

it, if not her life, at least the power of her faculties, and with Mary's name the last that she had spoken, the poor, tired wanderer was at rest from pain.

Outside the sand-pit the rain had blown away, and a solitary black-coated figure closed its umbrella and pressed forward quickly along the Common path. It was one of the priests belonging to a city parish who, having been summoned to a sick call in the suburbs, was gladly taking the way that would lead him the quickest to his dying parishioner. He had reached the middle of the Common, its most solitary part, as he would have thought, when suddenly he felt there was something brushing against his leg, and looking down, he saw to his astonishment—a tabby cat.

He had scarcely time to wonder where on earth the animal had come from when it disappeared from sight behind some bushes, but when he would have turned away to hurry on his errand, the cat came out again, uttering a tinkling cry, as though asking for help.

He had not time to spare, yet no cry of little children or of animals were ever left unheeded by him, and he stopped again.

"Poor Pass," he said, gently, "poor Pussy, I'll look in on you when I'm coming back."

But stooping, he saw there were fresh footprints in the mud, leading towards the very opening in the bushes through which, a second time, the cat had disappeared. An unreasoning impulse made him move a little nearer and peer into the gloom of what he saw was a disused gravel pit. Then as his eyes grew accustomed to the dark, he knew that his impulse had been an inspiration, that the cat had been a heaven sent messenger.

A woman was lying unconscious on a heap of bracken, but the touch of the priest's wet handkerchief, moistened in a muddy pool close by, made her move and moan, and after he had wiped the blood stained lips and bathed her head again, he saw that she was coming to herself. He would not let her speak, fearing a return of the bleeding, but bade her press his hand if she understood what he was saying.

Asking then if she were a Catholic, her eyes answered "Yes" and "Yes" again when he asked if she had been wishing, praying for a priest.

"I must speak," she whispered, so low that he could hardly catch her words. "It is eight years since I've seen a priest, but I've prayed and the Mother of God has got me what I asked."

Painfully, she made her confession, and he gave her absolution and the last anointing.

He was carrying the Blessed Sacrament to the other invalid, and when he left the dying wanderer, he left her with her Saviour in her heart.

Then hurriedly he had to go his way, promising to see her later and to return him to the gravel pit. Gravel pit? Nay, rather now it was the ante-room of heaven.

Reaching the house that had been his destination when he first set out, he redeemed his promise quickly, but when those whom he had sent to help reached the gravel pit upon the Common, the woman, lying on the bracken heap within, was dead.

They buried her in a nameless grave in the Catholic corner of a great city cemetery, and after the poor funeral was over the priest inquired if any one had seen a cat upon the Common, but no one had happened to notice if it was there or not.

Probably, frightened by the strangers, Our Lady's messengers had sought another refuge.

But ever since that day the priest has owned to a feeling akin to respect for every baby cat he meets.—Alice Dasse in English Messenger.

AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR

In the matter of education the Catholic Church takes her stand on the basic principle that religious training must not be separated from, but must go hand in hand with training in secular knowledge if we are to have any result worthy of the name of education, says Rev. Father P. J. Sheehy of Sydney, Australia. From the moment when she was in a position to address herself to the problem of education she has insisted that the child's opening mental life should be trained in religion, and she has ever refused to divorce this training from secular studies. The reason is clear and simple. Education is defined as a preparation for "complete living." Now, man is not merely an intellectual but also a moral being; and you cannot make a man moral without teaching him religion—morality is the source of sanction. Therefore do we say that secular knowledge must be baptized into Christianity; it must have higher knowledge and training, so that the progress and elevation of the child's mind may be a movement in the right direction—towards its last end—God.

RELIGION IN ITS BROADEST SENSE

And here I take religion in its broadest sense. I take it as embodying the existence of God; His sovereignty over us, and our dependence on Him; His infinite power and knowledge; His providence over us; the recognition of a Divine law; man's freedom and responsibility; the distinction between right and wrong; the duty of rendering homage to God, justice and charity to our neighbor; the obligation of keeping ourselves from sin, even in the secret chamber of conscience; and,

finally, the recognition of a future state, where a Supreme Legislator will reward the good and punish the wicked.

And by training in religion I do not mean merely the learning of the abstract propositions as they are elaborated in the Catechism. I mean further, that these great truths shall be branded into the conscience, elevated into standards of action, and habitually applied to circumstances as they arise. Thus, the religious training I postulate should result in religious character—that is, in life dominated by Christian principles, as opposed to life dominated by mere impulses from within and mere circumstances from without.

THE SOCIAL BODY

The social body is composed of individuals who have constant relations with one another. These relations involve various and complex duties, various and difficult virtues. Consider for a moment what society demands of you as citizens. It demands that you be loyal to your country, zealous in her defense, obedient to her laws, conscientious in the payment of her imposts, scrupulous in your oaths and vows, just in your contracts, honest in your dealings. Society demands that you be respectful to your superiors, courteous to your equals, faithful to your friends, affable to your inferiors, merciful to the poor and oppressed.

It demands conjugal fidelity of the married couple; of parents it asks provident vigilance; of children filial love and reverence. For discharge of these virtues of citizenship, strong incentives are necessary. They must be strong, for we have strong passions to overcome; they must be universal, for they bind all; they must be permanent, for they apply to all times and places. And there is no other motive, religion apart, which possesses sufficient strength, universality, and permanency to ensure the discharge of those duties, and the practice of those virtues without which society topples down, and disintegrates into a horde of murderous barbarians.

THE DREAD OF CIVIL PUNISHMENT

It may be argued by some that the dread of civil punishment is motive strong enough to ensure the due discharge of social virtues and duties. Alas, the records of our civil courts but too well prove the utter inability of such sanction. The civil power takes cognizance only of overt acts. It cannot enter into the heart, the secret chamber of rebellions and tumults; it cannot enter into the domestic circle to stop the intemperance, lewdness, the base calumnies, the hatreds, the injustice and selfishness that poison family life, and spread social corruption.

No; civil sanction is not fundamental. It is through God that kings reign, and His judgment seat is the only sure and solid basis of human society. Put God aside, and morality becomes a polite conventional or a cold calculation of consequences; it cannot enter into the domestic circle to stop the intemperance, lewdness, the base calumnies, the hatreds, the injustice and selfishness that poison family life, and spread social corruption.

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT AND VIRTUE

Some writers seem to think that intellectual development is of itself sufficient to make us virtuous. Their ideal of education has been accepted by many, and put into practice. These people educate on the assumption that man is for this world only, and that the world is one huge factory. It is then essential that the workmen be intelligent—"Angerwise," as they put it, and so they teach only the three R's, and kindred secular subjects. They ignore or make little account of the mighty field of religious training, where the finger urgings and the most powerful restraints of life are bred. They have no time for the moralities of life. They think to uphold current Christian civilization while kicking aside the religious foundation on which it has upgrown through the ages. The experience of nations past proves the falseness of this plea.

When the old Roman Empire was at the greatest height of mental culture it was sunk in the lowest depths of vice and crime. The Persian Empire, according to Plato, perished because of the irreligious education of its rulers. A recent writer tells us that the Spartan State fell because its education was materialistic, and could not supply for the individual or for the social body that element of morality upon which the real stability of a nation depends. And coming to our own day, with its vast horizons of secular culture, and its diminishing faith in God, can we seriously maintain that vice, public and private, is receding as public education advances? I fear that the contrary would prove to be a fact. The present disastrous war shows where such an ideal of education leads. It leads logically to the factories where we make shells, and then to the war trenches, where we hurl them at each other.

WHEN THE CHILD COMES INTO THIS WORLD

There is then no other motive or restraint or foundation capable of sustaining the fair proportion of morality, except strong religious convictions, implanted by religious training. The child comes into this world with a bundle of selfish, sinful inclinations, and, if it is not to become a pest to society, these tendencies must be curbed and opposite habits induced. Religion alone sup-

plies the meaning and the direction of such training.

If that child asks, "Why should I be moral?" It is useless to point to the policeman; it is childish to say that morality is the decent thing, the tactful thing, the useful or polite thing. All these considerations will be swept away like a mud bank before a torrent; and pleasant pleasure, self-interest, ambition will, in turn, become the guiding standards of conduct. Take away religion from the schools, and youth will grow up into ignorance of most important moral factors, and manhood will laugh to scorn the pale-faced motives your materialist suggests to induce it to virtue.

On the other hand, convince the child from his earliest years of mental life that there is an incorruptible Judge who will, in a future life, render to every man according to his works—punishing and rewarding—a Judge, too, who knows all, and is no respecter of persons—and then you place before it a monitor who impels it to virtues without regard to gain or fame, who restrains it from vice without regard to civil penalties, who follows it in its every thought, word or action, in darkness, and in light, in the sanctuary of conscience and of home, as well as in the arena of public life.

WHAT RELIGION TEACHES US

Religion teaches us that we are all children of the same Heavenly Father, brothers and sisters of the same Redeemer, members of the same family. It is thus the foster-mother of charity, the guardian of civility and good manners. Religion has stern admonitions for master and servant; it has elevated counsels for the rich, and sweetest consolations for the poor and the sick. It teaches the sacredness of life, the dignity of work, the beauty of chastity, the eternity of justice, the honor of truthfulness. It is stronger than passion, more awe inspiring than the sword, more universal than honor, and conventionality, more active than patriotism. It is the curb of the strong, the defence of the weak, the cement of the scattered, the covenant of the Infinite God with mortal man. It is the basis of public and private morals; the surest guarantee rulers can have of the loyalty of their subjects, or that subjects can have of the justice of their rulers.

"UNLESS THE LORD KEEPETH THE CITY"

Every philosopher and statesman who has seriously discussed the subject, agrees with our principle that religious training must go hand in hand with teaching in secular knowledge. Plato says, "He who destroys religion overthrows the foundation of human society." Long before Plato, the Royal Prophet, said: "Unless the Lord keepeth the city, he watched in vain who keepeth it." The prophet Isaiah says: "The nation and the kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish." The historian Hume says: "If you find a people without religion rest assured they do not differ much from the brute beasts." Even Voltaire says: "It is absolutely necessary for princes and people that the idea of a Supreme Being, Creator, Governor, Rewarder and Avenger, should be deeply engraven on the mind." Legislators and founders of states and empires—whether pagan or Jewish or Christian—have ever made religion the enduring basis of social order, and Viscount Bryce says: "History . . . tells us that hitherto civilized society has rested on religion, and that free government has prospered best among religious peoples."

THE BASIC EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLE

This, then, is the basic educational principle on which the Catholic Church insists so strongly. It is the principle that built up all Christian civilization. Sound philosophy, the teaching of history, the lessons of personal experience, all go to confirm it.

It is the principle underlying our Catholic schools. For, there is no other way of training up good citizens except through the teaching of the faith once delivered to the saints. All other methods are inadequate. Man must learn to bear the yoke of morality from his youth, and the process of subjecting the intellect and will of man to the higher law cannot be accomplished by any means which has not the sanction and the authority of religion.—N. Y. Freeman's Journal.

READING THE WORD OF GOD

The prayerful study of the Word of God cannot be too strongly recommended to the Catholic laity, resulting, as it always does, in increased devotion and spiritual life. The Protestants have carried to an extreme their worship of a mere book, making it a sort of fetish among the lares and penates of the household, but the Catholic will be on safe ground when he pursues his study of the Bible under the careful guidance of the Church divinely ordained to be its interpreter. Cardinal Gibbons says: "The perusal of an sermon on the doctrine of the Catholic Church, to my knowledge in a certain community resulted in bringing three hundred members into the Church. Read the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament. When I was a student we always carried a copy of the New Testament in our pockets, and each day we would read one chapter at least on banded knees. Always before retiring to rest devote a little time to the reading of the Word of God."

Every Catholic layman could make an "Office" for himself, selecting from daily perusal such passages from Holy Writ as would prove edifying and instructive, and would keep him in a holy and contented state of mind. For ourselves (and we are of the laity), we have found the practice of reading a chapter of an epistle in the morning and one out of a gospel in the evening very helpful, coupling these with the rosary and morning and evening prayers, and sometimes meditating upon the Psalms of David, carried always in a tiny volume in the vest pocket. Any plan of Scripture study is good, providing it be made good.—The Missionary.

THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

The older folks can remember a Lent when the fast was strictly observed, when the Rosary was recited every night, and when it would be a reproach to the family if a member of it went to the theater or other place of diversion. "It is Lent," the father or mother would say, and no further reminder of what was due to the season was necessary.

Modern conditions and parental laxity have changed the routine of home life, have banished many holy and beautiful customs. There are children growing up today in so-called Catholic homes who never kneel with their parents to say the Rosary in Lent. There are young men who frequent poolrooms and saloons as regularly in Lent as at any other time of the year, and suffer no qualms of conscience. Their fathers made an effort to break away from evil influences out of respect for Lent, and often their efforts were rewarded by the grace of perseverance in good living. There are young women who feel no compunction in attending dancing parties, suppers, theaters, etc., though they have been taught the meaning of Lent. The practice of observing it was not kept before them. They have not had the example of Christian living in the home life.

The Christian home will not allow anything to interfere with the practice of religious duties. Christian parents will impress on their children the fact that there is no more urgent business in life than the saving of their souls, no greater pleasure than in serving and honoring God. Children so trained will become imbued with the spirit of holy living, of penance and prayer.—Sacred Heart Review.

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES

It was the genius of Catholic Christianity that founded the university system of education, and it has been the most powerful factor in the upbuilding of our civilization. When, in the early Middle Ages, hordes of barbarians swept down on the decaying Roman Empire, they trampled out every vestige of the older order. The Church alone came forth from this tremendous upheaval. Patiently she set about the work of reconstruction. Her monastic and cathedral schools were the means she employed to tame the wild ferocity of the invader, and with the development of these schools came the first universities. Kings, noblemen, Bishops and, above all, the Popes, were the organizers and benefactors of these universities. Prior to the Reformation there were 81 universities established in Europe, and no fewer than 63 of these were founded and largely endowed by the Papal charter. But more remarkable still was the enthusiastic support given to the universities by the ordinary people. The modern feeling that a university and its interests are something altogether outside the concerns of the average man was quite unknown then. The making of a last will and testament was a religious act, and poor as well as rich considered it their privilege to make pious benefactions to the Church and to the university.—Truth.

"IT'S THE WAY OF ME"

A familiar figure in a western city half a generation since, was a big upstanding man, known in high circles and in low, as the "jail priest." He was well acquainted with prison life, and he knew more than one pale dawn rise above a grim scaffold, as he climbed the crazy stairs with his arm around a condemned malefactor, shrinking in the brief march to death. "It's the way of me," he would explain with a laugh. Fire, flood, explosion, cyclone, wreck, and any and all of the catastrophes that befall modern cities, brought this big hearted priest to the fore with his words and deeds of mercy and consolation. When you saw the Rev. Daniel McElane, S. J., hastening down the street, or hailing a patrol-wagon or an ambulance, you looked at your paper that afternoon or the next morning, with a new interest. Sometimes you were greeted with headlines, sometimes you found nothing; for like the worthy clergyman in "My New Curate," Daniel McElane knew how to consume his own smoke. "It's the way of me." It is the way of Jesus Christ seeking the soul in its lowest state, to which every man looks forward with gladness, when he ascends the altar to assume the awful powers of a priest of God. Daniel McElane, therefore, lacking perhaps the picturesque garb, manner and diction, are commonplaces of the Catholic priesthood. "A

priest's place," said Father Finn, when the Turkish shells were shrieking over the bloody beach of Sedd-el Bahr, "is with the dying." And with a bullet in his chest, and another in his thigh, he dragged himself from soldier to soldier, until a bursting shell stilled the sublime words of absolution on his lips. Coming nearer home, we find another realization of this priestly devotion. "Helping the injured, and administering the last rites of the Church to the dying," reports a New York newspaper, detailing the great New Haven wreck of last week, "were Father O'Connor and another priest. A look of happiness came into pale or bloody faces as the priests approached."

It is all in the day's work. A hunter of souls, you find the Catholic priest on sea and land, with lepers and outcasts, with broken men and stricken women, whose sole credentials are that they are in great need. He looks for no earthly reward, for he has renounced all that the heart can love. His only ambition is to continue the work begun in the shades of Calvary, when the Divine Lips cried infinite mercy upon sinful men, for they knew not what they do.—America.

MISSING MASS

Despite our crowded churches on Sundays, the number of Mass-missers is evidently on the increase, says the Tablet. This is especially noticeable during the summer months, and a serious aspect of the question is the apparent unconcern evinced by the guilty ones. The fact that they were "away on vacation" is, to many, an all-sufficient excuse for absence from Mass. The tendency to make little of this important obligation can be accounted for in only one way; men do not realize what the Mass means.

A staunch Protestant once remarked to a careless Catholic that if he believed, as the Catholic professed, that Christ became truly present on the altar at the word of the priest, there was no storm that ever came out of heaven that would keep him away from Mass. And "It," says Thomas a Kempis, "this holy sacrament were celebrated in only one place, and consecrated by only one priest in the world, how great a desire would men have to go to that place, and to such a priest of God that they might see the divine mysteries celebrated." Now we have many priests and many Masses, yet with some of our people, familiarity apparently breeds, if not contempt, at least indifference.

The Mass is the greatest act of worship that earth can offer its Maker. It is the King's Highway that unites heaven and earth. For the Mass is a sacrifice, and in sacrifice the best that earth has is given to heaven. In the Old Law the first fruits and the choicest animals of the flock were offered. In the New Law, how infinitely greater is the Victim! The Son of God is offered to His Heavenly Father every moment of the day, from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof; for Mass may be offered as soon as it is dawn, and it is always dawn somewhere. So the Mass is Christ's daily apparition. To be indifferent about the Mass is to be indifferent about the presence of Christ among us.

THE LITTLE LOST LAMB

The wages of sin are swiftly exacted from a young girl who finds too late that man deceives. The suddenness, the "tragedy" of her taking off, furnishes the newspapers of the country with a text for sermonizing, and a pretext for rehearsing similar and so sordid stories, written by man's peridy and woman's weakness during the last decade. There is a likeness in the stories, a familiar ring in the sermonizing, for they embody the commonplaces of Catholic thought, rejected by a cynical world, forgetful of the great Tomorrow. Here are a few wise statements which Catholics have been teaching these many years, but which to a Hearst newspaper are so novel as to merit the publicity of display types.

Cases of this kind are made possible by: (1) The easy morals of many fathers and mothers today, by their lax sons and daughters; (2) The tendency to forget the holiness of love, and to consider marriage nothing more than a "legal form"; (3) The light, burlesque manner in which problems of sex are treated by present-day drama and literature; (4) The dangers that surround a girl in her life at the modern high school or college. Professors today can openly profess agnosticism and even atheism. All these things have their reflections in the lives of the young.

A very Solomon is come to judgment. Four points of Catholic teaching are here set forth by a secular paper: the duties of parents to their children, the inviolable sanctity of marriage, a decent stage and a clean press, and schools dedicated to Jesus Christ. Nothing less than a fearful calamity will convince even some Catholics, that for his insistence upon these four points, the Church is neither praiseworthy, nor intolerant. The lesson is learned when the crash comes, but then it is too late. Sin has triumphed over innocence, hell has another soul for whom Christ died in vain, the world its nine day's scandal, and in some desolate home a mother weeps for her little lost lamb.—America.

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