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THE EQUIPMENT OF THE MAN.[1]

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JUST as the security of a tower rests only upon its foundation, so humanly-speaking the success of the *agent* depends entirely upon the character of the *man*. Designing our means as accurately as possible to meet the end in view, we know that the "natural man," whom it is our aim to catch in our net, is well able to appreciate superior manly qualities, and quite ready to value them. But until he is converted he cannot understand the servant of God, and will usually turn away from one instinctively.

The first business of the Church, therefore, should be to select good men for her agents. But it may be found more difficult to find them than to make them. We should do both. But to attend to her affairs with full purpose and understanding the Church should seriously undertake their cultivation. By the making of the man is meant the development of Christian character in all its fullness. Only upon a complete personality can the specialized training of the agent of Christ be safely erected. The Church should have no room for inferior men, they make her a laughing-stock in this sceptical world. We want men of naturally-commanding character, and we can have as many as we wish if we go to the trouble of selecting and training them. We should cultivate leaders of men who will lead men to Christ.

Up to the point where specialization begins the training may well be similar to that of other men, with this difference, that the servant of God must be better than other men. He should be taught to cultivate all the good qualities of others, and to carry them to a higher degree. He should be similar in kind to all good men, but quantitatively he should excel them. There are those who do this now, but we do not get enough of them into the Church.

It seems perfectly preposterous on the part of one who can lay no claim to being an educationalist to attempt to frame a system of training, even for a particular class. But a distant observer can often see the general proportions of a large object better than those whose intensive knowledge of the object may be complete, but

[1] Being a second section of the paper on "The Agent of God," which appeared in the October, 1921, number of the Churchman.

whose birth and life have forbidden the more comprehensive view. Again, we have a specific purpose to pursue, but a general basis is essential to our special end. The following, therefore, is thrown out as a suggestion for a liberal education in the case of those who are intended for the service of Christ.[1]

The whole subject might be divisible into three main parts: the first two covering the training of the man, and the third adding that of the agent proper.

(1) Subjective, the cultivation of the human organism or the natural personality of *the man himself.*

(2) Objective, the knowledge of the *natural* environment, man and the universe.

(3) Objective and subjective, for they coalesce in the knowledge of God. The *spiritual* environment.

From our earliest perceptions of our own existence soon follow those of external matters, and as both develop through life we should become increasingly conscious of God, until Christ be formed in us.

> Great God, from Thee we spring, to Thee we tend—
> Path, Motive, Guide, Original and End.

I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORGANISM ITSELF.

This would mainly comprise the physical, mental, moral, social, and spiritual elements, which together may be considered to make up the complete personality.

(*a*) *Physical.* Some men live for sport while others exist without it. Neither is ideal. The body of a Christian is a temple of the Holy Ghost and should be kept in good condition, but without extravagant attention to its ornamental appearance. Due consideration for the physical basis of our being prevents it usurping authority over the mind and spirit. In the perfect life sport might be superfluous, for it is non-productive. About two or three hours every day in the cultivation of the soil seems to meet the case.

(*b*) *Mental.* What appears to the writer to be of the first importance here is the proportionate development of the reasoning powers,

[1] After the above was written a correspondence appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement* upon the relative educational merit of literature and of science. No agreement can be reached without common ground, and this is hard to find amid the diversity of human nature. Subsequently, the writer of the "Elements of Reconstruction" in the *Times* showed that neither group could of itself form a liberal education, but that "the backbone stuff," from the times of Plato until now, "must be a clear and critical knowledge of oneself in relation to God and to the Universe." This sufficiently supports the writer's contention.

rather than the vicious system of trying to cram the memory with undigested matter, from which we used to suffer so much.

There is at least this firm residuum of wisdom left from Herbert Spencer's contention for a scientific education that the most rational, if not the only reasonable, basis for the human mind is the basis of nature itself. As science is the basis of all life, it should therefore be the basis, if no more than the basis, of all knowledge. It will be noted that this does not restrict education exclusively, or even mainly, to science. But it is to provide the only adequate foundation for a properly organized mind. It is to build upon the truth of Nature, which is the only natural and proper foundation for the truth of God.

"The laws of Nature are the thoughts of God," though not *all* His thoughts. The mind is incomplete and ill-ordered until furnished with correct if rudimentary conceptions of the nature and properties of matter and motion, of time and space. Nor can the relative value of diverse conceptions, or the difference between truth and error, be apprehended, except by an organized mind; and organized knowledge is science. To lay an orderly basis for the human reason early in life is advisable for moral as well as intellectual ends, and in some cases it is of the utmost importance.

As man is but one of many parts of the Universe, humanistic studies should follow elementary natural science, as in the more detailed suggestions put forth in the second part of this chapter. Let beauty be grafted upon the stem of knowledge, and for this reason: that the emotions are apt to run riot in early years, and it is prudent to prevent the æsthetic faculties from outstripping the expansion of the mind. The writer has reason to regret an early passion for music which has long since expended itself with the prodigality of youth. Years, precious years, may easily be lost to all who are not making such art the main business of life. But matters of this kind must be, very largely, matters of opinion. The object is to produce well-balanced, orderly intellects, capable of receiving truth in correct perspective. It is also needful to remember that the training of the mind is only one section of one of the three great factors that make up the complete personality.

(*c*) *Moral.* As mental culture is more important than physical development, so also moral worth surpasses that which is purely intellectual, especially in the servant of God. Few are competent

to form an estimate of our learning, but all will sit in judgment upon our practical conduct, whether we like it or not. It is here that we see the need of the ordinary good qualities of men in an extraordinary degree. Christ's agent *must* live a well-ordered life for the glory of God. His physical and mental equipment must conduce to this. Hence the need of a fundamentally scientific or orderly mind ; for morality itself is but order in conduct, and knowledge of the laws of life is the natural path to moral living. At present there are many clergy, just as there are many laymen, who cannot see how unmoral their lives are because of the defects in their education. Considerable damage is thus being done, though unwittingly, to the Master's cause. The need of some rational system of education for clergy is most pressing. Of moral offences, in the popular meaning of the term, I am not thinking. But the clergy should know that no life is fully moral if it be disorderly even in matters which seem to them insignificant. The negligible details of some clergymen are business men's axioms. A well-ordered life is the only truly moral one. Unbusiness-like, careless and negligent habits, being un-moral, become a source of actual evil. There is a remarkably well-sustained charge against us that clerical honour in the affairs of this life is inferior to that of the laity ; not that our ethical ideals are lower, but that generally we are ignorant of the high moral standard that obtains in the relations of all reputable business men, who would scorn to reap a mean advantage, however hard a bargain they may drive. Stock exchange and sporting customs are well-known instances of this. Every bill unpaid when it is due is a spring from whence flows a whole stream of confusion, as the writer can testify from personal experience with other parsons.

We clergy have the unenviable reputation of being the worst class of payers that tradesmen have to deal with. Thus the latter are kept short of capital with which to run their business, and are not likely to love the Church. Indeed many a bankruptcy is caused by people leaving bills unpaid for years.

Honesty is moral order. General orderliness of conduct should be inculcated in childhood, that it may become habitual. Whatever in life is not done decently and in order is evil. Punctuality, another business axiom, should be habitual, or time is wasted which is a sin ; besides which, tempers are ruffled and again disorder prevails. No one has any right to waste other people's time if he does not

value his own. These, and many other qualities such as civility sympathy, and respect for others, the average layman possesses, but Christians, it is said, are notoriously bad "walkers." If the agent of God does not rise to the ordinary standard of the world in his general conduct, he must expect to be harshly judged, for no one has any excuse for failing here, and the laity have a right to look to their leaders to set an example in everyday matters. They should, and very easily could, excel others in all the amenities of life and conduct, they ought to be true gentlemen for the credit of their Master.

Further, the servant of God should learn to become an *active* agent in life. It is true that the opposite lesson of Christian morality also has to be learnt, how to endure, to

> Know how sublime a thing it is
> To suffer and be strong.

But he is to discriminate, and be able to suffer even fools at times, while able also to firmly but tactfully take the initiative. What is meant by being an active agent is this : many men of great mental ability are practical failures, tossed about like so much flotsam and jetsam upon the sea of life ; while other men, often of smaller intellectual calibre, choose their plan and carry it out, using this world, and indeed abusing it too, for the furtherance of their aim. How much more should not the agent of God, the design for whose life is prepared in Heaven,[1] train and utilize all his powers of observation and judgment, his reason and his will, to carry out with firmness and courage, as well as with meekness and love, whatever his Master has given him to do. He needs a distinctly superior moral constitution, that his daily life may *adorn* the doctrine of God our Saviour *in all things*. He, more than others, needs perfect self-control, and should possess the secret of it, which is God-control ; thus will he perform effectively whatever duty requires, and do so like an efficient machine with the minimum of friction and waste of time and energy.

(*d*) *Social.* However useful mechanics may be analogically, man is not a machine. Every Christian should be an instrument for doing his Master's work, but it is as a living and organic, not an inorganic agent, that our bodies are to be presented to God. And this because our business is with the living, with other men, our

[1] Eph. ii. 10.

kind. Hence the present section, the object of which is to consider the cultivation of the faculty for comprehending human nature. We might term it "the human instinct." It is our understanding of humanity that regulates in the main our conduct towards others. It is therefore an extension of the last section into the special and larger sphere of human society.[1] Knowledge of men, one of the fundamental requirements of God's agent, like the knowledge of God (or of anything), can only be acquired up to the limit of the individual capacity. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that this capacity for understanding mankind be duly cultivated. The want of it is fast emptying our churches. The laity, who are sound judges of such matters, know that they are not understood, and that they never can be understood while clergy are devoid of the human faculty. A very moderate amount of book-learning will suffice, but nothing can take the place of knowledge of human life. The agent is supposed to exist to enable people to live good lives, but he is never officially trained for this purpose, one complete half of his equipment being denied him.

This is the preparatory stage of the individual for that wider acquaintance with men which should follow. Of the three fundamentals, "Know thyself," "Know thy fellows," "Know thy God," this is the preparation of the faculty for the second. Up to a certain age, and to a limited though varying extent, this faculty develops naturally. But divinity students are separated from the rest of the world early in life. Even the great Universities by no means epitomize the world outside them. Thus the main stream of life is abandoned for ever in favour of a smaller artificial canal. Again, very few have ever learned much about the lives of other classes of people, and their social outlook, which has always been narrow, gets still further restricted. Yet nothing is more eagerly learnt by the young than human lessons. Occasionally, fathers who have had experience of the world undertake the training of their sons, but such cases are necessarily rare among the clergy, because of the secluded lives most of the parents themselves have lived. The father is the God-appointed tutor for boys in all the practical matters

[1] No attempt can be made here at philosophical exactitude. Broad and practical ends alone are considered. Hence it is impossible to discuss, or try to settle, the inter-relation of the man and his environment, a knotty problem. This of course leaves the classification faulty because arbitrary, but it should serve its purpose.

of life, yet how few seem qualified for their office! And how few of those who are qualified seriously undertake these important duties! Although by no means perfect models for Christian ministers, Lord Chatham's training of his famous son, and Lord Chesterfield's futile efforts, are examples of what statesmen have attempted in this way.

The human faculty can be cultivated from quite early boyhood. The formation of business habits, too, cannot be begun too young; and early efforts at simple administrative tasks under suitable guidance should be encouraged; so also should experiments in organization, which may become quite serious and successful in youth. As progress can only result from two conditions, liberty and a variety of situations,[1] every opportunity should be taken of acquiring new conceptions of life, and there should be conversations upon them all. This kind of thing has an absorbing interest for the young, and might be promised as a reward for attention to duller duties, although very little will be learnt where personal interest is wanting. A sound judgment is easily acquired by the average boy, if given a fair opportunity of doing so, and with it will come prudence, business acumen, and the ability to handle his fellows, which are the great practical needs of God's agent on the human side. Nothing can take the place of actual experience of human life, for books and lectures cannot teach its lessons. Other religious bodies often succeed where the Church of England fails, in this knowledge of human nature, to which sometimes they unduly pander. But we ought to know how to "touch the public heart under the popular waistcoat," as well as how far to go in performing that delicate operation.

The object of the agent's life is in principle the same as that of other men, action. But his action is to be spiritual instead of worldly. He is to be guided by his Heavenly Master, and must be willing to obey. His permanent attitude must be "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" He is to influence the lives of those who, apart from him, will neglect higher things and live only for this world. To do so he must have all that is proper in common with them. He should therefore be formed very much as others are, being a specialist only in God's Revelation, like the Ancient Hebrew, whose place he takes in the world to-day.

(*e*) *Spiritual.* Any one intended for God's Service must have,

[1] Quoted from Humboldt by J. S. Mill in his essay on *Liberty*.

throughout the unfolding of his natural personality, his spiritual perceptions awakened and exercised. Words could scarcely exaggerate the advantage of this taking place in his earlier years. It is of transcendental importance. And here lies the ultimate need for an extended general education before specialization begins; there are some who seem as devoid of the religious as others of the human faculty, and these must on no account be permitted to embark upon the final training for the ministry. They can enter into some secular business for which they may be fitted, where their time will not be wasted, and from which they can still be withdrawn after a few years, should they believe they have received God's call. Most boys, however, are wonderfully responsive to Christian influence if introduced by skilful agents. Of these there are, happily, a goodly number who ought to be officially secured by the Church.

Possibly in most cases the chief hindrance to the spiritual life of children is to be found in none other than their parents, who are primarily responsible for leading them to God. This is probably the result of ignorance, of the duties of parent-hood, and of God, rather than of any coldness in desire to do their best for their offspring. Unless parents are themselves earnest Christians a nominal compliance with religious customs satisfies them, which, when the lads get older, is almost invariably thrown over. While those who do realize the supreme importance of the soul, by their over anxiety during tender years, very frequently sicken the youngsters of everything religious. This is one of those matters which are ruined if overdone. Those who present their children to the Lord, and leave them in His hands, have nothing to complain of. Account for it as we may, we are faced with a decided decline in true family Christian life. Fortunately spiritual work among the young can be undertaken by the Church, which is the next best thing. It is imperative that some one who is capable should be responsible for the souls of all who may be called to the ministry. But no time is to be lost over it, for in most cases the character begins to solidify by about the time of the legal majority, so that if the life is to be won for Christ this is almost the latest when such a change may be expected. Professor Drummond may be said to have established his case that the laws of the spiritual life are at least analogous to those of nature. The life-work of the agent of Christ among men is "to sow the seed of eternal life in their hearts." He cannot do

this if devoid of the Divine life himself. Spiritual, like natural, fertility can only proceed from a living progenitor. Even then, in both kingdoms, there are some who are mysteriously infertile. But all else is utterly useless unless the young agent has received the life of the spirit of God, and feeds his soul upon the Living Bread of constant communion with Christ. Hence definite spiritual work must be done if possible, during the responsive years, when the rudder of life is easily turned with the aid of a sympathetic friend.

Every part of the character of the servant of God must be practical and real, not having the appearance of qualities which are actually wanting, nor carrying more "luggage" (in the way of useless ornamental accomplishments) than is necessary to make him presentable. This is above all things important with his religious llfe, and hence it should be thoroughly well grounded as a layman, to prevent it, if possible, from becoming tainted by the clerical professional element, which is sometimes as objectionable as any other. For his own sake, and still more for the sake of others, let everything be based upon his actual spiritual experience, upon what he knows, personally and experimentally, to be true. Some of our clergy would be doing more good breaking stones. Let us have no superstition. Nobody believes that men are miraculously changed at their ordination. And if they have had no dealings with God before then they have no true vocation for the ministry. God does not send rebels to work in His vineyard. Christians are tired of the cultured and ordained sinners, sometimes set to minister to the saints, all their professional jargon cannot hide their abject spiritual poverty from the humblest believer in Christ. We must have spirit and truth, or give up altogether. Every layman can see through the wretched veneer, and judges what he can find of the real man beneath. Carlyle rightly honoured two men, and no third; the labourers for earthly and for heavenly bread. But the sham-priest is "the falsest and basest of men," under whose mask no living figure or spirit dwelleth, and who glares upon one "in ghastly affection of life."[1]

II. Objective. The Knowledge of Nature.

Some minds are constitutionally analytical, others synthetical. Ideally, they should be diagnosed and divided so that each might

[1] *Sartor Resartus.*

have the method of instruction best suited to it. There is much to be said for a system of education which preserves the proportions of the Universe as we know it. Boys cannot usually be expected to receive very definite intellectual conceptions of immaterial things, but they can rise from creation to its Creator, and are not often emotionally deficient.

> The heavens declare the glory of God,
> And the firmament showeth His handiwork.

Begin, then, with the mechanism of the heavens, of which perfectly correct impressions are often formed by boys of ten or twelve years of age. The imagination of youth is readily seized by physical magnitude, of which sidereal astronomy is our limit. The æsthetic sense is not neglected, for nothing is so sublimely beautiful as the heavens. One look at the Ring Nebula or the cluster in Hercules through a telescope will affect a sober lad as long as he lives on this earth, perhaps longer. The physical constitution of the universe is a good start, the Solar System is "assimilated" with avidity, and the best foundation laid for a devout and studious mind.

Descend to earth and its physical history from the Nebula theory to modern geography, properly so-called, and sufficient geology to enable the architecture of our own planet to be appreciated. How anyone can live without at least a bowing acquaintance with the great forces of nature, the present writer simply cannot conceive. Neither is it wonderful that the God of the average unscientific person is such a puny being as to be entirely negligible. Amid the wonders of gravitation and denudation, of air and ocean currents, the circulation of water, glacial action and ice phenomena, nine boys out of ten will simply revel. They will then become keen on physics and the mechanics of matter and motion, possibly also on chemistry, to satisfy their cravings for further knowledge, besides being driven to books of travel and exploration [1] for pure recreation, which will often supplant mere fiction, and the pure truth of God's creation be inhaled like native air. Thus, in an unbroken chain of intellectual pleasure, the youthful mind is furnished with a faithful replica of nature. Travel leads to natural history, this to

[1] One has only to test a school on such a subject as the unveiling of the new continent, "Antarctica" to realize the keenness of the young for such healthful knowledge. Scott, Shackleton, Amundsen and Mawson are an unfailing delight.

the biology of both plants and animals, which again suggest botany, animal physiology and anatomy.

Human Studies. Then, rising through the scale of life, we come at length to man. His nature, and his history in its widest sense covering all human activities; the story of the human race, its varied and persistent customs, modes of life and endless attempts at government; political, economic and constitutional history as parts of the greater whole; with philosophy, literature and art, Ancient, Mediæval and Modern, according to taste, and in natural sequence. Knowledge of figures and calculation is essential to natural science as that of languages is to history in all its branches, but both are means rather than ends in themselves. The only ultimate object is life. All knowledge obtained from books alone is indirect or second-hand, and direct personal observation is peculiarly necessary for a complete comprehension of human nature. But this must ever be limited to our own time and experience, and is of itself insufficiently extensive. Thus, one may be led from some local incident to inquire how our country is governed, and so into a more or less exhaustive study of the English Constitution. Then, our own country has not led an isolated existence, and its relations with other countries naturally arise, leading, it may be, to an aroused interest in International Law, itself one of several gateways to jurisprudence in general. Or an effort to understand the present leads us back into the past, until we may reach the very dawn of civilization or of political life, before a starting-point which satisfies the mind can be found. But we must turn to the last item on the schedule of general education.

Experience of Life. Those who pass from school into business, on looking back in after years, invariably feel that all the great lessons were learnt when school days were over. This is perfectly true, and is due to the entrance into the great world of men. But our clergy rarely enter this world in the practical or good sense, though some do in the "worldly" sense of gaieties and amusements, from which there is nothing to be gained. All previous training fails at its most important point if it does not receive a strong course of practical experience in order to gain knowledge of the world, and if the spiritual life is healthy, to be eventually repelled by it. No intellectual advantages can compensate for ignorance of the real facts of life, for "the world" is the environment of

nearly all the population; and the agent must live the same life as others to qualify himself for saving them from it.

Let it be said at once that nothing is further from the mind of the writer than to advocate a "worldly" life. A business life for a few years is quite sufficient to teach the practical lessons of human nature. The line must be drawn somewhere, and all true Christians draw it to exclude what is termed "worldliness." Very few of the laity whom the Church should get hold of are men with minds trained in the scholar's sense, their whole life consists of hard practical realities, which make the student's point of view seem visionary and useless. It is not the layman's business to understand our position, and perhaps he could never do so. From our standpoint his life may seem sordid and base. But it is our end in life to completely grasp his outlook, so that we may present our Divine message in a form which he can readily receive.

We must not live exclusively in our own world of thought, which may not faithfully represent nature, and so far as it fails to do so will be untrue and unworthy. But primarily we should live in the same world of fact in which all others have to pass their existence. The training of the mind should only subserve this purpose, that it enables us to see things as they are more clearly than others can see them. It must not abstract us from the reality of life, or our usefulness is at an end. The majority of the clergy should be men of action because the majority of the laity are so, and cannot understand those who are not. The only common basis of fellowship which is possible to the clergy and unspiritual laymen is that of their common humanity. But with so many of those in orders at present the man of the world soon exhausts his interest; before much sounding line has run out he finds bottom, and sums up his man immediately.

Knowledge of the world of men is not soon to be acquired. The denizens of great cities seem to pick up quickly a superficial smartness, and many, no doubt, have a deep acquaintance with life. But a sound knowledge of human nature, which can sympathize with its weaknesses, because it knows its difficulties, and enables us to feel as others feel, and see things as others see them, such requires years of intimate relationship with all classes of people. Its acquirement is not included in the Christian minister's equipment. It is indeed more important that he should faithfully repre-

sent his Divine Master than gain the confidence of his fellow-men by merely human arts. But where one fails to deliver his Master's message, many fail to grasp the people's wants. He should have each in due measure, the human subordinate to the Divine, yet distinctly present, as they were so fully in our Blessed Lord. To obtain the needed qualities, may I repeat that the only way is *by living the same life as others* for a few years? Those who have done so, and only those, know how perfect is the mutual understanding and confidence between the pastor and his flock. More than twenty-five years among laymen, over a wide area, has shown that the clergy, although devoted to their work, are losing their hold upon the manhood of the country. Humanly-speaking the cause of this is that their training has been merely professional. But spiritual deficiency lies behind this.

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(*To be concluded.*)