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Crowned Dirt and Profanity.

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An unlovable spirit is revealed occasionally in the *Nation*. Formerly the refined, exquisitely critical, high-toned weekly visitor to exclusive circles of cultured Americans, the stanch and fearless defender of the great American liberties, the arbiter in the realm of literature, art, drama, statesmanship, whose praise was coveted and prized by men of letters and men of affairs, while its censure was dreaded as a blight to budding genius, this journal has lately championed radicalism and modernism, boldly advocated birth control, and lent itself to spreading propaganda literature for this destructive sexual aberration in modern life. Its most revolting escapade, however, was the selection, on February 14, of Stephen Vincent Benét's *King David* as the *Nation's* prize poem for 1923. The poem has for its theme the nasty David-Bathsheba incident. It was selected from four thousand manuscripts by about fifteen hundred writers. If *King David* was the best in this lot, we have no desire to see the second best or the third best.

The poem is in six cantos. Episode No. 1 pictures David surfeited with wealth and power, singing to his "hook-nosed harp":

The Lord is a jealous God!
His violent vengeance is swift and sharp!
And the Lord is King above all gods!

Blest be the Lord, through years untold,
The Lord who has blessed me a thousandfold!

Cattle and concubines, corn and hives,
Enough to last me a dozen lives.

Plump good women with noses flat,
Marrowful blessings, weighty and fat.

I wax in His peace like a pious gourd,
The Lord God is a pleasant God,
Break mine enemy's jaws, O Lord!
For the Lord is King above all gods!

Paragraphs on Education.

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1.

Education is more than merely secular instruction; it includes also the religious training of the child. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. Education without religion lacks the one thing needful. Ps. 111, 10; 1 Tim. 4, 8; Luke 10, 42.

2.

The State cannot teach religion. Nowhere in Scripture has God commanded the State to provide for the souls of its subjects. It is the duty of the State to provide only for the temporal welfare of its citizens. Matt. 22, 21.

3.

Providing for the soul and its eternal well-being is a duty incumbent on the Church. The Church must see to it that the children entrusted to its care receive proper religious instruction. The Church which fails or refuses to make ample provision that

the lambs of the flock who were baptized in its midst may also be taught as soon and as long as they are capable of Christian instruction, is neglectful of a solemn duty imposed upon it by the Master. Eph. 6, 4; John 21, 15.

4.

The Sunday-school, with its brief session once a week and its too often incompetent teachers, is inadequate for that purpose. About the best that it can do is to guard against total ignorance of religious truth. Matt. 28, 20; 1 Cor. 1, 5.

5.

The Bible must not be read in the public schools. Bible-reading should be considered solely a question of public policy and not of religion. Though the Bible is excellent literature, it is impossible to have it taught without injecting sectarianism. The harm done would be incalculable. Strife and dissension would be sure to follow. The public schools are schools for the children of all the people. Men and women in this country have a right even to their unbelief. Their children in the public schools must not be coerced in a matter of this kind. This would be equal to disregarding the rights of the minority and blurring the American doctrine of religious liberty and freedom of conscience. Those who demand that the public school should teach Christianity frustrate the very purpose which they have in view. The State would gain nothing and Christianity lose all. John 18, 36.

6.

The movement toward better religious education not only, and rightly so, demands more efficient Sunday-schools and an increase of instruction in church-services, but also week-day religious instruction. Whole communities are turning to the Christian day-school. All churches are seeing the vital need of week-day religious instruction for children, and the movement to have them receive it during regular school-hours is spreading rapidly throughout the country. The churches must erect and uphold Christian day-schools to fulfil this purpose. The Christian Church must not depend on the State for imparting religious instruction. That would mean union of Church and State, an evil for both. Deut. 6, 6, 7; 1 Pet. 2, 2; Acts 20, 28.

7.

The Christian day-school is a bulwark against sin, immorality, lawlessness, and crime, which are sweeping our country. We are

in the midst of a great crisis. If we would save the Church and our nation from degeneration and restore them to health, there is but one remedy—we must educate the rising generation, from its earliest youth to its maturity, daily in the Word of God, which healeth all things. Ps. 119, 9—11; John 5, 39.

8.

The enemies of the true Gospel have set their minds on destroying our religious schools. On the one hand, they are bewailing the wave of crime, immorality, and lawlessness; on the other hand, however, they are trying to exterminate one of the most powerful agencies for restoring better moral conditions. They are blind. Instead of thus fighting sound education, they ought rather to cooperate in maintaining it. Ps. 11, 3; 2, 10—12.

9.

Education is a cooperative undertaking, in which family, school, and Church each takes an appropriate part. 1 Cor. 10, 31; 15, 58.

10.

Any act which makes it impossible or even difficult for these three agencies to cooperate is an un-American act, a backward step, fraught with disaster for the cause of true education. Matt. 16, 26; 1 Cor. 14, 40.

11.

Any doctrine or notion that our youth must one and all be cast into a common mold and trained under one and the same influence is not in accordance with the political scheme of the United States. Rom. 1, 22; Prov. 18, 2; Matt. 15, 9.

12.

The traditional American tendency has been to leave as many undertakings as possible in the sphere of freedom. A state monopoly in education would do violence to the inalienable rights of American citizens. It would strike at parental rights, religious liberty, and freedom in education. It would destroy America's foremost contribution to civilization, namely, its whole-hearted guarantee of complete religious liberty. Ps. 103, 1, 2.

13.

It is in no way the business of the Government in our American political arrangement to attempt to prevent the free choice by parents of the teachers and schools for their children. Education

is primarily and fundamentally a parental and family privilege and duty. The parents are responsible to God for the proper rearing of a child, and it is an essential part of their American civil liberty that they may train their children in such a way and in such a form of religious faith as they may prefer and choose for themselves. Is. 45, 11; Col. 3, 16; 2 Tim. 3, 15—17.

14.

According to our fundamental American principles the State defines the sphere of individual liberty and by so doing protects the individual against the government. 1 Tim. 2, 1—3.

15.

Knowing the distinction between State and government and also the distinction between the sphere of government and the sphere of liberty, it will be easy to see whether and how far anything should be assigned to the sphere of government or to the sphere of liberty. Jas. 1, 5.

16.

In the United States three different types of educational institutions rest upon the power and authority of the State: 1. Those which the government establishes and maintains, such as the public schools and libraries. 2. Those which the government authorizes, such as incorporated schools and colleges that gain their privileges from a charter. 3. Those which the State permits, because it has conferred on the government no power to forbid or to restrict them, such as private educational undertakings. 1 Pet. 2, 13. 14.

17.

The American educational system is made up of all these, be they national or only provincial, be they governmental or not. A school or institution may be governmental and yet strongly local, or it may be non-governmental and still nation-wide in its interest and influence. 1 Pet. 4, 10.

18.

In education as in any other part of our national life the well-established American principle applies that private initiative must be protected from monopoly. Rom. 13, 1—4.

19.

In view of the threats and attacks directed against our parish-schools, these paragraphs on the fundamental doctrine of American

education must be of decided interest to all supporters and champions of religious schools and should furnish them with an incentive for retaining and improving these schools. Matt. 16, 18; Ps. 46.

20.

The influence of the Church and the home has greatly decreased. If family and Church did their full duty as to effective participation in the educational process, many of the severe criticisms now brought against the schools and colleges, both public and private, would disappear. Matt. 5, 13; Hos. 4, 6; Jer. 48, 10: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord negligently!"

21.

The public schools of our country cannot make up for the deficiencies of the family and the Church. They can cooperate with the family and the Church, but they cannot provide substitutes for these. John 15, 5.

22.

Those who would reform the youth by multiplying laws are on the wrong path. More statutes for the purpose of effecting a better state of morality by force will never create righteousness. That must come from the heart and the enlightened mind, and it is the high privilege of the Church to reach the heart and mind, not by way of legislation, but by the straight road of Christian truth. It is the task of the Church to reach the child with the message of religious teaching — the message of the Gospel of Christ — and to turn the footsteps of our boys and girls into the paths of rectitude. This alone will stem the wave of crime and hold back the rolling billows of immorality, — and this surely will. Rom. 1, 16; Titus 2, 11, 12; Is. 55, 10, 11.

23.

How important, therefore, is the Christian day-school! In the Christian day-school those whom Christ has redeemed are taught to lead a godly life in this present world, and through faith in their Savior they are led to everlasting life in a blessed hereafter. John 10, 27, 28; 3, 16; 2 Tim. 4, 8, 18.

May the Lord, our God, be gracious unto us and protect our religious school system from the enemies in order that it may prosper in peace and bring salvation unto thousands of children and real inner strength to the Church!
