

that the Conference may not begin and end in mere talk and debate, but in some definite quickening and deepening of zeal and faith and love, and some definite hastening of the coming of His kingdom whose right it is to reign over Great China as over the Creation of God.



Moral Training in Citizenship in Elementary Schools.

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THE conscience of the nation is but tardily awakening to the inadequacy of its methods of education in elementary schools, in so far that they do not seem to fit youth for the struggle for existence. There is no time to lose; the nation must decide quickly whether it will reform or drift, whether it will take steps to regain its position commercially in the van of nations or starve.

Numerous and perplexing doubts must arise in a great empire, composed of many races, tongues, and creeds, as to the ruling motives which should guide it in the education of its youth; but, view the subject from whichever side we may, we ultimately can arrive at but one conclusion. The ruling motives must be identical with those which have guided the survivors of man and races in the struggle for existence, from the earliest times to the present day—namely, to excel in the chase and successfully protect their own.

For the development of a State the ruling motives must be expediency (1) to bring up its children to successfully compete with other nations in order to live; (2) to keep up such land and sea forces as will enable it to hold its own.

This motive involves the care and education of the intellect, the body, and the conscience, as follows:

1. In elementary schools the State undertakes entire charge of the education of the intellect.

2. Concerning the education of the body the State ought to undertake all that tends to fit youth in physical exercises and games, handicraft and hygiene, for the battle of life ; surgery and medicine being left to private enterprise. At present physical and manual training, though recognized as urgently necessary by the nation, is as yet most imperfectly instilled by the State.

3. Concerning the education of the conscience the State ought to undertake that portion of moral training which fits youth for good citizenship, and tends to form character and good habits ; but there is divergence of opinion as to where the dividing line separates these duties from those of the teachers of religion.

The clear dividing line between our duty to God and our duty to our neighbour marks off education which must be undertaken by parents and Churches, from that which, being common to all denominations and a necessity to the State, can be inculcated both by the State and by parents and Churches, according to their requirements, respectively.

Again, in the duty towards our neighbour, the State only should supervise that portion which deals with the duties of citizenship, drawing a line in its teaching where the "ought" of action comes in, and leaving to parents and Churches their own responsibilities in inculcating moral training according to their respective views.

High ethical principles and lofty moral character are acknowledged to be possible quite apart from Christian teaching, but "the best we know" in ethics is allowed by philosophers and Churchmen to be based on the teaching of Christ.

Every State is bound, for its own well-being and safety, to give its children some form of moral training in the schools it has established, and a Christian State must teach in its schools the best form of morality it knows, namely, that taught by Christ, without necessarily taking on itself the inculcation of Christian belief.

In the pagan world, before the Christian era, moral training

and education in the duties of citizenship were wholly apart from religion, and religion was one with the State, the chief officer being usually priest and King.

This continued until the second century, when the Christian Church, to defend itself against barbarism, forced on a separation between religion and the State, and so gave to mankind liberty of conscience ; about the same time Christian schools were established in which religion or theology was combined with moral training, unconnected, however, with the duties of citizenship.

Religion is defined as the constraining bond between the inward man and an unseen Person, and its teaching comprehends the duty of man towards God and towards his neighbour ; but the duties of citizenship which have arisen by evolution, due to the increase of knowledge and civilization, are not usually classed under the religious duties of man.

We have, then, from the second to the seventeenth centuries the Church teaching its children theology and morals after its kind, whilst the duties of citizenship (required by the State) were for the most part inculcated in the feudal castles and city guilds.

It has been recognized by Churchmen that the aspect of moral training may differ in the hands of the Church and of the State, and in the seventeenth century Bishop Cumberland sought to establish systematically the principles of moral right independent of revelation, and Bishop Warburton laid down that the State must consider religion, not in proportion to its truth, but solely with a view to its utility.

Since the fall of feudalism and consequent disuse of the city guilds, and since the break-up of the monasteries, the Churches have continued to teach theology and morals, but education in duties of citizenship has fallen into abeyance, except in the higher class of schools.

In Christian lands the Church and State are two distinct societies, with two distinct scopes and ends. The Church is a spiritual society to educate us by revealed doctrine for eternal

existence ; the State is a temporal society to protect the citizen in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and property.

A union of Church and State is to be avoided because it would force the State to punish the delinquents of the Church for heresy, and thus banish freedom of conscience ; the condition of the Church in England is not one of union, but of contract.

So long as the wheat and tares grow together in the Church of Christ there will be differences of opinion within. There is the view of Christianity and the view of the Church militant, and since the Church has split up there are the several views of the branches.

On the subject of war there have always been differences of opinion between Christianity and the Church. Amongst early Christians, in pagan times, all war was unlawful for those who had been converted. Yet, notwithstanding, many Christians did serve in the Roman army, the more readily as time went on, without being cut off.

As the Roman Empire became more and more effete, the only bulwark against the rising tide of northern barbarism was the Christian Church, now consolidating out of Christianity ; a compact society, of many races, with common interests, singleness of purpose, devotion, and enthusiasm. As the Roman government became disorganized and unnerved, priests took the place of magistrates, bishops marshalled armies and governed districts, and the Christian Church, in self-defence, saved the remnant of the Roman Empire, welding the barbarians into it. The military element continued to develop in the Church until it reached its climax during the Crusades, owing to the terror of the Turk. Thus, whilst Christianity has always viewed war with aversion, the Christian Church has learnt from experience to recognize its necessity in self-defence.

The same individual, then, may hold various views according to his standpoint. As a Christian he is averse to war, void of patriotism, looking on every man as a brother, and indifferent to the wants of the State ; as a member of a Christian Church

he recognizes that nations have their rights, and, when necessity arises, may fight for them; and, though condemning the wrong motives that lead to war, he has the aspirations of a citizen looking on the Church as his country; as a citizen of a State he considers the necessities of the State to be paramount. National sentiment and opinion must depend upon the relative strength of these views in a State.

It is to that branch of the education of the conscience which deals with the formation of character in the child and the duties of citizenship, that this paper is addressed.

In early days the bulk of mankind were illumined only by the glimmering light of natural religion, to what extent tutored by revelation we know not.

Gradually the nations, progressing in knowledge and experience, evolved their systems of the moral law and religion, running parallel in their training to that of the Hebrews, and all have contributed to the civilization of the present day.

Though the dogmas, of which moral systems are composed, have not changed, yet the powers of man have differed at different times, and there has been an evolution in our views on the duties of citizenship, due to progress in knowledge and civilization. Both morality and the standard of morality have varied in different ages and among different people. At the present day, owing to the lofty tone of the Christian religion influencing the bulk of professing Christians, there is a very high standard of morality in the civilized world; but "it is not too much to say that the mass of our populations have not at all advanced beyond the savage code of morals, and have in many cases sunk below it. A defective morality is the great blot on modern civilization, and the greatest barrier to progress."

Man possesses a will by which his actions are partly determined, and he knows that his will is free. Hence responsibility for his actions, which responsibility he knows he possesses and owes to a Supreme Being—God—and in some respects to his fellow-men. From this he arrives at his duty to God and his neighbour. He can distinguish between the quality of actions

which are free, regarding some right and some wrong, and is, therefore, a moral being. He further has a faculty called a *conscience*, which tells him intuitively, without inquiry or reasoning, that certain acts are right or wrong. The two chief instincts planted in man by God as seeds are :

Duty—to do right because it is right. Love to please our parents, teachers, God. Love without a sense of duty is a delusion. “Love is a noble tree of which duty is the trunk.”

Conscience has exerted itself in man in all ages, countries, and races. It is independent of man’s will, is not at his disposal, and cannot be corrected by him ; on the contrary, it approves or disapproves of man’s actions, and subjects him to feelings of self-condemnation when he is wrong. It has the authority to command, but it has not the power to enforce obedience. It may be mistaken, but it is the only light which man has got to enlighten him in each separate case when he has a choice of conduct. Mistaken or not, conscience must rule the life of man. Conscience has its infancy and grows up to maturity. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that it should be educated in the right way. It may be trained wrongly, and thus all his life man may be under a misconception of his duty. It requires the light of intellect and light from above.

The object, then, in educating conscience is to ensure a series of good habits, a universe of action, a character. Good men rather than good actions ; good men from whence spring good actions.

There are three classes of men who do right ; each individual man belongs more or less to each class :

1. The religious man, who, though he may be but of feeble intellect, is guided in the right way from above.

2. The man, who acts under a code of honour, or under the moral law, for duty’s sake and for love.

3. The opportunist, or worldly man, who, judging the right way to be the best policy, controls his actions and moulds his

desires until he acquires habits of acting rightly, from worldly motives.

As expediency governs the policy of the State, so also does it that of the various societies composing the Christian Churches, in their struggle for existence and extension ; but when their views conflict with that of the State, it is the expediency of the State which must be held paramount, checked as it is occasionally by Christian sentiment.

Each branch of the Church has its own conscience, and cases occur where members feel constrained to resist the law of the State and suffer the penalty rather than submit. But in such cases, if the sense of injustice be sufficiently powerful, the agitation will cause the State to reconsider its laws.

There is, however, a conscience in the State which is not founded on expediency, which the State cannot offend without danger to itself, and this is the conscience of the Church of Christ—of Christianity. Occasions may arise when Christians from all denominations will be found ready to unite together in a common cause, and the State must take this conscience into account in dealing with education. Thus the ruling motives of a Christian State are at times of emergency checked and even controlled by the conscience of Christianity. Parental love and affection is independent of the expediency of Churches.

We may assume, then, that the duties of a Christian State are to bring up its children with enlightened consciences and good characters, and to carry this out it looks to parents and Churches to do their part efficiently in religious matters, and there must be agreement in the methods for efficiency to reign.

There may be three classes of elementary schools in which the State exercises control :

1. State schools based on Christian lines, where Christianity is taught in a certain degree, as in many provided schools.
2. State secular schools, where Christianity is only taught out of school hours.
3. State-aided schools, as in our non-provided schools, where the teaching and atmosphere is denominational.

Each class of school has its advocates, and it is probable that in town districts the solution of the difficulty may lie in a compromise ; but in villages where the number of children only admit of one efficient school, the State alone can decide what class of school is most expedient.

Expediency rules the individual in private life in one direction, in public or political life in another. A Christian parent will send his own child to a foreign school where the religious training is not in keeping with his opinions, while holding rigid political views as to the dogmatic teaching of children in elementary schools ; he will send his own son to a public school, where much of the teaching is not of a religious character, while urging a consistent denominational atmosphere in elementary schools.

The impression cannot be avoided that it is political religion which bars all progress—the Churches *versus* Christianity—and that if we could only wake up the conscience of Christianity, slumbering in all Churches, and consider what is best for the children from the standpoint of Christianity and the State, we should rapidly come to a satisfactory conclusion.

By common consent moral training should not only be direct, systematic, and graduated, but also it should be given in the ordinary routine of lessons. There must, therefore, be a moral atmosphere in the school affecting all the teachers.

The teacher is the all-important factor in the school ; on his character that of the school depends.

But we have to consider, also other influences of great importance—those of parents and ministers of religion. Now the numerical proportion of ministers to school children in towns may be 1 to 500, of teachers 1 to 50, of parents 1 to 2.

It is evident, then, in considering the influence brought to bear on school children during their school days, that that of the minister, however exalted in his character and highly trained he may be, is small compared with the influence of parents and teachers.

But the influence of parents at the present day for good or

evil is an uncertain quantity, and for purposes of the State it is the teachers who must be looked to principally, the State expecting the Churches and the parents to do their part.

It is a simple matter enough to so arrange in a denominational school where children belong to one Church, but in schools (whether denominational or otherwise) where children of different Churches attend, a formidable difficulty arises owing to the political religious bias adopted in the matter.

There is a view now held by zealous partisans that, though to a certain extent moral instruction for all of us is independent of religion, yet the atmosphere in the school, both for moral and religious instruction, must be according to the religion of the child, and that the conscience clause should apply equally to both. We may judge of the extent to which party feeling will go when we enumerate the subjects of the instruction in duties of citizenship which the State now seeks to provide: "Courage; truthfulness; cleanliness of mind, body, and speech; the love of fair play; gentleness to the weaker; humanity to animals; temperance; self-denial; love to one's country; and respect for beauty in nature and art."

If, owing to denominational jealousies, the State should find it impossible to keep up schools on Christian lines, the only alternative appears to be the secular school for all those who cannot support schools at their own expense. Now we know the official reports concerning religious training in secular schools in America and the colonies, and they are not encouraging, unless systematic moral and religious training and efficient Sunday-schools are alongside.

A secular school without efficient moral training is but a hotbed for the growth of disorder and anarchy in the State.

The jealousies between the Churches on the subject of the education of youth, presenting such momentous difficulties, point to a want of faith in God's good providence. There is a morbid idea amongst many that children, in the elementary schools, must be subjected to an atmosphere of dogmatic teaching in order to grow up as God-fearing people.

Yet the same persons send their own children to public schools, where the good results, of which we are all so justly proud, are obtained by appealing to the consciences of the boys, and not merely to dogmatic teaching.

All Churches cannot get exactly the same advantages in deciding on the religious and moral training to be adopted in schools; yet there is not only no disposition in any side to give way, but there is the avowed intention of many that rather than one Church should in any way benefit, all must suffer.

If we are to obtain peace on the education question with the present conflict of views, there must be some give and take, some sacrifice; and each citizen must consider whether he should support Christianity and the State, or stand out for the demands of his particular Church, and finally adopt the counsel of despair and secular schools.

When the integrity of the State is in danger—when the school systems are eminently unsatisfactory, owing to the results of religious factions—is it a time to fritter away our energies in academic questions of abstract right and justice? The State must be permitted to do its duty in bringing up its children with good consciences and characters; and this can be done, when the now awakening conscience of Christianity comes to its aid, though it were better done if the denominational bodies would fall into line and render their active assistance.

Children are baptized into the Church of Christ, and subsequently are received into the Church of their adoption. May not a Christian State also so deal with its children, giving to them their necessary education as citizens, and granting to Churches all facilities for supplying the religious training?

