fact the Great Educator, with more than scientific exactness, followed up His first declaration with these still mightier words: "I have come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly." Yes, life in its fullest and deepest meaning; with the various grades of life, physical, mental and spiritual, rightly developed and co-ordinated in proportion to their relative values, this, and this only, is true education.

Instructors in the arts and sciences are indeed of incalculable value in developing physicians, orators, soldiers, accountants, chemists, etc., etc., but to develop men, the educator must be able to reach down to the deepest depths of the human heart, and cause to vibrate its noblest chords. It was in this sense that Christ said: "Call no man teacher!" The only One Who can educate man up to his true level is his Creator.

We have heard a good deal lately in military circles, of the "man behind the gun." Generals of armies insist again and again on the all-important fact that rapid-firing cannon and all the other modern improvements in the fine art of killing our fellow-beings will be of little avail in sustaining the glory of a nation's flag unless the men who wield the weapons are what they ought to be. Educationists of every hue are accentuating more and more the necessity of a somewhat similar principle in the less gory tactics of the mind. "Of what use is it?" asked, not long ago, the president of a famous non-Catholic College, "of what use is it to instruct our boys and girls in the art of reading, if their desire to read seldom or never gets beyond the sensational accounts of crime, or the worse than trashy novel?" He was evidently insisting on the man or woman behind the book.

A recent writer in the Nineteenth Century and After, in an article entitled: "The Blunders of Modern Education," makes the following serious charges: "It should be remembered," he writes, "that the first 'R,' reading, is all too apt to supply a substitute for one's own reflection, while writing and arithmetic are more or less mechanical exercises of hand and brain. The whole science of life," he continues, "consists practically, as we see it, in using substitutes for thought. Novelists save us the trouble of philosophizing on our own account about human nature, while the newspaper furnishes us with manufactured opinions on all topics of the day."

Thus, in the great majority of cases, our thinking is being done for us by proxy at greatly reduced rates, and with a correspondingly reduced degree of efficiency. Many men and women are actually paying far less for their thinking, done for them by the daily press, than for their washing done for them by the "heathen Chinese."

Remember also that the art of writing, which has enabled men to hand down through the ages the Gospel of Jesus Christ, with its mighty power to uplift the whole human race, has also enabled the man who is not worthy

of the name to forge a check which may ruin hundreds, to destroy a reputation more valuable than life itself, and by obscene literature, to lower the morality of an entire nation. Evidently we need a true man behind the pen, and a true man behind the printed page, if instruction in reading or writing is to be a blessing instead of a curse.

Now, if we are really to educate the man, we must impart to him a clear, definite and full knowledge of his immortal destiny. Without this knowledge it is impossible for a human being to develop along right lines, as it is impossible for a pilot to guide his vessel successfully to its destination without knowing the location of the port whither he is to tend, or without possessing the ability to read aright the mariner's compass, by his side. Nor will mere natural ethics be a sufficient guide, for since the Incarnation of the Son of God we can fully know man's eternal destiny and the means of reaching it only by listening to the teaching of Christ. The literature of Greece and of Rome will not do the work. We are no longer pagans, though the age does indeed seem to be drifting back to paganism.

"I know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified," exclaimed the great apostle of the nations. "This is eternal life," proclaimed the great Educator, "to know Thee, the One True God, and Him whom thou hast sent, Christ Jesus." When the Catholic Church hands on what Christ taught, she is not teaching in her own name. She calls no man teacher, for One only is her teacher, God.

Religion, then being necessary for all true education, the question still remains: Where shall this religion be taught? I answer, wherever, and whenever the human being is being educated, and as long as he is being educated. He is being educated in the home, let religion enter here; he is being educated in the class room, let religion enter there; he is being educated in social life, let religion enter there. But at this great assembly of educators, our interest must needs centre in the school time, when the boy, the father to the man, is being prepared for the battle of life, and when the human soul is as the wax to receive impressions, but even as the hardest granite to retain them.

At this stage of my argument it affords me great pleasure to be able to quote, with full endorsement, the bold language of a distinguished lecturer in Princeton Theological Seminary. "Secular education," he writes, referring to the class room, "is a cramped, maimed, palsied education. It can never render to the state the service of impressing upon the young that reverence for the public order and the established authority which are the first lessons in good citizenship. . . . The secularization of instruction is cutting off the children of the nation from contact with the deepest springs of its moral and intellectual life. It is isolating all the sciences from that fundamental science which gives them unity and perennial interest, the knowledge of God. It is robbing history of its significance as the divine educator of the race. . . . It is depriving ethical teaching of the only basis which can make its precepts powerful for the control of conduct. It is depriving national order of the supreme sanction which invests it with the dignity of divine authority. And this process is going on in every part of our country. . . . The instruction in moral philosophy, where room is still left for any, is given a thoroughly agnostic tone. It really looks as though we were coming to the French regulation which forbids the use of the name of God by the teacher during school hours." Thus writes the brave Princeton professor. (The Divine Order of Human Society, Thompson, Lecture VI. "The School and its Problems.")

Religion forming so vital a part of education, as all true educators admit, I could never understand how anyone could accept the compromise some times proposed, viz., that religion should indeed be taught in the classroom, but only after the regular school hours. Surely the man who proposed that could never have been a boy. How indeed, could any educator who had come in contact, not with paper boys and girls, but with the real thing, flesh, blood and bones, have invented such an educational rick. We all know the joy of hearing the bell ring for the end of class, but at this supreme moment the educational executioner created by this plan, appears on the scene, and while the young indifferentist of our American schools and the bright little agnostic and the budding Buddhist rush out into God's playground,

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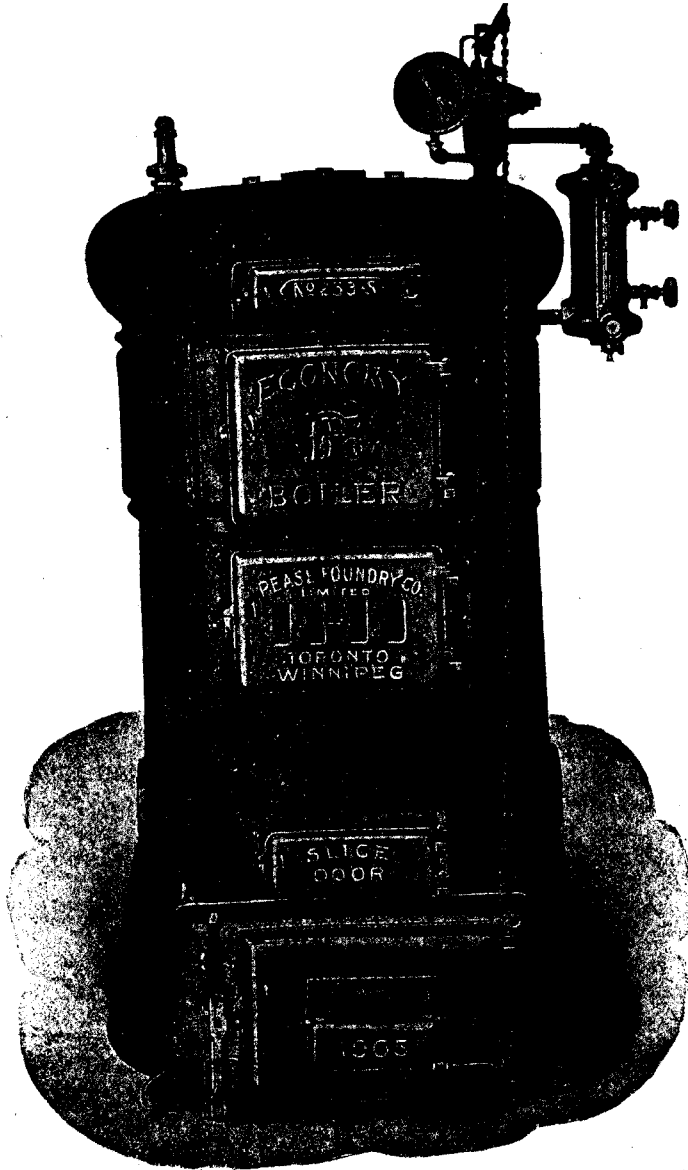
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