

life is cast, and within which authority blending with love first touches the will and lays the foundation of character, the family, not the individual, is the true unit of society and of the Church. As such both reason and revelation require us to treat it. Unfortunately for it, and for the Church and the nation, we have not done so. Overmastered or beguiled by the spirit of the age, we have drifted out passively on the current of individualism, until we are now called to face the consequences of a wrong theory and a worse practice touching the very source of the strongest formative elements of the Church and of the State.

#### HOUSEHOLD RELIGION AND MORALITY.—MARRIAGE.—DIVORCE.

That household religion and morality have changed, and are still changing, for the worse, is recognized by all Christian people as one of the dark omens of the time. The causes are not far to seek. Two theories starting from opposite premises, but both alike the product of the anti-Christian and secular tendency of the day, have been eating like moth and rust into the domestic conscience, and thus sapping the very foundations of home life. The one theory declares the individual to be the supreme unit of society, and so demands for every individual complete and equal freedom. It affirms all discriminating legislation based upon differences of sex to be degrading and tyrannical. It teaches that, as the only ground of marriage is the consent of the contracting parties, so the continuance of marriage is rightfully dependent on the continuance of mutual agreement. It declares that any other view of marriage converts it into the worst bondage known to our law. Admitting no power or privilege or disability in one sex not common to the other, and claiming for woman an absolute control over her patrimony and acquisitions, as well as over her person, it does not hesitate to affirm as one of its ultimate dogmas that there is "no more reason why the woman should take her husband's name in marriage than why he should take hers." Thus the Christian law of the household is not only disparaged, but denounced as a degradation of woman and a social tyranny.

The other theory—an outgrowth of a school of political economy rather than of any settled philosophy of social life—starts from the radically opposite principle of the subordination of the individual to the State, and insists upon a modern equivalent to the old pagan doctrine formulated by the speculations of Plato, which placed marriage absolutely under the sanction and supervision of the State. Both theories substitute the idea of contract for that of moral law as embodied in a solemn covenant, the former turning upon the freedom of the contracting parties to define and limit obligation; the latter upon the inherent subject matter of the agreement as defining the duty and prescribing the duration of the covenant. Both theories encourage an unlimited facility of divorce. Both theories loosen the ligaments and corrupt the inmost fibres of home life by robbing it of its religious sanction.

Separation in any form should be regarded, and is regarded by the Church, as a last and dreadful expedient, only to be justified by the gravest considerations, and, as it were, conceded to the unfortunate beings whose position constrains the grant of such relief. But no separation carries with it the right to seek another alliance; nor, except in one case, can a subsequent marriage be permitted. After parties have been lawfully joined together, according to the will of God, divorce with permission to marry again is not conceded by the Church, unless the ground of divorce be adultery, and in that case the guilty party is absolutely excluded from marrying again during the lifetime of the other, and to the innocent party only is permission conceded to contract another marriage.

#### MAMMON WORSHIP.

Another cause of domestic degeneracy is to be found in that gross materialism of the time which rises to fever heat in the greed for riches, and for the things that riches command. This "accursed hunger," this consuming fire, has in countless homes burnt up the habit, and burnt out the heart, of prayer, and with these even the inherited traditions of Christian living. Fathers have become too busy in the service of Mammon to serve God as priests in their own households; and mothers are learning to think more of "a social career," than of the divine beauty and tenderness and power of Christian motherhood. Parental authority stripped of its nobler attributes, with no Christ in it to guide, no worship to consecrate it, gradually abandons the cares and duties of home discipline, and the children grow up obedient to no law but that of passion and caprice, devoted to no ends in life beyond the range of their own selfishness. With this drift of the family, this loosening of its sacred bonds, this drying up of the sources of its parent inspirations, this matter-of-course surrender of the life of the spirit to the life of the world, the flesh, and the devil, we cannot wonder that, in spite of our stupendous accumulations of wealth, the impoverished missionary treasury of the Church threatens a reduction of the already meagre stipends of the Cross; we cannot wonder that we search in vain among our Christian households for candidates for Holy Orders who shall recruit the wasting ranks of our clergy; nor that our young men nurtured by such a parentage, instead of being attracted by the sacrifices inseparable from a true priesthood in the Church of God, are, like so many Demases, turned away from it by the love of the present world; nor further that the commandments of the law of righteousness are forgotten, or that the Lord's Day is profaned, or that intemperance and licentiousness reap their harvest of death at the very heart of a civilization, so many of whose homes, whose schools, whose riches, and even so much of whose poverty, know not God.

Verily there is a cry on the earth, in the air, and from the heavens, to work while it is called to-day, before the night cometh wherein no man can work. Fellow-laborers with Christ, it is well that we see clearly on what lines we are to work in His name, and how we are to wield the power of His truth and the grace of His kingdom. Society at large, the State, the Church, are indeed to be the objects of our solicitude. In and through the Church we are to leaven all life with the Incarnate Word.

#### FIRST CALL.—CARE FOR THE FAMILY.

But just now because of past neglect of its claims and of its safeguards, as well as because of its inmost hold upon all that lies beyond it, whether society or the Church, our first and most urgent call is to care for the family, and to build it up anew on the foundations originally built of God and consecrated by the Saviour of men. To this end these are the things we are to do. In opposition to the false theories concerning the relations of the sexes and the nature of the marriage bond, the people of God must be taught, as they have not been, that the family, not the individual, is the unit of society, and that the family creates the State, rather than the State the family. Without citizens there can be no State, and without the family there can be no citizens. The law of the household must determine, not be determined by, legislation of the State which affects the well-being of the family. The essentials of domestic life have been ordained and established by the will of God, and underlie the constitution of society. These it is the function of civil government to protect and regulate, but not to change.

#### PARENTAL AUTHORITY.

Again, parents are responsible to God first and to the State afterward, for their children,

There must be authority in the household commensurate with this responsibility, and neither Church nor State may rightfully or safely interfere with that authority or with the responsibility bound up with it. How far the State has done so, and with what results, it does not fall within our province to inquire. But of the Church's action in this regard it is our duty to speak. It has been her purpose in all the agencies she has sanctioned for the religious training of her children to provide helps, not substitutes for fathers and mothers in the foremost task which God has laid upon them. That these helps have ceased to be what they were intended to be, and have become something else, thereby devolving upon others outside the home the work which God means shall be done inside the home, very largely explains the widespread decay of domestic religion and morality now so pregnant with disaster to the Church and to the Nation. To stop this decay, to plant again in the old soil of home the germs of a healthier growth, to restore the family to the divine orbit of its power, to readjust on the old basis its relations to the Church and to the State, is by every consideration the most pressing problem of the day.

#### EDUCATION.

As one way of dealing with this problem, the time has come when the Church of God must change her attitude, must take higher, stronger, more definite ground in regard to the education of the young life intrusted to her, as well as of the young life in the broader sphere of the Nation. She has a message to deliver, a duty to discharge in this matter. Too long already have both been held in abeyance. At the close of this first century of her own and of the country's history, so full of solemn warnings, as well as of great achievements, let her voice go forth, declaring that, whatever others may do, she cannot without protest and resistance allow the salt of Christ's Gospel to be cast out, little by little, from the education of the children of this land; that she cannot without utter disloyalty to her divine commission acquiesce in what has grown to be the policy of the day on this subject, which, because of its inability to agree upon the fundamentals of religion to be taught in the public schools, has lapsed into the perilous heresy of modern secularism, that these schools can best do their proper work when giving no religious teaching whatever. We are the friends of these schools, sustained by such liberal expenditure; and because we are so, we desire all the more to see them placed on the only basis which will be at once enduring and beneficent. It is not to be denied that we are confronted with tendencies in the training of the children of the Church and of the nation which indicate changes in the feeling and opinion of this generation as dangerous as they are profound—changes which strike at the Church's hold upon the loyalty and love of the children now being nurtured in her bosom, and threaten to inflict an incurable wound upon the moral interests of the nation. We are drifting into an apostasy from the eternal law of righteousness, the supreme factor in the making of public and private character, which can end only in an eclipse of the noblest hopes and franchises of a humanity redeemed by the precious blood of the Son of God.

There are those who regard the present widening divorce between education and religion as so general and pronounced as to render it a hopeless task to resist it. They seem to think that the thing which is, is that which shall be. We do not accept this conclusion. Already the secular spirit has gone far enough to disturb the equilibrium of the nation's life, to say nothing of that of the Church's life. The day of reaction is inevitable. The old forces in the training of mankind, and the old proportions in which these forces must sooner or later combine, will re-assert themselves. Man cannot live by bread alone, nor by brain power alone.