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LONDON, SATURDAY, AUG. 27, 1921

BRAIN TESTERS

Thomas Edison and Hudson Maxim have turned catechists. Each has propounded a series of questions to the savants of America—questions which are designed to test the brain power of our citizenry in matters scientific. One precocious youth answered correctly about seventy five per cent. of the questionnaire which had been submitted by the "Wizard of Orange." This appears to have been an exceptional feat judging by the criticism given out by the daily press.

The questions submitted were, for the most part, directly related to commerce and science. All of Maxim's brain-testers were purely scientific.

It is a beautiful attainment for a person to know the intimate facts of Nature's origin and growth. Beautiful it is to have adorned one's mind with the principles and practices of Science and Art; with the teeming laws of Biology and Chemistry; with the astounding facts of Physics and Psychology. These acquirements are the possession of the two master minds who have presented us with their brain test.

However, there are other questions of more importance which were not included in the catechisms of the scientists referred to. Most certainly the questions omitted from their lists are more efficacious testing standards than those included. It is more important to know the correct answer to "Who Created Man?" than to the question of "Who colonized Cuba?" If Americans as a whole had the truthful answer to the Gospel query of "What Think Ye of Christ?" they would possess more "brain power," as Edison puts it, than if they could unravel the algebraic puzzles of Hudson Maxim.

This "brain test" movement is indicative of the times. In every case that has come under our observation the questions have related solely to materialistic affairs. The Godless school, the Christless church and the immoral press form a trinity which is educating the youth of the nation in materialistic science but which is despoiling him of the "one thing necessary." However, if knowledge of purely secular affairs is in one's possession; if practical disdain for eternal things is existing, the brain of the American is said to be normal.

THE CATHOLIC STUDENTS MISSION CRUSADE

Since 1918 there has been operative in both Canada and the United States an organization of students for the propagation of the Faith in foreign countries. This society has received the approbation of the Hierarchy of the Church and now flourishes in practically every college of the United States and in at least three colleges in Canada. Those familiar with the work know that the students are expected to contribute both in money and in prayers to the furthering of spreading the Gospel.

In one Canadian college which has enrolled 125 names in the society over seven hundred dollars has been contributed to the Divine work being carried on in the various fields of missionary work, and three philosophical students have signified their intention to join the noble band of missionary fathers for work in the Chinese missions. All this has been accomplished within two years.

Both Canadians and Americans have been greatly preoccupied with their own national and parochial needs. Little time has been afforded to devote towards foreign endeavors. However, the time has matured when this great torch of zeal is enkindling the hearts of the younger generation with the apostolic spirit. The opportunity for us to participate in the work initiated by Saints Peter and Paul and their associates; in its development by Saints Patrick and Boniface and their contemporaries has arrived.

We know how ably the Methodists contribute towards this work of foreign missions. Sometimes, we surmise, they have led the way in modern times by their generous contributions for propagating their Methodism.

Although prayer and grace are more necessary than money in carrying on the apostolic work, nevertheless financial aid is imperative.

As a means for furthering this missionary spirit it is now possible for each parochial school to establish a unit of the Catholic Students Mission Crusade. By collecting stamps and tinfoil; by contributing a few pennies annually; by becoming interested in the life of St. Francis Xavier; and, above all, by their common prayer a wholesome interest in missionary endeavors will spring up in the present generation. This will become augmented in the future. Then the Church in this country will be able to take up the great work which awaits it.

If there are any parochial schools anxious to establish a unit of the Catholic Students Mission Crusade, information can be had from the Moderator of the Society at Assumption College.

SCHOOLS REOPEN

It is gratifying to note the number of parochial and separate school pupils who have been successful at the Entrance examinations. Every one interested in educational matters takes occasion to compliment the boys and girls on their splendid showing. And everyone interested in their welfare would like to see as many of our young people as possible take advantage of a High School education.

There is much talk current of "hard times." Some parents are liable to become panicky to such an extent that they will not consider making any financial sacrifice for the further education of their offspring. Despite the difficulties encountered modernly in making "ends meet," there is that persistent need of advancing the Catholic boys in higher studies.

It has been pointed out before in the CATHOLIC RECORD that Catholic laymen are not taking their place in public life in proportion to Catholic population. Some critics aver that Catholics are discriminated against; this, to their mind, is the sole reason for our not being sufficiently represented. Perhaps there is a modicum of truth in this statement. But this reason will not hold when we realize that there are not sufficient Catholic surgeons, lawyers and professional men.

Thus, if the parents can afford to have their boy attend a Catholic College, where he can be suitably prepared to become, if not a priest, at least a professional man, let them make the effort—provided the boy has the fit qualifications. If the expense is too great, there is the local High School to be considered. In many cases it will be found to be the logical place to school the boy.

When school reopens it is to be hoped that a full quota of Catholic boys will have their names enrolled.

Just at present the agitation for our own Separate High Schools has been ably opened by the Hierarchy of the Province of Ontario. To carry through this agitation; to obtain our rights which have been given us in the Constitutional legislation of the Dominion requires educated, public, Catholic laymen.

THE SPIRIT OF ANARCHY

Considerable prominence has been given of late to the Governor of Illinois, Mr. Small, for his efforts to resist arrest. Charged with having embezzled State funds, he tells the inferior authorities in the State that if they attempt to arrest him, he will summon the militia to aid him in resisting.

Mr. Small is a firm believer in the out worn slogan: "The King can do no wrong." He forgets that

in the days of moderate democracy he is but the servant of the people, subject to their will within the Constitution.

Not only in the lower ranks of society has this spirit of anarchy made itself obnoxious but it has crept into the upper ranks as well. Whenever legislators forget that they are but the servants of the people; whenever they become obsessed with the idea that the State exists above the governed and that the people exist for the State then they become Anarchists of the worst type.

An entire Government turning anarchical is a common thing today. We have the Federal Government of the United States spending slightly above fifty per cent. of all taxes in preparing for a war. Japan is at present setting aside seventy per cent. of her taxes for the next war. Despite her enormous debts and the degradation to which her currency has fallen, England is busied building more battleships than her purse will warrant.

Now this is practical anarchy. When nations spend nearly half of their energy in preparing to shoot and kill each other, the functions of the States seem to be operative in the wrong direction. The Brotherhood of man, universal peace and all such empty phrases are merely the traps to catch the uninitiated. Until the eye of the Governors sees straight with the eye of the peace-loving people; until the principles of Christianity are preferred and practiced instead of the Mammon principles of commercial supremacy, a spirit of anarchy will be prevalent in all classes.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

EVER SOLICITOUS for the welfare of his world-wide flock, however poor or oppressed, the Holy Father is especially watchful of the best interests of Italian emigrants. The latest evidence of this is the appointment of a bishop for their special needs, and in the person of Mgr. Cerrati, who was Vicar Castrensis during the War, he appears to have chosen one with very special qualifications for the office. Another evidence of the Pope's interest lies in the founding of a seminary for the training of chaplains for the emigrants, which will be under the jurisdiction of the Bishop.

THE IMPORTANT work inaugurated in the United States by the Bishop of Trenton, having in view the same purpose of safeguarding the religious and moral interests of the Italian immigrant, has also attracted the interest of the Holy Father. The Bishop is forming an Italian colony in his diocese, with church and institutions of its own. This has been made possible by the generosity of a wealthy New Yorker, Mr. William Brady, who has given a splendid house for the purpose. The Pope has written an affectionate letter to the Bishop, warmly commending his undertaking and assuring him of cordial cooperation and support. It is an experiment that will be watched with interest everywhere.

SOME REMARKS in these columns a few weeks ago regarding Louis de Rougemont, the "romancer," who died recently in a London poorhouse, have had an interesting sequel. As our readers may recall we indulged in some reflections upon the harshness shown in branding the unfortunate as the "great-est fakir of the age" in view of the fact that others whose operations were not dissimilar were accorded the plaudits of the multitude. The truth, however, is that Rougemont (or, Redmond, as some claimed, was his real name) had so completely taken in a very wide reading public who when it transpired that it was being simply fooled, turned in wrath upon him and would now rend his reputation (since his poor mortal frame is now beyond them) into tatters.

A WRITER in one of the big dailies whose drift in this matter appears to be with the multitude, nevertheless recalls several precedents for his method, showing at the same time how the newspapers which profited were rather proud of the achievement than otherwise. The chief consideration was, did they increase the sales of the paper. For example:

"In 1835 the New York Sun printed a circumstantial account of a wonderful telescope invented by

Sir John Herschel which enabled him to study the inhabitants of the moon. They were minutely described, even to the copper-colored hair that covered them. At the time Sir John Herschel was in Cape Colony, and it was some time before he could issue a denial of the whole yarn. The Cardiff giant was another noted hoax. It was the effigy of a man cleverly carved out of gypsum, and deceived many scientists. In 1844 a New York paper announced that the Atlantic had been crossed in three days. American newspaper readers did not resent these hoaxes. Whether true or not they provided them with thrilling reading, and the writers who had ingenuitly enough to invent a reasonable fake were much esteemed in the profession."

WE REPEAT, then, that since poor Louis de Rougemont, whose wonderful "adventures" kept a whole world entertained, and made a mint of money for the magazine that printed them, it does not seem fair that he alone should be singled out for the opprobrious epithet while his predecessors in the field are "much esteemed in the profession." Barnum certainly would not have so demeaned himself. He was too great an adept in the game.

THAT a big metropolitan daily, the Mail and Empire to wit, should devote its chief editorial, as it did in a recent issue, to a panegyric of that notorious scoffer and unbeliever, the late Col. "Bob" Ingersoll, is an object lesson in the tendencies of the times. Just as the Globe has under its present management taken on more than ever the character of a Presbyterian organ, so may the Mail be characterized as a sort of mouthpiece of Anglicanism. The Ingersoll article should give a jolt to adherents of that body—especially to the "High" element who make such free use of its columns for controversial purposes. As for Col. Ingersoll, he may have been the prince of good fellows as the Mail says he was, but Father Lambert, when he had done with him, left him exposed as the shallow and vulgar scoffer that he in truth was.

BOY LIFE

WHAT SCOUTING IS

It is a game in which elder brothers can give their younger brothers healthy environment and encourage them to healthy activities such as will help them to develop citizenship.

Its strongest appeal is through nature study and woodcraft. It deals with the individual, not with the Company. It raises intellectual as well as purely physical or purely moral qualities.

Happy citizenship developed through the impulse from within rather than through impression from without, individual efficiency encouraged and then harnessed for the good of the community—that is the scheme. At first Scouting used to hope for these ends—now by experience we know that, where properly handled, it gains them.

Perhaps the best exponent of the aims and methods of Scouting has been Dean Russell, Professor of Education at Columbia University. He writes thus:

"By encouraging your Scouts in a healthy, cheery, and not in a sanctimonious looking-for-a-reward spirit to do good turns as a first step and to do service for the community as a development, you can do more for them even than by encouraging their proficiency or their discipline or their knowledge, because you are teaching them not how to get a living so much as how to live."

"Our schools are long in their ability to give information—knowledge which shall be of worth to future citizens; they are competent to go a long way in the matter of stirring the right feeling and developing the right appreciation on the part of the citizens; but they are all too short when it comes to fixing those habits and developing and encouraging activities without which the individual may be a pretty poor and even a very dangerous citizen. It is right at this point that the Scouting program supplements the work of the schools. Its curriculum is adjusted in such a way that the more you study it and the further you go into it, you who are schoolmasters, the more you must be convinced that there was a discovery made when it was put forth."

"The program of the Boy Scouts is the man's job cut down to boy's size. It appeals to the boy not merely because he is a boy, but because he is a man in the making. And it is just at this point that the program of so many organizations for boys and girls breaks down. It is an easy thing, as every teacher knows, to appeal to a flitting fancy of the adolescent age. There is a time when the boy is delighted with a tomahawk and feathers and buckskin leggings. And you can put over a very considerable program based on that kind of symbolism. One of the great organizations for girls has made, it seems to me, an irretrievable mistake in appealing to just that kind of passing fancy. The Scouting program, however, changes that squarely. It does not ask of the boy anything that the man does not do; but step by step it takes him from the place where he is until he reaches the place where he would be. . . .

"It is not the curriculum of Scouting that is the most striking feature, but it is the method. And on the method of Scouting I venture to say there is something we have not seen elsewhere in our day. There is nothing comparable to it, so far as I know, that has been turned out in three or four centuries past. As a systematic scheme in leading boys to do the right thing and to inculcate right habits it is almost ideal. In the doing, two things stand out—the one is that habits are fixed; the other is that it affords an opportunity for initiative, self-control, self-reliance, and self-direction. And these two ends are implicit in all our educational efforts. . . .

"There is of course nothing in life better than good habits. There is no drag in life compared with a bad habit. To the extent, therefore, that the Scout leader can develop right habits he is performing a service of inestimable value, the kind of service that every parent wants, the kind of service to which every teacher would gladly contribute; the kind of service that is needed in this life towards which our boys are headed. At the same time, Scouting does not over-emphasize this fixation of habits. Here again is where the genius of the man who planned it shines forth, I think, most brilliantly. I could designate to you, and perhaps you will recall spontaneously, great schemes which have worked out in such a way as to restrict freedom of action of the individual by fixing habits which later become a hindrance to the development of a citizen in a free republic."

"In the development of initiative Scouting depends not merely on its program of work for the boy, but in a marvellous way it also utilizes its machinery of administration. In the administering scheme a splendid opportunity is given to break away from any incrusting method. It comes about in the Patrol and in the troop. It teaches the boys to work together in teams. It secures co-operative effort for a common end; that is a democratic thing in and of itself. My friends, as a schoolmaster, I want to tell you that it is my honest conviction that our schools in America supported by the public for the public good will not be equal to the task of the next generation unless we incorporate into them as much as possible of the Scouting spirit and the Scouting method, and in addition to that, fill up just as many as is possible of the leisure hours of the boy with the out and out program of Scouting. We have no examination in college or school for moral character or patriotism or good citizenship. We have not yet developed an instrument for measuring those habits that make for righteousness in a democratic state. Here is an instrument and a program which directs itself to that end specifically. I am confident therefore that when schoolmasters realize their obligation to the State, when they understand what the public want and must eventually have, when they sound the depths of their own patriotism and realize that upon them, more than perhaps, upon any other class of American, depends the future welfare of this country, they will not leave untested and untried an instrument that makes for so much good."

WHAT SCOUTING IS NOT

Experience in different fields shows that there are certain shoals to be avoided in launching Scouting, lest it get stranded in commercialism or diverted into dead-end

channels that never lead to the open sea.

Here, then, are some of the things that Scouting is not:

It is not a charity organization for people in society to run for the benefit of the poor children.

It is not a school having a definite curriculum and standards of examination.

It is not a brigade of officers and privates for drilling manliness into boys and girls.

It is not a messenger agency for the convenience of the public.

It is not a show where surface results are gained through payment in merit badges, medals, etc.

These all come from without, whereas the Scout training all comes from within.

ALVARO OBREGON AND HIS POLICY

By E. J. DIBON, In The Nation

In the course of a varied experience in most parts of the globe during the long span of time between the close of the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Peace Conference I have come into contact with most of the statesmen, rulers, and leaders of men whose deeds and endeavors have made contemporary history. The list includes Bismarck, Gambetta, Gladstone, Crispien, Chamberlain, President Kruger, the Marquis Ito, Disraeli, Roosevelt, and Venizelos, and most of the prominent public workers of the present day. And I can honestly say that none of them impressed me so powerfully or so favorably from the point of view of leadership, single-mindedness, and that elusive quality which occasionally goes by the name of grandeur as the Mexican reformer of whose existence and aims the people of the United States are only now beginning to have a vague inkling.

Alvaro Obregon is a born leader with whom love of justice is a consuming passion, and duty the highest law. A man of sterling character and of a humane and sympathetic temper, he combines the fervor of the idealist with the capacity of the organizer, and his solicitude for the well-being of the masses, is the driving force of his public and private activities. His words are acts and his promise the beginning of achievement. His respect for truth in all its Protean shapes and singular surroundings is almost tantamount to worship.

Before I had the advantage of meeting Obregon I had heard much about him from eminent Americans—experts all of them on Mexican affairs—to whom the principal sources of information public and private were easily accessible. And the portrait which I drew from the data thus liberally supplied was the reverse of attractive. Later on when I came to know him as he is I perceived that the data were fabrications and the portrait a sorry caricature. . . .

My first visit to Obregon took place while I still believed that he was one of the least reputable types of the class ridiculed in the United States as the Mexican bandit general. Primed with this idea I called on him one afternoon at his hotel in Mexico City. His ante-chamber was filled with typical representatives of the despised poverty-stricken masses with whom he was hail fellow well met. He inquired what he could do for me. I answered, "I merely wish to know how you intend to deal with the problems of recognition, of Mexico's debts, of foreign claims for losses, and kindred matters, when, as now appears certain, you will have entered upon the duties of President." "My answer is simple," he replied laughingly. "Mexico will pay all her debts and satisfy all the just claims of foreigners. As for recognition, I cannot admit that that is a Mexican problem. Foreign states will recognize the lawful government of the Republic in accordance with the law of nations. That is all. You would not suggest, would you, that any of them will make a new departure?" I arose, said that I would not trespass further on his time, thanked him for his reply, wished him good afternoon, and left. . . .

The next day I received an invitation to accompany him on his journey to Nogales and after a few hours' deliberation I accepted it.

On that journey and on our many subsequent travels I had a rare opportunity to study General Obregon in the various lights shed by adventures pleasant and unpleasant, exhilarating and depressing. I saw him in his native place surrounded by his family and his kindred. I conversed with his earliest teachers and his schoolmates. I observed him as a candidate for the Presidency and listened to over a hundred of his electoral addresses, always with a keen sense of aesthetic enjoyment and at times with admiration for his fairness and generosity as an antagonist. . . .

Obregon is a man of the people, a proletarian of the proletariat, a lack-all who worked his way up from the lowest rung of the social ladder to the highest by dint of intense painstaking while preserving his "scutehon from blot or stain. Whatever he set his hand to, that he persevered in until he accomplished the task. As a simple

workman he labored with might and main to the satisfaction of his employers, who soon gave him a post of trust and responsibility. As a farm hand and farmer he acquainted himself with agriculture in most of its branches until his qualifications enabled him to render a lasting service to the whole State in which he was born. Combining mechanics with agricultural industry, he invented a sowing machine which is employed today in various States of the Republic. Political conditions constraining him to abandon his peaceful existence and his ideal family life, he became a soldier and applied himself so intensely to the requirements of his new profession that he finally ended this uncongenial career with the triumph of the popular cause and the well-deserved reputation of a general military strategist as well as a most successful organizer.

Obregon is one of the very few men I have met—Venizelos is another—on whom power and rank have no further effect than that of sharpening their sense of responsibility. In all other respects he is as he was. Kerensky, the Russian lawyer whom the turn of fortune's wheel raised to the highest post in Russia, had his head turned dizzy and his estimate of values upset by the all too sudden change. In the Czar's luxurious apartments he is said to have attired himself in magnificent costumes and to have striven to add a cubit to his mental and moral stature by the aid of the cast-off finery of the former autocrat. Obregon is a man of a wholly different cast of mind and type of character. He owes everything to himself, nothing to artifice. In virtue of his unbroken military successes, his moral rectitude, and his transparent sincerity he wields an extraordinary sway over the spirits of his countrymen; and he uses this for the purpose of inculcating among them faith in the great emancipating principles of right and wrong, respect for law and individual right, and a striving after freedom with order and administration with integrity.

Those aims underlie Obregon's foreign and domestic policy, and nothing that he undertakes or achieves will be found to run counter to any of them. His fiscal measures, his political program, his attitude toward the State Department in Washington are all practical corollaries of these principles and aspirations. In this way he has imparted to the new generation of his countrymen a powerful impulse in the direction of substituting veracity and moral rectitude for old-world politics and diplomacy. He knows better than any of his contemporaries the nature and gravity of Mexico's wounds and infirmities and also the efficacious remedies which he is ready to apply. That knowledge embraces the entire problem and includes every detail. He perceives the needs of each district and their relation to those of the entire State, those of each State and their relation to the Republic, and those of the entire Republic in the frame of the community of nations. In a word, he is endowed with the gift of seeing things in true perspective, in which they are seldom, if ever, surveyed nowadays on this or any other continent.

As an orator he deserves high rank for qualities which are innate and are therefore often belittled by those who lack them. He discards the usual artifice aids and speaks briefly, simply, and to the point. His every discourse is a message. He has the knack of imparting to his hearers a direct interest in the matter dealt with. And however homely the subject, he views it with a mind permeated with a sense of the larger issues of which it is an integral part. Obregon knows the crowd much better than the individual. None the less he is often strikingly right in his judgment of individuals, which is mostly intuitive, but when dealing with personal friends his intuition is sometimes paralyzed. He is then blind to defects that are almost obvious. One afternoon in Tehuacan General Obregon and I had a long talk about his plans of reconstruction and the principles that would govern them. And here a concise note of the conversation which I jotted down immediately after for future reference:

He is resolved to substitute morality for politics. Recognizes power only as a means to an end—the end to be the good of the community. The making of laws is easy and the belief is common that by statutes you can right every wrong. But what counts more than the wording of an act of Congress is the integrity of those who interpret and administer it. Never hesitate in a crisis. If you take a resolution carry it out with might and main. If you are dubious give it up altogether, and if convinced that it is the right thing to do tackle it even though you have no hope of achieving it and persevere even though failure should stare you in the face, for it is not only what you have actually done but also what you would do that counts.

Mexico will find her right position, not through aloofness from world affairs, but rather by recognizing the essential unity of humankind and the need of developing the resources of each country for the benefit not only of the nation that owns them but also of human-