

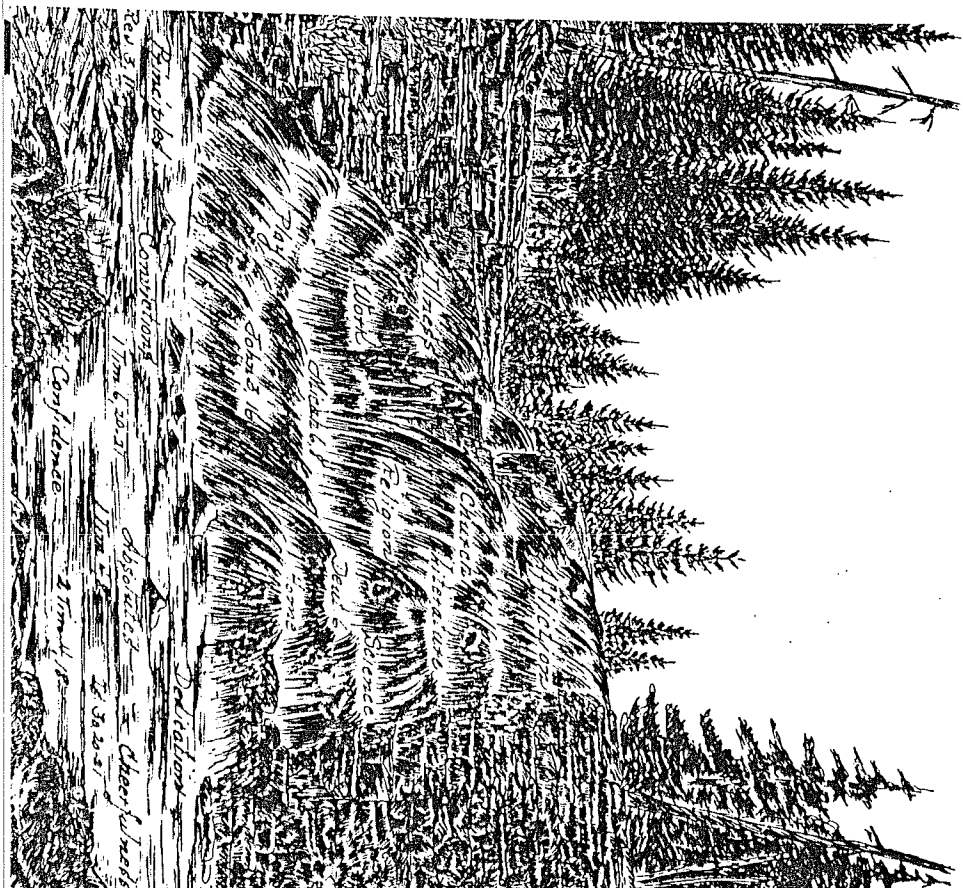
BACKGROUND

FOR

TEACHING

DISCARD

By MARTIN GAISTAD



Principles of Construction
 Association of Architects
 11th & 12th Sts.
 Philadelphia, Pa.
 1910-1911
 11th & 12th Sts.
 Philadelphia, Pa.
 1910-1911
 11th & 12th Sts.
 Philadelphia, Pa.
 1910-1911

The first implication of this topic points to the person of the teacher. No school is better than he is, nor should any be much worse. Much more is needed than a Mark Hopkins in a log schoolhouse, but with him there you have a good beginning. Yes, there was a time when men were greater than institutions; it was the day of Confucius, of Socrates, of Plato, of Aristotle, of Jesus, of Paul, of Luther. The Chinese civil service examination steeped in dead formalism, the scholasticism of the Middle Ages, and the intellectualization of Christianity came later--all with their dull tread of the pedantic, their killing of the spirit which would spring forth in a way of life.

So we would seek to regain what we can by seeking to enlarge in your minds a concept of that bigness which belongs to you, the teacher of youth. You cannot be great without background. There is so much to learn that after a lifetime of growing in this profession your main distress in the end will be, as with William Lyon Phelps, a consciousness of how far you are from the goal. Then your consolation will be that in Christ Jesus, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, "ye are complete in him." Col. 2, 10. Then you will have eternally to live, and, don't forget, to learn.

Even as the Greeks were the first among pagans to formulate an ideal and goal--a new type of man--so we Christians must be big enough in mind to comprehend what is our purpose in teaching: the birth and development of children of God who serve Him and His brethren here in time and hereafter in eternity. We must remember that eternal living is a part of the life of those whom we are helping that they might rightly and fully live.

The fullness of your experience should bear fruit for your pupils. That home you came from, those schools you attended, those times you spent in the back alley, playing with the boys on the empty lot, on the playing fields of your Etons, in literary society and y.p.s.--yes, in the cherry tree viewing to reign lands, with some teacher who inspired you to exceed the assignments, a pastor pointing you to Beulah Land, Paul constraining you in Christ to do all things--all those and many more have been the makings of you as you today live with your pupils.

"Whoever is to teach others, especially out of the Holy Scriptures, and rightly to understand this book, must first have observed and learned to know the world." Luther. (Painter: Luther on Education, 148). It is assumed that you know your God and your Savior and His Spirit that moves you in the direction of eternal life. And just as he can best lead the little ones along the way of life who has himself walked the way of God, so he can best point the way through the

The Essay

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The Author

Doctor Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, 1954--
Education, Science
Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minnesota, 1945-1954
Education, English, Psychology, Religion, Theology
University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Master of Arts, 1952; History and Philosophy of Education
Curriculum and Instruction minor
Clergyman
Northwood, Iowa, 1940-1945
Parkland, Washington, 1935-1940
Teacher in Lutheran elementary school
Princeton, Minnesota, 1932-1933; 1934-1935

present valley who knows his way also there. We were not, you know, taken out of this world, but we were prayed for that we might be kept from its evil. (Cp. John 17.)

Thus we have not been called to a life apart from this world, albeit apart from its evil. We are not to build us a pillar to get away from the world, as did Simeon Stylites, nor are we to hide away like a hermit to starve our bodies and feed the vermin. We have not been called to a life of quiet, but to a life of doing, in imitation of Jesus who "went about doing good."

Is anything so restless to live as is a healthy child? Is anyone more full of questions than a pre-school youngster? Does anyone respond more artlessly to the teachings of Jesus and the Kingdom? What have we done to kill the questions and the gift of "utterance" (1 Cor. 1, 5) regarding the things of the Spirit? Are we big enough to set children on their course, cheer them along, and then stay out of their way? Have we thought enough about our times to distinguish the sphere of values from the realm of doing, to see how they interact, and to be aware how we must distinguish them--at the same time seeing how in the Christian alone they find their true synthesis? To work with these things is the duty to which we are called as teachers in the church. Heaven forbid that we are satisfied to think little thoughts, that we are embarrassed to get caught in a conversation on topics that are heavier than the latest gossip or sports.

For the purposes of this paper the field must be limited, and we must choose certain parts of the vast background for study. Such areas as these will be found valuable: Christian weltanschauung, history of ideas, history of education, the relation of values and techniques, principles of teaching and learning, content of curriculum as it is determined by our culture, and the thinking of our times.

We shall not at this time say much specifically about the Christian view of life, although that is most basic in the whole discussion. It colors all that we have to say about other parts of our topic. Suffice it to say that we are people of the Word, in an exalted sense of that term. Exalted, we say, because many cultures and civilizations have been word-based: the pre-revolution Chinese had their Confucian Four Books and Five Classics; the Bible of the Greeks was their Homer; the Moslems have their Koran, the Christian Scientists their Science and Health and Key to the Scriptures. The Laws of Lycurgus, The Twelve Tables, The Book of Mormon, the Magna Carta, the Constitution are all words put down for a foundation. Even the Future Farmers of America have a five-paragraph Creed. "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Micah 6, 8. That this Word is basic for us is assumed in the following discussion. We would never speak otherwise than

as the oracles of God.

Our culture, however, is of the world. By common consent it is traceable largely to the Greeks. It has been said that all western philosophy is but footnotes to Plato. The intellectualizing of education is traceable to the Greeks who followed the Golden Age, and learning has been very Greek ever since. Our school subjects are according to the outline of knowledge given us by Aristotle some three hundred years before Christ.

Is there a specific Christian culture? Or do we speak more correctly when we talk of Christian use of the culture of the world? There is nothing especially Christian about one mode of living as compared with another. Is it not equally Christian to use machines as to do without them? Is it more Christian to appreciate painting and marble statuary than not to do so? Is it more God-pleasing to walk than to ride? When we stay with such obvious questions the matter seems easy. But it was not always so. Men have refused to look at airplanes because a man was not created to fly. They have refused to be healed because if they died of an illness--well, their time was up. The scalpel was long withheld because the body is a sacred creation of God. It is not secret that early scientists were adjudged in league with the devil. It has been suspected that the popes and Catholic rulers held out against Columbus and other early explorers for fear they might prove that the earth is round.

There is nothing especially Christian about inventing machines or not inventing them, using them or not using them. There is nothing more Christian about a Plymouth than a Pontiac. Nor have we heard about a Lutheran refrigerator or television set. There have been Lutheran stea mrollers, and we only hope that there won't be a "Lutheran" model out soon.

There is nothing to be despised, we learn from God through Paul, if it is used with prayer and to God's glory as well as our neighbor's welfare. It is not what goes into the body that defiles it, said Jesus, but what comes out--"whatever Miss T. eats turns into Miss T." Food is good; but misuse of it is as bad as the misuse of drink in drunkenness. Enjoy good clothes, but do not let them nurture vanity. We can enjoy our American standard of living, but not if it dries up our bowels of mercy or curdles the mild of human kindness. Jesus did not say the rich man did wrong to have riches, but He did say that, as it was, the rich man had received his good things.

Perhaps we are quite clear on these things today. But it was not always so. Nor are we sure that it will always be thus. We need to have background in history and culture to be informed and aware of what has been and what may yet be.

Men have asserted in the name of religion the divine right of kings; it would be as easy to assert the propriety of having rulers like unto the Roman emperors, for it was when the worst of them was on the throne, Nero, that God had Paul write Romans 13 on obedience to the power. We must realize that God's saints can live under theocracy, kingship, dictatorship, emperors, regents, democracies, oligarchies and whatever. Who knows how many Christians there are even under the hammer and sickle! The Scripture doctrine regarding "the power" will stand!

Cultures may differ, indeed, and yet the kingdom of God may grow and fill the earth. Men may live on blubber or bananas, decorate their bodies under the tropical sun or cover them in colder climes. Our people may bring up their children in the realities of life, or invent push-button living or trudge the human treadmills. There is nothing more essentially Christian about the one or the other. Both ways can be good, or both bad.

When men seek to ameliorate their lot, let us not in the name of Christianity oppose it. Ours is the task to understand and to evangelize. A recent writer in the American Historical Review pointed out that in the days of Queen Victoria the Christian church received great opposition in England, not so much from Darwin's Origin of Species and the higher criticisms of the Old Testament by the German rationalists, but because it had set itself against meliorism (attempts to better social and economic conditions.) This opposition seemed to be a direct continuation of the medieval church's and the papacy's desire to keep men suppressed under the powers of Rome and the princes. The church has often set itself against change wrought by invention and science--and in the name of God!

Somehow there has generally been a misunderstanding in Christendom regarding two kinds or two realms of truth. This may be chargeable as much to Christendom's mixture of theology with Greek logic and philosophy as to the humble Christian's disinterest in things of the world,--and the latter we doubt.

It is no secret that Aristotle and Christianity were married by Thomas Aquinas. In that rite Christianity was married to a certain scholastic view of life, to a certain view of reality, to a certain set of explanations of Being. It was a weltschmerz which talked about why and not about how. It talked about being and not about becoming. It viewed the world as oriented only toward the supernatural and disallowed nature. It spoke of Aristotle's Unmoved Mover and frowned upon things moved. It made the proper sphere to be reasoning, contemplation, and orienting mankind to conform to it.

This made science metaphysical, a thing of logic. Motion (which is as nearly the heart of science as we can put it in a single word) became a matter of why, not how or what is the rate of acceleration, say, of freely falling bodies. Motion, according to Aristotle, exists only because things seek places or directions that are proper to them.

The "form" of a thing decides its place and its movement toward that place. The "form" of air and fire requires them to move up; the "form" of stone makes it fall, and the nearer it rolls or sinks to the center of the earth the more fully it fulfills its appointed purpose, its divine and eternal mission. This kind of knowledge the church accepted and stamped with approval. It should not have done so.

It was further assumed that all things moved away from their contraries, fire up from the earth, a stone down from an up-position which is contrary to its nature. Also, the heavenly bodies moved in circles, so it was assumed. That was proper and necessary for them because they were heavenly, incorrupt, not needing to move away from anything contrary to them. Hence they must move in circles, the only "noble" and "perfect" way of moving to express this self-completeness. Churchmen had no right to adopt this philosophy as true.

The only reason for this information at this point is to illustrate what was the "science" that the church for centuries adopted in its adoption of Aristotle. It shows what trouble the church gets into when it speaks where God has not spoken, when it should leave it to man to study, inquire, subdue, and have his little dominion.

The Christian should remember that the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. The converse is also true, although the Savior did not say so in so many words: the children of light are in their generation wiser than the children of the world. Each have in their particular generation a special interest and motivation: they the now, we the hereafter in addition to the now--"All This and Heaven, Too."

But we are not Calvinists with a blue-print for Christian community, Christian culture, and Christian automobiles. We will make Christian use of invention and democracy. We will use the manners, arts, artifacts and gadgets in a God-pleasing way. We will be in the world, but not of it.

The last is not so easily done as said. Louder and louder the world is saying that what men once sought of God they can now provide for themselves: food, clothing, and shelter, also the beautiful, the good, and the true. "It is possible to believe in Progress as a fact without believing in it as an ethical principle, but in the catechism of the average American the one goes with the other." (Norbert Wiener: The Human Use of Human Beings, Houghton Mifflin, 1950, p. 27.) Ever since Plato virtually said to mankind, "Take hold of your lives; most of these things that distress you, you can avoid; most of the things that dominate you, you can overthrow," man has devoted himself to control of nature to make her serve all his wants, and then worship her, let her displace God! Then religion in the classical sense becomes irrelevant. It just isn't needed by a people fully satisfied with material things. "Soul, take thine ease!" God can be escorted to the edge of the city, thanked for past favors, and dismissed from the scene; from now on man can walk alone. Perhaps it is harder to be and abide a Christian today than it was in the days they were thrown to the lions.

How, then, do we explain today's "return to religion"? We find in it one of the truths of history that will not down: that our modern as well as the ancient scientific culture satisfies neither man's need for what only God can give, nor does it regard human and divine values. In this world's extremity we find our opportunity. We must understand it to make the most of our teaching.

The Chinese for centuries neglected scientific learning and material betterment because their sages taught them a greater wisdom. Surely, this was humanitarian, but it did have values. The early Greeks were not concerned about intellectual things of worldly knowledge; but they did instill the values of courage, valor, bravery, sacrifice, and respect with their Homeric tales of gods and heroes. The Latins grew strong in their respect for the gods and superiors; they had values to live by. When the Israelites had respect to righteousness and the Word of their God, they did well. When the early Christians sought to imitate Christ and emphasized their way of life in Christ they became the very leaven which saved a decadent empire from entirely falling apart.

Our times are at a crossroads in thinking. Men are terribly confused. There is danger that we become confused with them. We stand, we Christians, but only so long as we take heed lest we fall.

This will become more clear to us the more carefully we study the history of education, its philosophy, and the psychology of mankind. Some knowledge of the history of thought is essential to us who bear the heavy responsibility of teachers in the church. If the young in our hands are too childish to grasp this, we nevertheless need to know so we can teach with conviction and with purpose.

The passion of the modern world is to make man the measure in all things, but we Christians know that God limits our decisions to things that are below us. Still we are tempted to ask whether God has said; we like to find a way "to do it anyhow." From God come all good and perfect gifts, and in Him we live and move and have our being; yet modern man is striving to invent the methods and machines that shall bless him on his own. The high priest of naturalism declared that man's chief mistake was in believing that some power outside this nature around us has some interest in us (John Dewey in *Quest For Certainty*.) In his introductory address at the mid-century convocation at his school Dr. Burchard, dean of humanities at M. I. T., spoke with awe of "an approaching scientific ability to control men's thoughts with precision." No doubt Winston Churchill spoke for all of us when he commented, "I shall be very content, personally, if my task in this world is done before that happens." Yet man goes on to boast that he will end the drought, control the climate, end disease by managing the molecules, create life by manipulating the amino acids, perfect man so he will not make war, give earth a new satellite among the spheres, and fly to the moon! All of that, he soberly tells us, is but a beginning!

Yet what stands accomplished today did no less confound the faithful of an earlier day. The certainty men had one time that we would never travel safely sixty miles per hour in automobiles was perhaps as great as ours today that this conference will not one day meet on the moon!

Although man has largely conquered space, harnessed much of nature, promised push-button living in an unbelievable measure, and done nearly as he will in many ways, still it must be remembered that these marvels are all found in things below us. The moment they have implications for the irrelevancy of God and a life of the spirit their use is perverted. The situation is ever that which we have had of old: when man trusted in the abundance of the things he possessed he fell away from God and was cursed.

When the rich man tore down his barns to build greater, when he said to his soul, "Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry," God intervened to say, "Thou fool!" Now men are experiencing that God is right again. There is hardly a thought more frequently expressed in serious books, periodicals, and editorials than this: man does not live by bread alone.

This was the chain of events in the past: the Church oriented men's thinking entirely away from this world and took a stand against inquiry into nature and the control of it. The Church made a mistake as great as if it had declared that the Romans sinned against universal law when they brought water into Rome by way of aqueducts. Now our modern age with its science has made an equally great mistake by saying as did W. T. Stace of Princeton when he announced in the September 1948 *Atlantic Monthly* his discovery that God does not exist, that there is "in the universe outside man no spirituality, no regard for values, no friend in the sky." (Time, April 11, 1949, p. 27f.)

The development has been more subtle. Science has everywhere substituted natural explanations of phenomena for the supernatural causes in which the age of faith believed. With the discovery of natural causes men lost interest in the supernatural.

This belief that all events are due to natural causes, and that God has nothing to do with them--whether we acknowledge it or not, and even if with our lips we deny it--is simply a part of what is taken for granted by the modern mind. It is a part of our imaginative world-picture, and is a heritage which we owe to seventeenth century science. We are accustomed to say that while the medieval period was an age of faith, our time is not. No doubt ninety-five per cent of the people say they believe in God. But this is not an evidence of religion. Such a belief is either a mere intellectual abstraction, inoperative in our behavior, or it is a conventional and barren verbal formula which people out of habit keep repeating because they are too unthinking or too lazy to change their habits. A God who "exists" but does nothing in the world, who in no way affects the outcome of events, is simply a God who does not matter. Of course most people do not say things like this, do not even think them in their minds. But this modern

world-picture, consciously envisaged only by a few intellectuals, is nevertheless the unconscious background of modern life. And we see now that when we speak of Newtonian science as having undermined or even destroyed belief in God, it is not meant that it has resulted in people saying "there is no God," but in draining of all life out of the assertion that there is. --W. T. Stace: Religion And The Modern Mind (Lippincott, 1952), p. 88f.

Our teaching is being done today, then, among people in whose minds nature is explained as acting according to certain laws of its own and with no reference to God. The modern world is naturalistic and materialistic.

We should understand that just as the Church spoke out of turn when it adopted a certain philosophy in the Middle Ages and closed the door to counting, measuring, and weighing things created, so also science has spoken out of turn to the hearts of men when it has presumed to make unnecessary the hand of God.

Today burmoll fills the minds of men. Some years ago men were sure that God was dead. They would surely with their science raise a new civilization over the ruins of the old. Evolution assured the world that it would soon surmount its fears if only the ball and chain of faith were struck from man's feet. We need not recite the events of the last half-century to reveal the dismay and the fear that fills men's hearts. But we do want to document the actuality of the storm that whirls in modern man's thinking these days when man has become the measure in all things.

In popular magazines we often read editorials like this:

If, in this country, we have indulged in one great and fundamental error, it is to confuse the things of civilization and the spirit with the material products of our mechanical age.

Too many of us look upon automobiles and plumbing as civilization, which they are not, save insofar as they give us more time for the things of the spirit and the mind.

The vast mechanical advances of our times are not to be underestimated, but once they seem to be all-important--as they do in all Marxist countries and as they sometimes do in this country--civilization itself begins to wither and standards of ethics and honest behavior to suffer corruption.

A hermit living in a cave can possibly be far more civilized than a man with three cars in the garage and a bathroom for every bedroom. Honor, decency, a sense of true values, real Christian behavior--these things are not to be manufactured on the assembly line.

Should our civilization come to ruin, it will be principally because of the confusion of values which manifests itself today in the

two most powerful or potentially nations of the world. Mechanization of life may bring convenience, but it has little to do with the eternal mysterious essence of Man, the whole and only excuse for his existence. --Louis Bromfield: "What Matters Most," This Week.

"Those people who are not governed by God will be ruled by tyrants." --William Penn.

The Republic was founded and preserved by men and women who frankly acknowledged themselves dependent on God. That natural assumption inspired every individual and nation as a whole to efforts for human betterment hitherto unknown in the history of man. Vitamins and leisure-time activities and the profit system are all very well, but they alone are not worth dying for.

The great difference between us and the Communist system is and must be the difference between spiritual power and materialistic cynicism. Our's is a nation founded on belief in God and if we forget that, we lose the secret of freedom. --Robert Hillier: "The Great Divide," This Week."

Democracy, too, and the democratic process, is an invention of man as fully as is the machinery with which he seeks to save himself from the sweat of his brow. The solution of problems by man's own finding out often leads to a departure from absolutes of right and wrong, and this has been noted again and again by men who think. They speak of it frequently in current literature:

With us the danger lies not in our political institutions, but in our temptation to idolize them just because they work so well. American jurisprudence, which once acknowledged the natural law as above the Constitution, has latterly tended to ignore any such check on it. The "idolatry of the democratic process" is as dangerous as any other idolatry, and in the light of our own meaningful history, Americans have less excuse for it than most....

Jesus' kingdom was not of that world, nor is it of this; his kingdom is still "within you," as it was within the living hearts he addressed alive.....

Christians are not natural rulers of the world. They are what St. Paul told them to be--the leaven in the lump. Christian love is not a substitute for the old Roman political virtues of justice, courage, temperance and prudence. But it can heighten and transform them; as Augustine said, all virtues are nobler when their object is the love of God. --Editorial, Life, Dec. 27, 1954.

With keen insight the editor wrote again:

Marxism is a result of our disintegration, not a cause. Once the West had a moral community; it agreed on a few basic principles. We agreed that men were equal before the law, that each individual had infinite worth in the sight of God, that the disposition of human energies might be umpired by the state but not

forced into state-dictated patterns. We believed that our basic rights derived from "the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God," to quote the Declaration of Independence, and not from legislative majorities which might or might not apprehend the laws of nature correctly. We believed, finally, that any state which presumed to usurp the function of "Nature's God" was not worthy of the allegiance of its citizens.

... If civil law is merely what those in power choose to impose how are we to judge the justice of any given constitution or statute? The very idea of justice presumes that even lawmakers must bow to some authority that is superior to constitutions.

Marxism believes in "historical materialism"; the West theoretically believes in a spiritual truth behind the material circumstances of history. The historical materialist either bows to force or imposes it; the believer in spiritual truth may use force, but he seeks to channel it within the boundaries set by a study of justice. It is when the believer in spiritual truth decides that he cannot know or establish justice that the monstrous state takes over. The West was approaching that point long before Lenin or Hitler appeared on the scene. -- Editorial, Life.

The failure of mankind to arrive at satisfying solutions without reference to a built-in truth in the universe is pointed up in Time's review of Walter Lippmann's The Public Philosophy (Atlantic--Title, Brown), recently published:

Part of The Public Philosophy is standard Walter Lippmann... But the basic tone... is new. In his day Lippmann has been a champion of the New Deal's invented and chosen theories, a writer admittedly guided often by "hastily improvised generalizations." Never before has he shown such firm and specific regard for the natural law and for basic religious principle. This emphasis is the key value of Lippmann's important book. He concludes: "Political ideas acquire operative force in human affairs when... they bind men's consciences. Then they possess, as the Confucian doctrine has it, 'the mandate of heaven.' In the crisis within the Western society, there is at issue now the mandate of heaven."

The executives in democratic governments... Lippmann says.... owe their primary allegiance to the law and to the office, not to the electorate.... the people of democratic countries have forgotten that the natural law is the basis of democracy, have descended into agnosticism and neutralism.

Ultimately, says Lippmann, politics are based on philosophy and theology. -- Time, February 28, 1955.

When General of the Armies Douglas MacArthur received the surrender of the Japanese aboard the SS Missouri, you will remember, he declared that the problems of the world are theological.

In his book, Protestant-Catholic-Jew (Doubleday, 1955), Will

Herberg quotes President Eisenhower as saying, "Our form of government has no sense unless it is founded in a deeply felt religious faith, and I don't care what it is." We as Christians naturally disagree with the indifference to religions, but we agree that here again is pointed up the necessity of basic truth to practical government.

The Bell Telephone Company of Pennsylvania has shown that it is serious in wanting employees who not only can do things but also know truth. It got the University of Pennsylvania to set up an Institute of Humanistic Studies for Executives. Of course, humanistic studies are an insufficient guide to truth, but they do point in a right direction. One of the Bell graduates said, "I used to think that there was nothing in life besides earning money and looking forward to a Cadillac. Now I ask myself what is right, rather than what should I do and what am I expected to do." (See Time, February 28, 1955, p. 42.)

"Man Needs More Than Open Mind" is the heading of a column by Sydney J. Harris, Chicago:

"The purpose of an open mind," Chesterton once said, "like that of an open mouth, is to close it on something solid." Open-mindedness is not an end, but a means; skepticism is not a goal in itself, but an attitude to be used while exploring for truth.

This does not mean that anybody has the exclusive possession of truth; but it does mean that there must be a common standard to which all men must pay respect, if humanity is to survive and settle its differences without continual conflict.

It is not enough to be "tolerant" or "liberal" about other men's opinions; for if their opinions are false, they can wreck the social order. It is our duty not merely to tolerate disagreements, but to discover a central core of agreement which we can proclaim to be true and good for all men everywhere, and not only for ourselves. -- Des Moines Register, August 1, 1954.

Perhaps you are weary of quotations from those who express the thinking of our time in the popular press, which, we trust, many read even in this day of television. It should surely be plain that we are dealing with two spheres of truth, the one pertaining to things below us, where even God sanctions our attempts to subdue and have dominion. People can be happy and blessed, now and in eternity, so surely as they keep straight and in their proper relationships these areas of truth to which Luther so clearly pointed. But it is in the confusion of these two things that the turmoil of the world finds its origin. To be worthy of our position as teachers we must have the background of a clear understanding of these matters. Lack of such understanding may explain the situation visitors to our schools have at various times pointed out: there seems to be little mention of the religious view after the religion lesson is over; there is little to know that a school is Lutheran except that the congregation pays

for it; there is not sufficient evidence that our Lutherans are distinctly Christian. We can explain this deficit only in terms of weakness in teacher background. Hence, this effort to shore up that weak spot. The urgent need that something be done is surely apparent to anyone who will see. But before we turn to a discussion of what is being done in our nation to meet the need we would like to have you hear a most trenchant statement of the situation by atomic energy commissioner Thomas E. Murray, who has put it right before us in Better Homes and Gardens:

I believe that God meant us to find the atom. Admittedly, we are wrestling with the greatest alteration in man's relation with Nature since the upheaval at the time of the Garden of Eden. But his fundamental relation with God has not changed one whit. The same trial that tested the first man in Eden and every man since, challenges us in the atomic problem. It is the exercise of choice, the dangerous freedom to use God-given power for good or ill. I do not mean for a moment that science is wrong, but only man's worship of it. Surely, a part of our duty, the effect of the primal urge implanted by our creator, is to discover more and more of the world we live in. But science can give man mastery only over matter. It never reaches ultimates.

I greatly fear one thing. If men will not clothe the bare framework of science with the warm garments of true humanism, they will end up by making machines their god and mathematics their only dogma. The rising paganism of the western world will make our civilization cold as interstellar spaces, ruthless as the atoms which smash each other.

Against our fear, I oppose a great hope. The physical discoveries, which have shaken the spiritual faith of some men, are also shaking the philosophic foundations of materialism. I have noticed a new, extremely encouraging disposition on the part of some leading nonreligious scientists. They are beginning to acknowledge that the concept of divine creation should no longer be dogmatically excluded from rational speculation about the origin of the universe. To my mind, there are today startling possibilities for a religious break-through into the secular mind. The time is ripening for a marriage of religion and science. --Time, April 11, 1955; p. 28.

This break-through into the secular mind is what worries the pragmatist, the naturalistic philosopher, the experimentalist educator, and the modernistic thinkers in general who thought that with Karl Marx, John Dewey, Charles Darwin, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. mankind has abandoned the quest for certainty. It is not exaggeration to say that we are at a turning point in history. Boyd H. Bode, educator and Kappa Kelta Pi lecturer in 1937, wrote in the

October 17, 1949 issue of the New Republic in honor of John Dewey's 90th birthday: "Either democracy has a morality of its own, or we must return to a type of educational control which we thought we had left behind." (Page 17.) Miles E. Cary, professor of philosophy of education at the University of Minnesota, has written and spoken frequently in defense of the theme that spiritual values flow from experimentalism in education and in democracy. In 1951 the National Education Association published its booklet on Moral and Spiritual Values in the Public Schools.

Because the secularization of education in America has born its bitter and palpable fruit, people are rather frantic for the return of religion or at least of spiritual values into the education of the young. Numerous best sellers among the books have dealt with the religious theme of late. Popular periodicals have been generous in the space they have devoted to religious articles. Note also the books of Norman Vincent Peale and of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. Broadly speaking, we can say that the people have found that bread alone is an insufficient diet in the world's schools.

The result is a new American religion. This is a common-denominator religion, born of the school's teaching about religion, but not of any specific religion. Its spiritual values are derived from democratic living together, not from any authoritarian God above. Its reactions are those of man's sense of fairness, not God's revelations. It derives its motivation from the law as expressed in the golden rule. It advocates the value of speaking with the man upstairs. It calls in local clergymen seriatim for prayers and benedictions on various exercises and ceremonies. Its main doctrine is the impriety of any criticism of any religion or denomination. Its one requirement is that all take part.

Such is the new American religion. It thrives because the American climate does not now countenance the professional unbelievers like Robert Ingersoll and Clarence Darrow. Today it is fashionable to be religious because the values of the secular world and of the colorless Christianity of our times are the same: have respect for the beautiful, the good, and the true. The articles of modern man's creed, writes Frederick A. Voigt in England's magazine The Month, are:

Religion without God; Christianity without Christ; Christ without Antichrist; Heaven without Hell; works without faith; a God of Love but not of Wrath; a Church that can bless but cannot curse.

We believe that God, almighty and incarnate, is but a benevolent Spirit; that Satan does not exist; that Christ was the author of an ethical code, but not the Godhead crucified. We profess to believe that He existed, for agnosticism is no longer the fashion. We believe that the Gospels must conform with our time and not our time with the Gospels. --Time, May 15, 1950.

Few have so thoroughly scored the new religion as has the Rev. Liston Pope, dean of Yale Divinity School:

First of all there are the popular skits about wholesome families, presumably model Christian families; some of them are the best argument for celibacy advanced since the Middle Ages. I would never have believed that anything could be stickier than some of the soap operas, but religion has outdone even Lever Brothers. The difficult art of Christian family life is reduced to little moralisms and pleasanties, and to the cheerful conclusion that it pays in the end... Religion is introduced as a fragment of ritual, or a moralistic cliché, or an offstage voice quoting Scripture in a mellifluous voice....

For example, "brotherhood" is lifted out of relation to God's Fatherhood, which is seldom mentioned... and mere brotherhood is offered in the name of Christianity as a nostrum to keep America strong.... Let us have have brotherhood, but not by all means. --Time, March 14, 1955

The wheel has gone full circle. For centuries the Church would have nothing to do with science: not that it needs to, but it could have let men work at the dominion over nature that God allowed. The Church thus appeared as an enemy of progress, for to the unthinking mind new inventions and new gadgets are sheer progress.

Next came the secular age, the age of man's self-sufficiency (so he thought). How did he do in the managing of his own affairs? According to Liston Pope, dean of the Yale Divinity School:

At mid-century (1950) man is a creature pathetically unsure of himself. A sober appraisal of the last fifty years reveals extraordinary changes but leaves in doubt the question of net progress. Mars has reigned supreme in the exterior world; Freud has become the high priest of the realm within. The first half of the century has been an era of conflict and war to a degree never matched in history.

No comfort is derived from a glance toward the future. Except in those Communist circles where a mystical faith in the future still prevails officially, most men appear to be largely without hope. This is the age of anxiety--of guilt from the past and apprehension about the future. As compared with our grandfathers we have less faith and a greater sense of futility; less purpose but mounting frustrations.

Fifty years ago the new century was greeted with enthusiasm. Economic development was breaking all records, despite occasional depressions. Political reform was in the air; democratic forces had all but routed despotic governments.... The editor of one religious journal was so optimistic in 1901 that he renamed his periodical The Christian Century. This was to be it....

At middle age the twentieth century is prone to discard the

heritage of ideals bequeathed by its predecessor. The cult of faith in progress has virtually disappeared. The clay feet of Science the Savior have been exposed, and there is great anxiety that science may prove to be the Destroyer.....

It is ironic that television, capable of exhibiting men to each other across great distances, has become widely available just at the moment when man is looking for a hiding place.

In short, man appears to be approximately the same self-serving creature he has always been. If anything, his moral reliability and sensitivity have declined in the last five decades and his spiritual vision has dimmed. Having largely discarded faith in a deity before whom he would know his sins and his smallness he no longer knows how lost he is.

There is not likely to be a firm basis for renewed hope on the earth, however, until man confesses that his problem is ultimately not that of conquest of his environment. --Saturday Review of Literature, Feb. 10, 1951, p. 7.

It is five years since that was written. In those five years we have seen the rise of the secular American religion which has been the answer of our American people to the barrenness of science un-informed by light and truth and salvation from the realm of absolutes where God presides. Understand, now, that it is a religion of man's own invention; man has made himself gods in his own image.

The clear thinking of Bible-based Christianity is the only answer. Instead of allowing one realm to interiere with the other, to act as though the other has no right to exist, each must know its sphere: science and invention must speak only in the realm below us, and theology with its absolutes must speak only about God's revealed truth and thus be the guide to the use of all things below us. "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Titus 1, 15 f.

Thus we have tried to outline what we have found to be one of the most striking lessons in the history of education. To assume that we Christians have learned that lesson and are acting according to it would be assuming pretty much. It is unwise to say much in the Church that we have not first said to ourselves. Perhaps you have felt that the point of this essay thus far has been aimed at others; you are mistaken, it is directed toward our deceitful hearts.

Let us now turn to our own practice and see how we measure up. Has our spiritual insight and our ready obedience always been so great that it could be told abroad? Is not our sluggishness a cause for daily repentance? Have we been quick to use all our goods for the glory of God and the welfare of our neighbor?--and here we remember the fact that God has given us all things richly to enjoy. Cp. 1 Tim. 6, 17.

In matters of education, have we been quick to distinguish between matters of method and matters of principle, or have we held out at times against a new method in the name of principle, when the matter of principle was not in question at all? A solid old Christian once refused to look at the first airplane that flew overhead in the name of the principle that man was not created to fly overhead. The scalpel was long withheld from the human body in the name of the Scripture truth that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. It is no secret that early chemists were written off (if not burned) as in league with the devil. Has every Lutheran school always been supported because the realm of eternal truths is to spread its guiding and protecting wings over the realms of the children's earthly activity, or has it sometimes been because it was the best way to preserve foreign language and customs and to prevent too much Yankee-fying? Men have today opposed the invention of atomics as a direct assault upon the secret realms of God; they have forgotten momentarily, you see, that all things are ours to profit withal, to use a right for the welfare of mankind. We have heard objective tests condemned in the name of principle. Men have said that it is wrong to have certain activities (not in themselves sinful) in the school because they belong in the home, although there is no Scripture command on their location. A city we lived in one time had major convulsions some years ago when a school administrator introduced domestic science and arts in the high school. The criticisms of the new education and of progressive education and their mentor, John Dewey, have too often fallen on the head of methods and things, whereas they should have been aimed at the naturalistic philosophy which makes democratic process the determiner of right and wrong. We must be critical of the world, but for the right things. We do not want to be obscurantists. Moses was not less a child of God because he was skilled in all the knowledge and wisdom of the Egyptians. It was not his wisdom in things of the world that got Solomon into trouble. The problem always is to keep clear the distinction between the realm above us and the realm below us, and always to use the lower according to the guidance of the higher.

It is not an easy matter, of course. Therefore we must work at it. It no doubt would have been hard for Abraham to understand our little single-shot 22 caliber rifle could we have handed it to him across the centuries. But God does not subject us to such strains; Jesus only asked the disciples to remain in the world, putting no restriction on their life in it except that they be kept from its evil--using it but not abusing it. The Gospel can thrive in any era; it is robust enough to ride with us in our jet age. There is no special virtue connected with a Christian's being behind the times. But since his conversation is in heaven and since he has motivations that the world knows not of he must exert himself in the world where God has placed him. He must serve double duty, even as a Christian is a citizen of two kingdoms; but God has not called us to coast into the Kingdom; we fight a good fight in faith.⁹

A little thought will convince us that times change and we cannot just sit back and denounce the change. We are interested in this chiefly as it has an impact upon our work of education. It is not long ago that children got the bulk of their education in the actual world of adult activity. That they still do so among the Eskimos is the secret of why the Eskimo children have been recently called the best behaved children in the world today. Not many decades ago the children of America had an active part in building the homes of America, contributing to the economic welfare of the home, and learning responsibility from the necessity of doing daily duties. If these chores were not done, someone has said, "the pigs would squeal on you and the calves would bawl you out." Boys and girls joined in the birth process and the death-watch of both animals and human beings. They learned those things naturally. They tilled the soil and tended the animals, slaughtered and processed the food, tended the lamps and made sure that there was kindling and fuel indoors for mother lest all of them be cold. It was hard work, and we are by no means advocating a return to the pre-machine way of living, but it was a complex training. The point is: in simple days people got a complex education. And when the home was also Christian it is obvious that fine people with character and ability were developed.

Bright as we may be in many ways today, and complex as our society has become, are we not ignorant on many vital subjects? Are there not many things that simply cannot be learned as well by hearsay and from books as from participation in their doing? Don't we sometimes learn the subject but not the object?

But what of many children today, especially those in our great cities? Are they not the children of a "spiritual proletariat," crowded together and aimlessly drifting? These are the children who are indeed dispossessed for they help to grow no food; they rarely care for pets; their recreation is predominantly passive--through movies and radio; they have no real work experience even in adolescence; they are little concerned about political affairs; they remain shut away from the mysterious processes of birth and death. Whether they exist in squalid tenements or reside in luxurious apartments, their life-long separation from many elementary human experiences is precisely the same. Mistaking "creativity" for happiness, street address for success, and "getting by" for true achievement, they live their lives on the periphery of basic human experience rather than at its heart.--Edward G. Olsen: School and Community, (Prentice-Hall, 1945) p. 5.

In our complex age children tend to get a simple education. Child labor laws now forbid children to go with their elders to their jobs, and if they go along the danger factor among the machines would be prohibitive; as if this were not enough, the efficiency experts would shoo them out for cutting down production with their curiosity and questions. Even around the house there is but little to do beyond

dishes and dusting, and there is also marvelous machinery for that; but no fuel to prepare and no ashes to go out; no chickens to kill and no meat to can--only can openers to whirl, complete meals to be lifted out of the freezer, buttons to push, and the bills to pay. We just set the thermostat once a year (or is it just once when we move into the house?), and soon, they tell us, the lights will be turned on by electric eyes. Few know how to bake bread, and those who know don't. Then, too, when the gadgets go wrong we must call in experts to make the repairs. Without further laboring the point, the point is that in our complex times we are simpletons with respect to the processes by which people live. Why learn to do very much, for other people do things for us; we just pay them. Why learn any complicated arithmetic, for machinery calculates much faster and more accurately than we do.

The only disadvantage is that in our culture it is hard to become educated. The painful part of it is that children and also many adults have much less to do that is educative and conducive to character building--and much more time to do it in. Is it then reasonable that education should follow exactly the same methods today as those that great-grandfather enjoyed? We say enjoyed, and deliberately, for in those days children got their real learnings in the workaday world. They were glad to gain simple literacy through intensive drill, and their school effectively transmitted some of the social and literary heritage through memorization and classic book-learning.

How are we doing with our adjustment to changed conditions? Is it not obvious that many things which children before learned at home or in the community should now be taught them in the schools by means of activities furnished by the schools? Luther urged that boys should go to school an hour or two per day and spend the rest of the time with the adults in their work. Such a mode of upbringing in our culture is impossible, for reasons pointed out above.

In view of this situation it is difficult to understand many of the criticisms of the schools that we hear these days, many of which are made in the name of earlier culture and even of Christianity. The parallel between this and the earlier oppositions of the church to things in the world's culture ought to be obvious. Too many in the church today talk about the world's schools as defective in their methods and in their activities and blame them for not doing things the way they used to be done. Let us level our criticisms against the naturalism that prevails, and at the doctrine of the perfectibility of man through democratic processes, and at the tendency to develop a new American religion based on good-fellowship and an untrue idea of the brotherhood of man. For example, let our comments and

criticisms of the Boy Scout movement be made with a full appreciation of the need boys have for activities and experiences that are involved; and let our resistance to the paganism of the false religion involved continue to the bitter end; we oppose the idolatry.

Let us think on these things. They are not matters of common conversation, but they are vital to a sufficient background of understanding for our purposeful and effective teaching. They give us a sense of direction. They give us vision. They clarify our thinking. They give a certain competence that is necessary in those who have in their hands the treasure of the earth, the children of today and the citizens of church and state tomorrow.