

twenties. During these years the youth has passed out from under the direct influence of the parents, but what is to be his decision in these great life issues will depend very largely upon the influences which have been previously playing upon his life.

The strategic position of the home is apparent to all. As the home has unlimited possibilities for realizing noble character, so it has the same great power to develop character that is a menace to the welfare of the nation. In the home where low ideals

are set up, where false standards of life are praised, where bad principles are commended, how can it be other than a most damaging influence?

How tremendously important, then, that the homes of our people receive the most earnest and sympathetic attention on the part of the church and every other agency which has at heart the highest welfare of the nation and the world.

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*The Church's Obligation to the Community

BY REV. PROFESSOR J. W. MACMILLAN, D.D.

The field is the world, but the homestead is in the middle of the field. Paul writes that one who provides not for his own is worse than an infidel. The missionary enthusiasts wisely make much of the "home base." Unless the central fires burn warmly, there will be little radiance and cheer at the outskirts of the world field. The internationalism that denies patriotism is a hysterical thing, without vigor or endurance. Unless the church serves its own community with wisdom and energy it cannot give a genuine and lasting service to any other region.

One of the fine things which the church did during the dark ages was to keep the doors of opportunity open for the sons of the poor. There was no caste among the novitiates for the priesthood. The son of a tanner or a peasant might come to rule nobles, even to have kings hold the stirrup of his mule. And in a wider and more thorough fashion the church, in the name of him who knew no human distinctions of rank, should see that every child in the community has a fair chance to enjoy and use the blessings and powers of life. Most human derelicts get on the shoals in childhood. They get off to a bad start and never catch up. They are born into poor homes, or the housing conditions propel them into the street, or their situation in respect of play is that they learn to play tag with the law, or they are taken from school too soon and rushed into a "blind alley" occupation, so that they come to the threshold of maturity all unstrung and incapacitated for the battle of life.

The church should be the enemy of privilege. Those broad rights which are the defence of the common man, because the

more favored people get them without any public guarantee, should find championship wherever a group of followers of the Saviour are found. The right of free speech, the right of a free press, the right of freedom to assemble and associate together are the sheet anchors of democracy. For the rich and the mighty have these things in any case, but the poor and the weak need to have them under the shelter of law and an enlightened public opinion.

In every community there are to be found the interests of vice and corruption. They comprise an alliance between greed and perverted appetites. The stronger element in this alliance prospers by reason of catering to the degenerate habits of the weaker element. Thus the driving force of the partnership is commercial. Take the money-making ingredient out of the liquor question and the fight for sobriety would be easily won. So it is also in respect of "dope," sexual vice, decadent amusements, political crookedness, and all the other forms of immorality in the community.

Now, two things are to be remembered by church people in opposing such evils. The first is that they are often supported by people quite estimable in many ways. The second is that it is possible to defend these iniquities with fervent moral enthusiasm. Wonderful are the by-ways of the human heart, and the worst foes of true righteousness are those who are most sincere. Some of them "think that they do God service" in fostering customs which deprave his children.

But the disciples were never told to expect general approval of their actions. They were uncompromising and stalwart soldiers of the truth because their Master had been of that type. When the magistrates of Jerusalem saw the boldness of Peter and John, they "took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." To refrain from opposing wrongs in the community because

* The second of four articles, which will be found helpful by students of Dr. Frank K. Sanders text book in the New Standard Teacher Training Course, Second Year, Part III. The present article may be read in connection with Ch. VIII. of the textbook.