

The Catholic Record

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THE STATE AS "SUPER-PARENT"

Addresses before the National Education Association at Des Moines, Iowa, last week, throw some interesting and illuminating—not to say alarming—sidelights on the educational tendencies of today. The heading of one great daily's account of the proceedings reads thus: "Lindsey Sees State as 'Super-Parent.'" The speaker was Judge Ben B. Lindsey of the Children's Court at Denver; and his varied and intimate knowledge of delinquent children entitles his views to a respectful hearing.

Though at a time when we have grown accustomed to the undue alarm, the hysteria, of patriotic Americans over Bolshevik propaganda, it strikes one as passing strange to hear an American judge advocate the most pernicious and subversive of all Bolshevik doctrines: the right of the State to uproot from the mind and heart of childhood every vestige of religious sentiment and religious restraint. Making due allowance for exaggeration there is yet little room for doubt that by its system of education based on the arrogation of the right of super-parenthood, the Russian State has played moral and spiritual havoc with a generation of Russian children. There may be those who doubt the truth of the reports of Russian conditions. The facts in this particular case are of little importance. Once admit the principle that the State's rights are supreme over the rights of parents and what power is to prevent the State from doing everything that is alleged against the Lenin-Trotsky regime in Russia?

No principle could be more subversive of all liberty. Liberty of conscience that used to be thought to lie at the very root of all real liberty becomes a phrase emptied of all meaning, if the State may override the parent in the education of his children. However, Judge Lindsey does not envisage the tyranny of this principle carried to its logical conclusion; he does not think of the State whatever its principles or lack of principles, whatever its beliefs or its negation of beliefs, as supreme in the domain of conscience; as exercising the most odious of all tyrannies. He thinks rather of the State as defeating Christian ideals, as restraining by the Christian conscience, as guided by Christian principles, the heritage of centuries of Christian civilization.

Limited and restricted in this way the principle he advocates assumes a benevolent aspect, may even be considered by himself and others as an effective means of promoting the great virtues of Christian charity. But the principle of the super-parenthood of the State in itself and in its implications is subversive of Christianity and Christian civilization. We must obey God rather than man. Fidelity to conscience is the very essence of the Christian faith; and the Christian faith alone can save the civilization which it created.

Here is the summary of Judge Lindsey's address on the "Parent-hood of the State": "This [the Parenthood of the State] was first expressed in the struggle for acknowledgment by the State that it was its duty to educate the child," Judge Lindsey added. "No one today seriously questions this responsibility. Since that acknowledgment the State is becoming more and more the overparent of the child."

The next phase of this struggle concerns the responsibility of the State for the health and morals of the child. Since health and morals are so nearly related, they may be considered almost as one. "The 'Parenthood of the State' includes its duty to see that the child is well born. By the strictest kind of marriage laws the State must forbid, as far as possible, the bringing of children into the world unless they come from healthy parents. The child must no longer be the victim of conditions over which it has no control, but for which society and the State itself are to blame."

"When the State is imperiled, it calls the child of eighteen to defend it with its life. When the child is imperiled, it has a right to call on its overparent, the State, to protect it with its wealth. "The time will come when it will be regarded as a crime against childhood if the State permits that child to suffer from undernourishment, due either to poverty or ignorance. Since it is the accepted duty of the State to educate the child, it is far more its duty to feed the child. "The time to save many a boy bandit is in the nine months before and the nine months after his birth. We must have maternity laws. We must have laws to see that the child does not suffer for the lack of proper nourishment if the parents are unable to perform that function, and if they are able to perform it, to see to it that it is performed. "If this is 'paternalism,' then all of your free school system is paternalism, and if free schools are paternalism, then give us more of it. "We have the common experience in every city of five children of a wealthy family for whom the State has paid \$25,000 for their free education, and the five children of a poor widow, who need to be fed even more than they need to be educated, and for whom the expense of education is wasted because of this neglected condition which makes them incapable of receiving its full advantages. Undernourished children are more dangerous to the State than uneducated children."

Extraordinarily important as we think such pronouncements to be as indicative of the trend of educational thought, we are quite willing to acquit Judge Lindsey of advocating a principle so subversive of morality with eyes open to the fatal consequences of its logical development in easily conceivable circumstances. Indeed his concluding paragraph goes far to take the harm out of what precedes: "It is not the purpose of the 'Parenthood of the State' to usurp the function of the home or to permit the natural parent to shirk, but rather to see that the home performs its function where it is careless, and to see that no child suffers because of poverty where the home is helpless. The State must preserve the home for the child," Judge Lindsey concluded.

Evidently Judge Lindsey was thinking all through of the exceptional cases—too numerous no doubt, but still exceptional—that he is called upon to deal with in his capacity as judge of a Children's Court. And it seems evident also that he did not see the fatal consequences of the "Parenthood of the State" erected into a principle whose application would be limited only by the problematical conscience of the State itself or its functionaries.

And this suggests another phase of State authority in such delicate matters as he would intrust to, nay, impose as a duty upon the State. Not only does such Statolatry exact a sublime faith in the State as Super-Parent; but it exacts an altogether unwarranted faith in the virtue, the judgment, the conscience and the rectitude of innumerable State functionaries. For as you enlarge the duties of the State you multiply its officials. Obviously it is only through officials that the State can act in the proposed extension of the State's rights and duties in all relations of life. Socialism is rejected by the common sense of the vast majority chiefly because of its inevitable and intolerable multiplication of such officials. And there is very grave and certain danger of weakening the sense of parental responsibility, of shuffling it off onto the State, if the State comes to be generally regarded as the Super-Parent. The interference of the functionaries of the Super-Parent may easily become an intolerable nuisance. Official and official busybodies, clothed with the authority of the State, may destroy not only the sense of personal responsibility but the conscience and the morals of those whom they are intended to serve.

Perhaps an actual war-time incident may serve to point a moral: A lady of great patriotic activity kept herself in the public eye as an efficient and devoted worker in the great cause for which we were fighting. Calling one day on a neighbor whom we may call O'Brien, she demanded in a super-patriotic tone why his sons had not enlisted. (Parenthetically we may state that at the time they were barely of military age and later three of them served in France.) "Why have your own sons not enlisted, Mrs. Blank?" "Why you know, Mr. O'Brien, I have no sons." "And why have not your sons of your own to send to the War?" "Oh, Mr. O'Brien, if you choose to be insulting—"

"I don't mean to be insulting at all, Mrs. Blank; I want to be just as courteous as it is possible for me to be in the circumstances. But when those sons of mine were being born, you, Mrs. Blank, told my wife she was a fool to have so many children. You tried to instruct her in the damnable practices that have left you without sons to give to Canada now that she needs them. That is why I think it unbearably imprudent for you to come here to teach me patriotism."

"You imply that I am shirking my duty, Mrs. Blank. I think you are the shirker and I resent—"

"Mrs. Blank, for once in her life reduced to silence, beat a hasty and undignified retreat. And the Mrs. Blanks would have much more time and appetite for the duties of officials of the State as Super-Parent than the Mrs. O'Briens are likely to have.

OTHER SIDELIGHTS ON EDUCATION At the same meeting of the National Educational Association Dr. T. D. Wood of Columbia University presented the Report of the Association's "Committee on Health Problems in Education." "No phase of the program for our men in the World War," declared Dr. Wood, "produced more significant benefits than the modernized and rational program of physical education which the War training evolved and required."

We are quite convinced that Dr. Wood did not exaggerate when he emphasized the importance and the value of outdoor sports and games in the education of the children of the nation. Such sports and games have their obvious bearing on the physical culture and development of the young; not so obvious, perhaps, but none the less real, is their importance as a factor in education in the widest sense of the word.

In the current number of the Catholic World there is an article by John O'Connor entitled "Recreation and its Relation to Delinquency" that will repay perusal by parents, priests, teachers, and others interested in education. Albert Bushnell Hart, Professor of Government in Harvard University, told the assembled educators that institutions of higher education are placing too much emphasis on Greek and Latin and not enough on the industrial problems which the students will have to face after leaving school."

If Professor Hart were to elaborate his views on higher education we fear that even in a utilitarian age the result would hardly displace Newman's idea of a University in the estimation of thoughtful educationists. Professor Hart also advocated the abolition of all "foreign language" schools; and that foreigners should be admitted to the United States only on condition that they agree to learn the English language within three years; failing to fulfil the condition he would have such immigrants deported.

Many who have studied the question more deeply see a positive danger in too rapid assimilation of the foreign immigrant. The process must be gradual or it may be disastrous. Some of the speakers, instead of giving themselves to vain glorious boasting, frankly recognized the short comings of educational effort. Sherman Williams, Chief of the School Libraries Division, Albany, N. Y., gave this plain-spoken verdict of what we are accustomed to hear indiscriminately praised, that is the

half-education which is all too common: "We hear much these days in regard to the dangers arising from illiterate people, but really the half-educated person, who knows many things, but who left school at too early an age to have learned to think clearly and reason well, is far more dangerous than the illiterate." He gives a great task over to the Public Libraries when he adds: "The public library should continue the education of these half-educated people."

Considering her position as Librarian of the Binghamton N. Y. Central High School, Ellen F. Chamberlayne's statement is illuminating. She declares that the average teacher does not read, neither does the average pupil. And without passing on the problem to the Public Libraries she has the good sense and courage to admit: "With reading in the home fast becoming a lost art, it is in the school that the future citizens of our Republic must get this love of good reading." If the teachers love good reading they can hardly fail to communicate this love to their pupils. Especially is this so in these days of school libraries. But if the teachers themselves do not read it is impossible for them to kindle the fire in the minds of their pupils. So, as in all such discussions of the problems of education, we come in the final analysis to the personality of the teacher. Nothing can take its place; and as Dr. Waldo, President of the State Normal School at Kalamazoo, sorrowfully admitted: "The salaries generally paid to teachers now are not sufficient to attract the right sort of young men and women to the profession."

And this brings us to the comforting thought that, whatever the shortcomings of our Catholic schools we are not confronted with the problem of "pitifully inadequate salaries" that fail to attract the right sort of men and women. Our religious teachers are neither attracted nor repelled by considerations of salary. They consecrate their lives to the work of teaching because they feel that here they find something in itself worthy of their highest effort, for which they neither expect nor receive reward in this world. We Catholics have in the religious teaching communities the solution of a problem that to others is ineluctable.

THE IRISH CONFERENCE As we go to press the outlook for a just and reasonable settlement of the Irish problem seems favorable. Speculation as to the outcome is idle; but every lover of Ireland, every lover of justice and liberty, should pray fervently that the Holy Spirit of God may enlighten the minds, move the wills and guide the deliberations of those who bear the great responsibilities of negotiating a settlement.

SOCIALISM AND HUMAN NATURE BY THE OBSERVER No man who knows the world, and will speak honestly his knowledge, will decline to admit that enormous crimes have been committed in the name of business and of industry, by men who control what is sometimes called "big business," and sometimes, "high finance." They will go on committing such crimes as long as we permit them to use our money for such purposes.

Imagination is staggered at mention of the figures in which modern business expresses its transactions; millions, and hundreds of millions; and billions of dollars. We cannot grasp their significance; we cannot measure the possibilities involved in the use and control of so much money. And because of our limitations in that respect, some of us are in danger of supposing that all the dishonesty in the world, worth talking about, is committed by mergers and trusts and combines and companies; by manufacturers and jobbers and middlemen; or, as the Socialists say, by "capitalists."

Some of us are in danger of forgetting that, in the first place, the sins of big business and the sins of small business are the same in nature, in character; that a trick which nets the trickster ten dollars is exactly the same as a trick which nets a large-scale trickster thousands of dollars. Small thieves would be glad to be big thieves. It is not honesty, but lack of opportunity, that prevents them. Thus we see that one must take human nature into account, and not go building up

new social fabrics on the supposition that the only sinners against honesty are those who cheat in thousands or in millions; and that all who are poor are honest. The second fact that some of us are in danger of forgetting is, that the game of big business is played with our money. Yes, dear reader, with your money, and with mine; when I have any; which, as I am a "writer chap," is seldom. It is not with their personal fortunes that the leaders of "big business" corner all the goods in a certain line of trade; or merge all the factories making a certain line of goods; or do the other stunts of "high finance," which get them a niche in the pantheon of modern success; which means, modern money-grubbing. No, it is with the money deposited in banks and trust companies, and by them loaned to fit out piratical ventures on the seas of trade and commerce.

Some people quite misunderstand the business of banking. They imagine that when they put some money into a bank, it is kept there until they want to draw it out again. Nothing of the kind. The bank does not, and is not bound to, keep their money on hand. The bank owes them the amount and must be ready to pay them that amount when they ask for it. That's all, and so that it is ready to do that, it may lend the money as it pleases; provided it gets sufficient security for the loans it makes. Now, if the captains of finance as this dollar-worshipping generation loves to call them, had no money to play the game of "big business" with than the money they themselves have in bank, they could not play the game very long or very effectively. What they do is this: They buy, let us say, a string of factories. They have not enough money to pay for them. What difference? There is plenty of money somewhere. They mortgage the string of factories to a Trust Company; and issue bonds, guaranteed by the Trust Company; and the Trust Company holds the mortgage to secure the payment of the bonds and the interest on the bonds.

The bonds are sold to you and me. Or, suppose I feel like buying some of the bonds, but I have no money, or not enough money, I go to a bank; and say to the manager; I want to buy some bonds of the Consolidated Boot and Shoe Companies Limited; I have only part of the price; I will pledge the bonds to you, and give you my note; indorsed, if you like. "All right," says the manager; and I buy the bonds and borrow the money. Borrow whose money? Yours, dear reader, and yours, and yours; which you deposited in that bank. The transaction is a perfectly honest one. I pay the bank interest on the money; and the bank pays you interest on the money; not so much as I pay the bank; but that's how banks make money; which is another story. I am not criticizing the transaction; I am just pointing out to you how your money helps "big business" to carry out its purposes. You lend your money to a bank; that's the meaning of bank deposits; the bank lends the money to me; I lend it to the Consolidated Boot and Shoe Companies Limited; on their promise to pay it back to me in ten, fifteen, twenty or thirty years, and to pay me interest on it in the meantime. That promise is in writing, and signed by officers of the company; and it is called a bond; and it is counter-signed by a Trust Company; which means that if the Consolidated Boot and Shoe Companies Limited does not pay me, I go to the Trust Company; and the Trust Company takes the string of factories and sells them to get money to pay me and others who are in the same position I am in.

All this is elementary business; and I only state it here to direct the attention of the reader to the fact that it is with our money that big business is financed. And, as we furnish the money, we might, if we would, do something to influence the situation. But that is still another story.

NOTES AND COMMENTS A CONVERSION which attracted much attention abroad was that of Sir John Cowan, the distinguished soldier who had through the whole Great War led the armies fighting under the British standard. Sir John had always been an Anglican, but a few days before his death, feeling the end approaching, asked to be received into the Church. He had been sojourning for some time at

Mentone, where he died, but his body was taken to England, and a public military funeral, with a Requiem Mass at Westminster Cathedral, accorded to him. Sir JOHN COWAN'S part in the War was one of the most important, though not such as to bring him especially into public notice. At one time he was responsible for the commissariat of seven million men, and the success with which he inaugurated and carried through this great task stamps him as one of the great figures of the War, all the more so since he did his duty without making a fuss about it or getting talked of in the press. This in striking contrast to the oversers of other departments of the State who while squandering public funds kept themselves ever in the limelight.

IN RECORDING this conversion a London scribe alluded to it as a "great tribute to the Church," which remark led our East Indian contemporary, the Catholic Herald of Calcutta, to moralize upon what it terms "a curious sort of snobbery," which consists in looking upon every conversion to the Catholic Faith as a tremendous compliment to Almighty God and to the truth. "It is a sort of anthropomorphism," says the Herald, "which assumes that God looks upon the rich and great with open mouth as men are inclined to do, and that He likes to see them all comfortably seated in the nave, whereas the poor may stand in the side-aisle, and in the porch."

THERE is pith in this saying. It should be understood that no man's conversion, however powerful or illustrious, is anything but a favor and a blessing to himself, and that as the Herald further remarks, God rejoices as much over the conversion of a beggar as of a king. The value of their souls is exactly the same in His sight, however much their earthly station may differ. Of course, humanly speaking, it is always a gain to have won to the cause of Truth, those illustrious for learning or intellectual achievement. But the greater gain is to him to whom the Faith is given, and the blessings and privileges which Faith brings are as much the beggar's as the millionaire's. Indeed, we have it on the authority of the Master Himself that the state of poverty when rightly exercised carries with it a special blessing, whereas riches carry a heavy responsibility.

AGRICULTURAL READERS and all those concerned with the products of the dairy will be interested to know that the first shipment of Canadian butter to England this season has been very much appreciated, one firm of handlers remarking that, while there was some variation in quality, the best was as good as any on the market. Should this quality be maintained and depended upon, remarked the same dealer, no long period would elapse before Canadian butter secures a reputation that will give it a permanent foothold on the British market.

In this contingency, as we are reminded by the Canadian Trade Commissioner at Liverpool, it is important for producers and shippers to realize that Canadian butter is now in the unfortunate position of having to make headway against the reputation for low quality and lack of standardization which has been created by lack of proper care and supervision in the past. It is a difficult matter to overtake such a reputation, and it can be done only by the adoption and consistent carrying out for a considerable period of time of a better system. As it is, even the best Canadian butter is under a handicap and fetches a lesser price than its merits really warrant. THIS SEASON'S first shipment above referred to furnishes an instructive instance of the effects of a poor reputation. An important buyer, interviewed by the Trade Commissioner, stated that before seeing the butter he had bought on the basis of his general experience of butter from Canada, and that, if he had realized its high standard of quality, he would have considered it possible to pay fully ten shillings more per hundredweight. He was particularly complimentary in his comment considering that butter of such prime quality would always find a sale at attractive prices. IN VIEW then of the present attitude of the United States towards

Canadian produce, and the desirability in contradistinction thereto of cultivating the markets overseas, Canadian producers, packers and shippers would do well to give due heed to the advice of their representatives by adopting a far sighted policy in respect to this matter. Inferior qualities should, he says, be systematically kept at home (not perhaps an altogether pleasing prospect for the Canadian consumer) and the best grade only sent forward. The main thing is that if our export trade is to expand it is in the interest of all concerned to live down past mistakes and bend every energy even at the cost of a little personal sacrifice to the building up of an unassailable reputation in the world's markets.

GRATTAN O'LEARY From the Toronto Star Irish, of course; but Canadian Irish; and New Brunswick Irish, at that; Grattan O'Leary is the Canadian Press correspondent with Premier Meighen at the conference of premier. For the next few weeks he will be a more valuable presence to the Canadian people than they are likely to apprehend, unless the change from some former customs is pointed out. Grattan reflects credit on Meighen, too. The prime minister of Canada has shown an appreciation of what is due the people who have made him what he is, in ways that never occurred to some of his predecessors in office. Few statesmen are clever. Not all are wise. In the unofficial partnership between Arthur Meighen and Grattan O'Leary there is cleverness and wisdom—on both sides.

The lean and legal Arthur understands something of the beneficence of timely publicity, to which Sir Robert Borden was an almost incorrigible stranger. He believes in giving his own people some publicity about their own affairs before it reaches the ears of his august colleagues in the conference. Grattan O'Leary crossed the Atlantic with the Premier, and instantly became a sagacious Boswell to our political Lechner. He told us what he did on board ship—how he worked and shuttled; how he played bridge, and how he made the collection speech at the concert in aid of sailors' orphans. Grattan told us all about the trip, with one especially delightful comment—the Canadian premier was the second worst bridge artist on the boat, Grattan, of course, carrying off the premier's bad eminence in this most innocent, most beguiling of anecdotes to melancholy and mad despair. Meighen, the innovator, and O'Leary, the recorder of the innovations, were revealed as soon as the party landed. A Canadian precedent was honored. Before the journey began Grattan foretold the premier's temper towards the conference in language that showed he was no more guessing than one guesses the amount when he writes a check. On the water Mr. Meighen made up his attitude to the Anglo-Japanese treaty, the expiration of which shares with the expiration of the Toronto Street Railway franchise the honor of leading the events of the world's 1921 series. O'Leary set forth the prime minister's three perfectly good reasons for keeping Canada clear of any responsibility for a renewal of the treaty. If London insists on renewing it, Meighen will decline to bind Canada, until parliament definitely approves. Having thus early taken his stand, he could only give one advice to Parliament, unless he became converted—and he is a poor sort of convert.

This declaration, in full, frank and unmistakably Meighenesque form, has made imperial Melinda cream; and has added these good souls who think when the political rain falls in London the political trousers of Ottawa should be turned up an inch or two higher than the trousers are in Whitehall and the Strand. Nothing is better understood than that a Canadian Press correspondent must transmit news and not his own predilections. But he does not become inhuman by adhering to the canons of his craft. Even a writer has feelings and patriotisms. O'Leary, you may be sure, thought Meighen was giving him good stuff when he authorized O'Leary to tell the people at home what he was going to tell the London statesmen who can't get it into their heads that we really feel at home in Canada. O'Leary works regularly for The Ottawa Journal; but he thinks regularly in the inspiration of Canadian nationality. He is positive that Canada is a good country, with as capable a people, in every one of life's duties, as any in the world—a weakness, perhaps, to the trousers-tuckers, but entirely pardonable. He will not become rapturous about what he sees on his first trip overseas. He will tell his story with the steadiness of observation and the accuracy of diction which his signed articles in the Star weekly have for several years manifested. Physically he is dark and small; but mentally he is big and swift. Probably a majority of the best journalists are on the slender side—at least, the serious ones are. Too heavy, fat fellows are apt to run to lightness—to float upon, rather than to