

FIVE MINUTE SERMON

BY REV. WILLIAM DEMOUY, D. D.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

TRUE EDUCATION

"He hath made both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." (Mark v. 17.)

We are all born deaf and dumb as regards religion. Even after we have been purified from our original stain by the waters of Baptism, we are not conscious of the incipient state of grace within us. We are under its influence, but altogether unconscious of it. We are saved from physical dangers by the vigilant care of parents; we are safeguarded, as regards our soul, by the habit of grace infused at Baptism. We are deaf and dumb to both until we reach the age of reason. Then we gradually learn how we were helped to emerge from the state of ignorance. Our ears are opened, and our speech is given to us to use in thanking our parents for the care taken of us, and praising them for their good work. We should look upon our fathers and mothers as the absolute rulers of our physical life, at least, in this world. God helps them from on high, and gives them, as He gave the power to bring us into the world, strength to continue the noble work in rearing us. We must be deaf to every voice in contradiction to our parents, and every word we speak should be in accordance with their wishes. Of course, we are speaking now of God-fearing parents, not of neglectful fathers and mothers, though even they must be obeyed and submitted to by their children.

But this absolute deafness and dumbness is overcome as we grow in years. As our reasoning powers increase in intensity and clearness, we begin to speak for ourselves, and to hear rationally. We rejoice at the fact of this physical progress taking place within us, and at the development of our mental powers. In other words, maturity brings with it many joys.

But do we develop equally as well religiously? Is our blindness gradually overcome, until we have a clear vision of our religion through knowledge and faith? Are we ready to listen to those in authority or those who are in a position to teach us? Growth in religion does not come of necessity, as does progress in the physical and mental part of us. Religion refers to the noblest part, and requires the exercise of the noblest of our faculties. The will is the great motive power behind religion. Now, we can use our will as we please, and though it is true that we are inclined to goodness, we also have strong tendencies to wickedness. Are we earnest members of the school of religion? Certainly God demands us to be.

Oh, how great is the number of those who have never seen religiously, nor heard religiously! They are still spiritually deaf and dumb. Do they not more than half fill the world? Are not their blindness and dumbness a cause of the same defects continuing in others? The world in the last few centuries has exalted education. No one will blame it for setting knowledge on a pedestal, but it is a fact that it has made education the god of all. Religion has not played the part it should in this recent enthusiasm. What is education without religion? And what is education with a false religion? Of the one, we have examples unnumbered; and of illustrations of the other, there are scores. The world, it is true, often gives both of its best gifts—though worldly, of course. Their spiritual eyes never see, and their spiritual ears never hear. The greatest lights of the world, who at first were only educated, but who afterwards also saw and heard spiritually in the true sense, admit that the happiest and most consoling days of their lives were lived after they had received this new sight and hearing. Such was the conviction of St. Augustine, one of the greatest geniuses of the older centuries; and the same may be said of Cardinal Newman, one of the brightest minds of recent years.

People are blinded today by the glare of these so-called educated individuals. Is it not true that a highly educated man is almost defied by the world, no matter what he thinks of God? Have you not seen thousands of such instances during your lifetime? Do you not see as many today? In our every day literature are we not extolling men of distorted ideas of religion, or of no religion whatever—nay, even those who deny God an existence? The same is true in the financial world. The money giant is the hero. He is honored, he is looked up to, he is sought after. But has he a religion? How few stop to consider. He is famous; that fact seems to suffice. He may remain forever spiritually blind and deaf, but he always will have his coterie of admirers—people no better than himself. The blind still lead the blind.

But why is it that so many remain forever deaf and dumb and blind as regards religion? It is because they do not apply to the right source to overcome these defects. It was the same with the Pharisees. They saw Christ, viewed His works, but remained deaf and dumb. The representative of Christ in the world today is known, is seen, yet by how many is he despised! And for what cause? Why was Christ hated and mocked and falsely accused? Search for the reason,

not in the person of the Supreme Pontiff, not in the person of Christ, but in those who hate them, despise them, and persecute them. Had these people of old come to Christ as did the deaf and dumb man, He would have healed their infirmities—especially their spiritual ones. Let the Pharisees of today come to the great school of Christ on earth, and their eyes will be opened, and hearing and proper speech will be imparted to them.

Let us who have listened to Christ endeavor to become yet more interested in His life and His teachings. Our eyes are not yet fully opened, our ears do not yet hear His command alone, nor our voice speak only His love. His school is one in which we must remain scholars as long as we breathe the mortal life. But what other school is half so noble with Himself as teacher?

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SUNDAY SCHOOLS!

TEACHING YOUNG BLASPHEMY AND SEDITION ROUSES ENGLAND

London, Eng.—The menace of the Communist Sunday School, already pointed out by the N. C. W. C. News Service, has at last moved England to action. In the House of Lords was read, for the second time, the Seditious and Blasphemous Teaching to Children Bill, which seeks to prevent the perversion of the minds of children under sixteen years of age by seditious and blasphemous teaching or literature.

It is not likely that the bill will become law, as its sponsors well know. It is a private measure, which will be read once more—for the third time—in the Lords, and will then be shelved for lack of Government facilities to give it attention in the Commons. Such bills serve their purpose as "demonstrations."

Those who spoke in support of the bill were alive to the danger of communism as it is taught to the young, unchecked, up and down the country.

Lord Danesfort, moving the second reading, pointed out that the bill in no way interferes with the teaching of Socialism or any other political propaganda conducted on constitutional lines, and in no way touches propaganda among adults. He quoted the Bishop of London as having said that the communists realize that in the destruction of the Christian Faith they could break down one of the strongest barriers which stand for law and order. For this purpose, all religion was to be held up to contempt in language of the grossest scurrility.

Lord Danesfort said he had the names of fifteen communist Sunday schools in London, and he believed there were about twenty-five such schools in other parts of the country. Each school was attended by from forty to one hundred children, he said.

The literature which had been disseminated among the children, asserts Lord Danesfort, is of the most atrocious and pernicious character. The general scheme had been described as follows in a communist publication:

"To teach the children the idea of revolution should be the primary object. All other teaching is of no value. The boy and girl should learn to become real live red-hot revolutionaries. Our work is to train the children of the working class to accomplish the revolution."

FEAR TO MAKE "MARTYRS"

A pamphlet with "ten proletarian maxims," published in Glasgow, contains the following:

"Thou shalt not be a patriot, for a patriot is an international black-leg."

The Lord Chancellor, Viscount Haldane, opposed the bill, holding that by the law of England seditious and blasphemous were offences to be tried by judge and jury. It was not the law of England that everything was bound to be in accordance with Christianity, and so long as opinions were advocated in decent terms no one had a right to interfere. Anything that tended to stir up sedition and revolution was on a different footing.

"But even then," declared the Lord Chancellor, "we have to be

most cautious, because when there is any interference with the liberty of the people who are advocating opinions, there is the possibility of such people being converted into "martyrs."

The Earl of Balfour fought for the Bill. The doctrine of liberty, he said, dealt with free discussion between classes, between adults, people who had experience of life, people capable of having an opinion and expressing it. That was the liberty of speech that was the proud boast of Englishmen. The Bill had nothing to do with free discussion. It simply asked if schools, supported by whom he did not know—it had been suggested not always from English sources—should teach what was admittedly illegal and corrupt to those who had no power to protect themselves.

ALSO TEACH IMMORALITY

The Archbishop of Canterbury asserted that communist teaching was on the increase. Some of the teaching in the proletarian schools was not only anti-Christian, but vicious and immoral. He had in his possession some publications containing matter so vile as to be unquotable, including the teaching of free love in the widest and most animal sense. This was more perilous than any attack on the Christian religion.

The Archbishop thought that many parents who allowed their children to attend such schools were totally ignorant as to the teaching imparted.

The Duke of Atholl charged that the existing machinery for stamping

out the schools was not doing its work. The canker was growing, and nothing had been done by the authorities to check it, he said.

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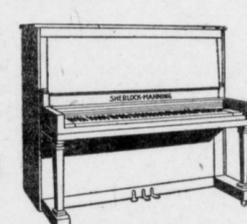
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