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which ought to be available for many who go to the field because their husbands are going. To give them efficiency as well as their husbands is to multiply the values of the mission family by at least four times.

It is absolutely essential that in offering these courses the standards be kept at a type of thoroughness and competency which equals that of a first class college. It is perfectly possible to deal with the students who normally come to the Training School in this way. It can never be achieved, however, so long as the major portion of a faculty do not give their full time to the school or, at least, are not paid at a rate which commands first-rate service. To have a faculty, largely permanent, assisted by genuine specialists is the working ideal of every institution which takes itself seriously. To accomplish this means endowment and equipment, but it can be done.

THE APPROACH OF THE CHURCH TO THE HOME

THE REV. WILLIAM E. GARDNER, D.D.*

Those leaders in religious education who try to find pathways by which the church may approach the home vibrate between despair and courage.

They are in despair when compelled to face the small amount of religious nurture that actually takes place in the homes of today. This despair is increased when they realize how little can be accomplished by conventional methods. The series of sermons, the lists of books for parents to read, parents' conferences and classes attended by only a few, and the warnings of the loss of moral powers in the family are unheeded because the home-makers of today question the ability of the church to understand the conditions of family life today and intelligently and sympathetically to meet and develop its needs.

Much of the advice that I hear ministers give their congregations is in the conventional terms understood and obeyed by our forefathers. Those terms are not current today. They stand for an expression of religion that is out of harmony with modern life.

The music sung and played in the average modern home, the plays attended by ordinary families, the books and magazines read, the membership in clubs, associations and unions, the long hours of

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work, the strife arising from competition, the tenement and apartment-house problems—and a hundred other things—do not furnish a background in the life and conversation of the modern family before which the ancient family altar can be appropriately raised. One man described the condition of his family life and ended by saying: "To have family prayer under these circumstances would be absurd." And he was right even though he discouraged his minister.

On the other hand, all religious leaders have had experiences that have brought them courage. Every congregation has some family where religious observance is normal. The family has a place in church; in the home grace is said at the meals; and intelligent and reverent discussion is given to questions that arise from scriptural, moral or ecclesiastical references. There all mark the family's recognition of God.

If such conditions can be found in some of our modern families, and if the benefits are visible in a poise, sympathy and buoyancy that make the members of the family respected, admired and desired, then we should have confidence that, by patient study and suggestion, the way may be found by which the church will develop an appreciation of religion in all families, which will be manifested by varying methods according to temperament and circumstances.

From this point of view the church will make the best approach to the home when at least two ideals dominate the ministry.

1. The religious leader must be a student of the history of the family, and must understand the forces that hold sway in modern life.

2. He must seek and try out innumerable methods by which the home may be made to recognize the intelligent and sympathetic concern of the church. On the basis of this concern the church and the home will co-operate in a task that cannot be performed by either alone. These two ideals we will now consider in detail.

The church cannot effectively approach the home until the minister understands more thoroughly the history of the family and its important place in the development of society. This means that along with his desire for certain religious activities in the homes of his congregation, he must carry a recognition that back of the whole question of religion in the family are many unsolved social problems and a vast unchartered area of human desires and activities that must be studied from biological and sociological points of view. An adequate treatment of this aspect of the subject is impossible here. Professor Dealey's little book on the family presents in a concise and vivid way, some of the issues that are present.

The minister must also recognize that religious manifestations by corporate worship either within the church or within the family demand a quality of life akin to that which makes an artist. There must be an inheritance and that must be supplemented by education and training conducted in the spirit of happy artists and musicians who having certain natural abilities, never attain full expression and enjoyment without study, training and practice. This point of view is seen most clearly in the tendency to analyze the practice of the religious life. The popularity of books like Professor Fosdick's "The Meaning of Prayer" and "The Manhood of the Master" and the demand for sermons and classes on what is called "Personal Religion" mean the rediscovery of the values and joys of spiritual exercise. This movement has many dangers. Some temperaments find it easy to be pious without comprehending the social obligations that are evident when one finds relationship to God. The success of the movement in personal religion will depend upon the breadth of the training in vision, patience and trust that must take place before religion and the church can have their complete values restated in terms that will be understood and accepted by the family.

To these two brief statements on the scientific study of the question and the artistic essentials, the minister must have in his ideal of study, a third which I call theological.

Recognizing as he must that education is not education if God is left out, he should see clearly that certain kinds of recognition of God's life are impossible without the family. Most people today accept the statement that there are no definite religious feelings innate in the child. He is only a possibility capable of what we term spiritual growth. His first stages of development are along the lines of natural religion. Communion with God in the future is promised by his love of rhythm, his curiosity that sends him seeking, his mothering instincts that give him sympathy and a whole chain of activities which in their beginnings we call natural but which in their development should approach the spiritual.

These natural tendencies toward religion are dependent for guidance on the family. This guidance will not be normal and effective unless the family is identified with some of the historical forms of religion which present to the child, with the authority of the family, teachings and forms of worship, ceremonies, etc., that have been the result of tested experiences. From this point of view, a so-called denominational appreciation of God is an essential in the development of the child's religion. It is an experience with God organized; and for the best development of the child, that experience must be approached through the family.

A third stage follows in which the spirit of youth drives the reason to consider, criticize and compare denominational experiences with God, in which process he should secure not only a contact with the universal elements in religion which would give him toleration but also an appreciation of the value of the historical process, the denominationalizing of religion which has made the universal aspect in his mind possible. Rosenkranz has put this clearly when he says:

"Nothing is more absurd than for the educator to desire to avoid the introduction of a particular form of religion or a definite creed as a middle stage between the natural beginning of a religious feeling and its end in philosophical culture. Only when a man has lived through the crudeness of a concrete individualizing of religion and has come to recognize the universal nature of religion in a special form of which excludes other forms, only when the spirit of a church has taken him into its number, has he the right to criticize religion in a conciliatory spirit, because he has then gained a religious character through that historical experience."¹

The approach of the church to the home will be more rapid when every minister comprehends and instructs his congregation in the three stages described above. In this way the families of our congregations will be made to see the important office which they must fill in placing the idea of God as the unifying concept in all education, progressively and effectively in the life of the child.

I realize that in what I have said I have only suggested in a superficial way three vital points around which the minister's study of religious nurture in the home should center. I now turn to the second ideal: that the minister seek and try out innumerable methods by which the Church may approach the home. I suggest only a few:

(1) *The approach to the home through the child.* The greatest promoting force which the church has in modern life is in its children. Millions of children week by week pass from the church to the home. If religious leadership made them conveyors of religious values, untold profits for religion would result. An advertising specialist conferring with me on methods of religious advertising, inquired "What is the total registration of the children in the Sunday schools of your communion?" My answer was "Approximately 500,000." The advertising specialist replied with enthusiasm that if he could have the opportunity of sending 500,000 children once a week into their homes with a definite message, in a comparatively short time he could accomplish in those homes almost anything he desired.

We should all feel encouraged over the many movements to win the parent by bringing the child and the parent together on a common platform of religious endeavor and interest. Dr. Bradner

¹Rosenkranz, "Philosophy of Education," page 177; Appleton, N. Y.

has injected this element into the Christian Nurture Series of Teachers' Helps published for the Sunday schools of the Episcopal Church. Every parent is made to feel that the church calls to him through the child, for help. Each month the parent receives a letter in which requests are made for weekly religious instruction of a definite kind. The widespread acceptance and approval of the method has shown that the homes are ready to co-operate with the child and the church; but that child and parent desire definite instructions in order that they may have confidence in the co-operation. Much along this line can be accomplished when in addition to Bible study, we draw upon organized religion and worship for Sunday-school instruction.

A few days ago I received from a minister a card entitled "My Resolutions." These cards were intended for certain grades in the Sunday school. During the week previous to the Sunday when they were distributed in the school, every parent received a letter from the pastor and a copy of the card. In this letter the minister requested the parent to talk over with the child all of the resolutions and select those which the child could reasonably perform. He also gave suggestions which would cause the parent to master the fundamental ideas under each resolution in order that he might explain them to the child. In this way the child, the parent and the church were inspired by a common ideal and effort.

(2) *The example of church officials.* Another approach of the church to the home might be through the church officials and representatives of the congregation. Trustees, committees, vestries, deacons and wardens represent the church to the child and to the community. In many of the homes of these officials there is little manifestation of religion. They are visible on Sunday and are faithful in the administration of the church's affairs, but it is perfectly visible to their children that they do not practice openly and with enthusiasm the life of prayer, scriptural study and sacrificial expression to which those children are exhorted in the Sunday school.

I never suggest this method but I am informed that if spiritual leadership were placed upon some of our vestries and Boards of Trustees, there would be many resignations and much difficulty in filling vacancies. Such a state of affairs would no doubt exist if the effort was hurriedly and tactlessly made. On the other hand, if the minister followed the methods of spiritual propaganda given to us by Christ and his apostles and approached the community and its home life through his official family as an apostolic company, we should have a method successful in history and an experiment in modern religious administration that has not had widespread trial.

(3) *The creation of community esprit de corps.* The approach of the church to the home will be more successful when the leaders of religion give more careful and scientific study to the creation of a religious *esprit de corps* in the community. We all know communities where the *esprit de corps* is commercial; others, artistic. These are the results of the earnest and vital expressions of community members. The development of a right passion for religion in the community growing out of the other legitimate community interests is a study that should command the combined energies of all religious leaders.

The movement for church unity can but result in a deeper appreciation of community *esprit de corps* in religion. This should make possible the insertion of common religious activities in the family life on holidays and festivals. To illustrate, suppose the religious forces of the community set forth for Fourth of July and Thanksgiving Day, one or more prayers with brief responsive readings, and requested that they be used in the homes immediately before a meal when the whole family was present.

Many of us must have had the experience of passing out of New York on the railroad some Friday night when we gained fleeting glimpses of the Jewish families surrounding their candle lighted tables ready for their Sabbath-eve meal. A sense of community strength was engendered by that sight. The best community *esprit de corps* must depend upon religious observances in the family. What these observances shall be the church must determine. They must grow in accordance with the needs.

(4) *Through responsibility of parenthood.* No better approach can be found for the church to the home than through the responsibility of parenthood. The establishment of a fireside awakens new responsibility. Every young man and woman in his new home is asking deeper questions than many of them openly allow. If to such persons the church would bring a guidance in the discussions of the problems of modern eugenics and the sacred function of the family in the development of the future society, a respect for the church's ability and interest would be developed. The movement for parents' classes is a sign of a better day and the appointment by parishes of special workers who visit and confer intimately with the parents on the religious nurture of children and the development of religion in the home means an effective approach of the church to the family.