Religious Education: The official journal of the Religious Education Association

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/urea20>

THE CHURCH SCHOOL

Ernest DeWitt Burton D.D.^a

^a Professor The University of Chicago , Chicago, Ill.

Published online: 10 Jul 2006.

To cite this article: Ernest DeWitt Burton D.D. (1910) THE CHURCH SCHOOL, Religious Education: The official journal of the Religious Education Association, 5:2, 145-150, DOI: [10.1080/0034408100050210](https://doi.org/10.1080/0034408100050210)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0034408100050210>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

a month, a lecture on the lessons for the next four weeks, should prepare carefully for the class-work, not only by the use of the regular text-books but of other helps provided by the school, should regard the duties of the position to extend beyond the class-room, and, finally, should forfeit one dollar for each absence from the class, for whatever reason, the amount thus forfeited going to the substitute teacher who took the class. This rigid agreement, it is interesting to note, the teachers were not only willing but eager to sign.

As a result of these efforts, the church is more ready, today, to vote support for the Sunday school than for any other cause; the school is supplied with every appliance it can use; the enrollment steadily grows, and the attendance averages 90 per cent of the membership; parents testify that their children are studying their lessons as never before; at least half the teachers employed have had professional training, and as vacancies occur it is now possible to fill these with trained workers; and the pastor finds under his hand a school of religious education exceeding in firmness and efficiency his fondest dreams.

THE CHURCH SCHOOL.

CO-ORDINATION OF EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

ERNEST DEWITT BURTON, D.D.,
Professor The University of Chicago, Chicago, Ill.

Education is an inevitable product and agency of Christianity. Wherever Christianity goes education follows. Even when a narrow definition of the function of the Christian missionary has given rise to an anti-educational movement, education has soon found its way back into the activities of the church as an indispensable instrument of its work. This indispensableness of education to the work which Christianity aims to achieve was never more clearly recognized than today. The tendency is to bring the work of the church more and more under the category of education and to apply to it the principles of education. This fact demands in turn an effective educational organization and a rational coördination of all the educational agencies of the church, and this both in respect to the local congregation, and the larger ecclesiastical groups, city, state, and national.

AGENCIES IN THE CHURCH.

It will be well to begin by considering what agencies now exist, though an exhaustive list may be impracticable. First of all we must name, as the only organization in the church that bears a distinctly education name, the Sunday school. Coördinate with this and, in most cases, of more educational influence on all above the age of childhood are the services of worship, under which term we include the Sunday preaching services and the mid-week prayer meetings. Third in importance, perhaps, are the Young People's Societies under various denominational names. And after these follow women's missionary and benevolent organizations, men's clubs, boys' clubs and girls' clubs under many names and with diverse special aims.

If the right of any of these to stand in the list of educational agencies be questioned, it must be remembered that whatever aims at the storing or training of the mind, the due development of emotion, and the discipline of the will, whatever seeks to create right habits of thinking, feeling, willing, doing, belongs under the head of education. From education we may exclude efforts simply to stir the feelings without reference to the production of a right habit of emotion or merely to give pleasure or pain without reference to any abiding results in the character of the giver or receiver, or to move to action simply for the sake of the external result of the action and with no consideration of an abiding effect on the actor. But when we have eliminated what falls under these categories, it is evident that there remains under the category of education a large part of the work of the church.

Now it requires no extended argument to prove that in most churches, the various agencies which are either chiefly educational in their purposes or which involve an educational element are very imperfectly coördinated. They have established themselves in the church one after another to meet a felt need, often without distinct recognition of their educational character and usually without definite effort to relate them to the existing educational agencies.

But it is also too evident to require argument that there is more or less loss of effectiveness in this lack of coördination. With two or three agencies working for the same end, there is duplication of effort and waste of energy. With no clear definition of the precise field to be covered either in respect to classes of persons or activities of the soul, there is danger that some portion of the task shall escape attention.

FIELD TO BE COVERED.

In the suggestions that I shall now venture to offer along these lines, I shall avail myself of the studies of the subject recently made by a committee of my own denomination of which I am a member. While I assume full responsibility for the tentative suggestions which I offer, I am in fact largely indebted for them to my colleagues on the committee.

1. It must be recognized that religious education, like education in general, must be adapted to the age, and to some extent to the sex of those who are to be educated; and that the division into periods from an educational point of view must be made at the points indicated by a sound psychology. Proceeding thus, we shall find it necessary, it is believed, to divide all those for whose education the church is concerned into ten principal classes:

1. Infants, under three years old.
2. Children of kindergarten age, 3-6.
3. Children from 6-9 years old.
4. Boys and girls from 9-13.
5. Girls from 13 to 18.
6. Boys from 13 to 18.
7. Young women from 18 to 25.
8. Young men from 18 to 25.
9. Adult women.
10. Adult men.

AIMS IN THE CHURCH.

Fully recognizing the unity of the human personality, it is not less necessary that we recognize the diversity of human activities, and that education concerns itself with the whole personality. The local church does not indeed assume responsibility for every type and phase of education. It must leave some things to the home, some to the public schools, some to the college and technical school. But it is a matter of importance to the church that its own activities shall be so related to those of the home, the public school, etc., that no important area is left uncultivated, and it is especially concerned that in its own special field of religious education, all phases of the pupil's life are called forth. Thus, to adopt a convenient form of expression, the education of the church must cover the field of knowledge, of emotion, and of action, not as separate, fenced-off territories but as mutually and intimately related. If education was ever defined simply as acquisition of knowledge, that definition must now

certainly be abandoned. If emotion was ever thought of as something with which the educator had nothing to do, except perhaps to frown upon and suppress, this attitude can no longer be maintained. If action was once excluded from education except as a possible by-product, that foolish motion must give place to the perception that action is an integral element in every educational process and that especially in religious and moral education it enters as a necessary sequel to knowledge, a necessary expression of emotion, and as itself a cause of knowledge and character.

3. In the third place, the church must take account of the world in which the pupil lives and is to live, and must select the material, and the specific methods of education with reference to the pupil's world. If we have thought of religious education as simply the teaching of the Bible this competition must give place to a broader and juster one. The end of religious education is not knowledge of the Bible, but fullness and goodness of life. The Bible is only a means; and not the only means possible or necessary to be employed. Along with it should be placed the study of nature; the study of the past history of the church, and the present organization and activities of the church; the biography of the great men of the church and the history and present status of Christian missions; a survey of modern society, and the opportunities it affords for social service; and a formulation of the fundamental elements of Christian teaching. Into the question of the adaptation of each of these to the several groups enumerated above, I shall not take time to enter in detail. That which is chiefly to be insisted upon at this point is that the problem of adjustment of the subject matter of education to the several classes of students calls for careful study, and that it must be controlled not by *a priori* judgment as to the value of this or that study, but by its capacity to fit the pupil for life.

A UNIFYING ORGANIZATION.

4. We come then at length to the question of the organization which shall conduct this work. And here let me first of all suggest the wisdom, if not the necessity, that there be in every church of any size a committee or Board of Religious Education which shall have general oversight of all the educational activities of the church. Such a committee should have upon it representatives of every agency carrying on educational work in the church. It should make a thorough study of the whole problem both in those aspects which belong to every church because they pertain to human nature as such and in

those which are local and temporal. It should point out to each educational body in the church its proper aim and specific field, and in case of necessity recommend the consolidation of existing agencies, the addition of new ones, or even the discontinuance of those which have no proper function.

The recommendation of such a committee would doubtless vary greatly in different cases. Yet relying again on the wisdom of my colleagues in the committee to which I have referred above I venture to offer any such committee a few suggestions for their consideration.

a. It is suggested that all the educational functions of the church not covered by the services of worship be organized under, and as parts of the CHURCH SCHOOL. This would not be simply the Sunday school, but while including its functions would be of much larger scope. Its activities would not be confined to Sunday, nor limited to any class in the church, nor to instruction in the Bible, but deal with all phases of religious education.

b. For children under six years of age, the home must be the chief educational agency. So far as the church enters into the education of the child of this age, it is through the kindergarten.

c. For children between the ages of six and thirteen all the educational work of the church should be done through the church school. Education as always, but especially at this age, should concern itself with all three general phases of education: knowledge, emotion, and action, care being taken that emotion does not generate into mere imitation, and that adequate opportunity be provided for expressional activities. With a view to this end and to better co-ordination, Junior societies and girls' and boys' clubs should be continued, but as a part of the Church school. In view of the difficulty of providing a service of worship adapted both to adults and children under thirteen, provision would be made in connection with the school for a service of worship adapted to pupils of this age, and such connection established between this and the general service of worship that at the proper age the pupils will pass into the latter.

d. For the periods between thirteen and twenty-five the two educational agencies of the church should be the services of worship and the school. The latter organization should accordingly conduct classes for instruction in all fields of religious knowledge, and also clubs and groups for training in activity. All Young People's societies within the church should become parts of the school. Young People's organizations in which the two sexes meet belong to the latter half of this period, viz.: from eighteen to twenty-five.

e. For the period above twenty-five years the educational work of the church should, as in the preceding period, be conducted through the service of worship and the school; but with this difference: that Men's clubs and Adult Women's organizations, having educational features, would co-ordinate their educational work with that of the church school, registering their classes, e. g., in the school, and adjusting their work to that of the school, but not necessarily as organizations being a part of the school.

It will perhaps occur to some that under such a plan as this the local church would spend all its energies upon its own education and have none left for aggressive service of the community at large. Precisely the opposite ought to be the result. If the work of education is effectively organized it will be conducted with economy of energy; if with right ideals it will be an education for service and cultivation of efficiency in service.

HYGIENE IN SUNDAY SCHOOLS

WHAT EXTRA BIBLICAL INSTRUCTION CAN BE GIVEN AS A PART OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION?

GEORGE J. FISHER, M.D.,

Secretary Physical Department International Y. M. C. A., New York.

There is, in this day, an increasing appreciation of the importance of considering the individual as a human mechanism. A mechanism subject to certain chemical and physical laws. The efficiency of this physical mechanism determines the character and quality of the mental efficiency of the individual in large measure and also has a strong influence upon his spiritual efficiency. Man's body may be likened to a heat creating plant in which temperature is created and distributed throughout the organism supplying each cell, under normal conditions, with just the degree of heat for it to perform its function properly. It is not fully appreciated that a rise of a single degree in the bodily temperature may unfit the individual for the duties of the day, yea more, may spell moral defeat for him in the ethical issues which may confront him. To be efficient the individual must have an efficient physical mechanism.

Again the human body may be likened to a power plant in which power is generated and released over a thousand wires giving to