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THE HOME AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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In this paper I shall try to consider the Home and its function in the education of the child, the School and its function in the education of the child and the Relation of the one to the other.

In the study of the development of the family one may see how the ministrations of the primitive mother to the helpless offspring and of the primitive father to both mother and child furnished the means of developing patience, consideration and love, and all of the other Christian virtues which are found in the finest type of a modern Christian home. And if one is familiar with such a modern Christian home he knows that here are the best possible opportunities for the children to get their moral and religious training.

Emerson has put the matter well when he says, "The household is a school of power. There, within the door, learn the tragi-comedy of human life. Here is the sincere thing, the wondrous composition for which day and night go round. In that routine are the sacred relations, the passions that bind and sever. Here is poverty and all the wisdom its hated necessities can teach, here labor drudges, here affections glow, here the secrets of character are told, the guards of man, the guards of woman, the compensations which, like angels of justice, pay every debt; the opium of custom, whereof all drink and many go mad. Here is Economy and Glee and Hospitality and Ceremony and Frankness and Calamity and Death and Hope."

The two points which I desire here to emphasize are, 1st, that home had its origin in the needs of little children and, secondly, that the finest Christian virtues have been developed by ministering to these needs in the home.

Many otherwise good women think of the ideal home as a place full of labor-saving conveniences for adults. The goddess of convenience stretches out her hand to such, offering light and heat, pneumatically cleaned rooms and even prepared meals by the touch of a button, in apartments just large enough for two, with perhaps an extra room for a guest or an aged relative. But in the other hand she holds a notice "Dogs and children not allowed."

The ideal home is a nursery for young children where the mother is the head nurse and the father is the first assistant. It is a kindergarten where Froebel's suggestion "Come let us live with our chil-

dren" is being carried out by participation on the part of the children and parents in simple household duties, in walks and talks, in home games and in the entertainment of friends both adult and children.

It is provided with an environment which demands a sufficient variety of activities for the proper development of the growing boys and girls. It is a debating club in which all kinds of questions, social, scientific, moral and religious, are discussed by both adults and budding adolescents.

So much for the home. Let us now turn to the school.

In primitive times there was no school as such. The education of the children was always in the home and in the hands of the parents.

The school started as an agency for supplementing the work of the home especially along intellectual lines. It quickly became artificial, formal, technical, bookish, unrelated to the life of the home. Pestalozzi, the greatest of modern educators, the one whose pedagogy has been mainly responsible for Germany's leadership in education, suggested in his great book, "Leonard and Gertrude," that the school be patterned after the home. Pestalozzi said that "the child accustomed from his earliest years to pray, to think and to work, is already more than half educated." His disciple, Froebel, found that educating the mothers was too slow a process and so he hit upon the scheme of training young women with the mother instinct to teach little children in the children's gardens, Kindergartens.

The ideal modern school is permeated with the Kindergarten spirit. It emphasizes, as did Froebel, the importance of respecting the individuality of the child and of cultivating the unity of his being.

It considers the individual needs of each child and tries to encourage him to be reverent, to be thoughtful and to be industrious both in school and at home.

Many good men feel that the American schools are Godless and desire to remedy the matter by imposing upon the schools some system of formal instructions in religion and morals. May I suggest in passing that such a system does not accord with the spirit of modern education? Nor with the method used by the Great Teacher who left for us no system of ethics but rather some great, fundamental principles and the example of a life of service.

One who is inclined to demand for our schools a systematic course in morals and religion may well try to imagine what would have been the present condition of the Christian religion if Christ had given us a system of dogmas or a set of rules of conduct instead of indicating the spirit and illustrating it in His own life.

The school was at first for intellectual training supplementing the practical training of the home. As the school has developed it has come to arrogate to itself more and more of authority, demanding more of the children's time and energy.

The home has, meanwhile, expected more and more of the school and has thrown upon it more and more responsibility until now many people are inclined to put upon the school the most of the responsibilities that formerly belonged to the home and Church. Right here is, I believe, a great danger. Is there intemperance, we look to the school to correct the evil. Is there irreverence for Church and State, resulting in hoodlumism, street brawls and highway robberies, we look to the schools. Is there an awakening regarding the terrible results of the social evil, we turn to the schools for relief.

We are certainly paying a wonderful tribute of respect and confidence to the work which the school has already done. And, doubtless, the school can do much more, but what about the Church and the home?

May we not still insist that the home is the particular and special instrument for the nurture and education of young children? And must it not be held to this work by School and Church?

If the home is failing in these matters, as we all know many homes are doing, will the matter be remedied except in a very temporary way by relieving the home of responsibility and substituting some other agency?

The experience of the more thoughtful of our social workers agrees, I believe, with the lesson which comes from the study of the historical development of the three great institutions, Home, Church and School, viz.: that the home is fundamentally the place for the development of the character of young children; that the business of both Church and school is to supplement the work of the home, that no school or church or institution of any kind can quite take the place of the home. The home must then be held to its work. It may be assisted, made more intelligent, supplemented, but never relieved of one iota of its responsibility.

May I mention a few typical things which seem to me to belong particularly to the domain of the home rather than to that of the school?

Every one of us as children drank in certain prejudices religious, moral and social. Such prejudices develop naturally in the home atmosphere but not in that of the school. Then, too, such questions as those of sex relations begin to need attention with very young chil-

dren in the home. The school can take them up only when forced to do so by home neglect and then it is impossible to manage the matter as it might have been done in the home. These are typical of many questions which we would all agree belong primarily to the home.

Someone may ask, what can the school do for such a home as has been described? At first one is inclined to say that not much is needed, but the right kind of a school will, I am sure, find very much to do.

It can recognize, encourage and help to fix right standards. It can furnish opportunities for practice under circumstances different from those of the home. It can broaden the intelligence, aid in the formation of generalizations and enlarge the spiritual horizon.

These are glittering generalities; let me illustrate: A child comes from one home where very good English is spoken. Another child comes from a home where such English is considered pedantic, "stuck up." The school must help to encourage and fix the higher standard for both.

A child who is taught at home to wash his face, to clean his teeth and to sleep in a well ventilated room is strengthened in good resolves and practice if similar lessons are taught at school. I know a boy who takes a cold bath every morning because his teacher advised it. I know another boy who had garden work at school. One year his father encouraged him to help care for a home garden and to sell the surplus product. The family spent the most of the next year abroad. This boy had about twelve dollars of his own money to be exchanged into foreign money. He had decided to try to save the most of this until he should arrive in Switzerland and then to buy a Swiss watch. Often through the year he refrained from buying tempting things to save his money. His father noticed too that he often suggested that the family ride in second or even third class cars because it would cost less. Having received more money in Christmas gifts he found himself at last in Geneva in April. The whole family were one day conducted by a Swiss gentleman who was a friend of the father, to a typical Swiss shop where a very good watch was purchased. They then went through one of the noted Swiss watch factories. You may be sure that this boy learned some lessons in connection with his garden and watch experiences which will never leave him. It seems to me a good illustration of natural, practical education which may come about when school and home conspire together. And in order to do the things here suggested school and home must work together. If the home is out of sympathy with the work of the school, if it makes light of such work or even neglects to encourage the child to do at home the things suggested at school, then not much can be accomplished.

The relations between home and school must be those of sympathy and co-operation. The school must recognize the influence of the home. If this influence is not desirable then the school must make its first business to uplift the home.

The school may well be expected to furnish the child with some skill in the three R's, a fair store of facts in geography, history and kindred subjects, some ability to think within the limits of his stage of development. It should also help him to form certain hygienic habits and to get such an attitude toward life that it will show in a life of helpfulness at school and at home.

This last is the supreme test of all education. Does it function in service for others? Does it make for good citizenship here and now?

Believing this we are trying to train our students to go out, not simply to teach the three R's in the school room, but to make the up-building of the community their problem and to this end to join themselves to all of the forces for social uplift that may be in the community.

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