

What Price the Modern Boy? XI.

Thus far we have considered the failings of the modern boy as a social evil. No study, particularly no social study, is complete without a background. We proceed now to a study of the causes that lie behind the failings of the modern boy, in the order in which they were presented to you in the opening chapter of this series.

1. Goofy Parents.

"Yes, I understand all that, but my boy is different." When an educator hears these words from the lips of a goofy mother, he stops his search for the causes of the son's mental or moral breakdown, whichever the case may be. No one knows better than the experienced educator or the priest that all boys are different, and no one knows better that fundamentally they are all the same. But when he hears a loving mamma declare that her son's high-strung nature has exempted him from the universal law of obedience he understands.

One of the chief failings of self-made fathers is the unholy desire to have their sons exempted from the material hardships that brought out their own qualities of self-reliance, integrity, and force. In their effort to do this they frequently expose the son to spiritual dangers which they were too poor or too tired of evenings to experience. If these fathers really want their sons to take up where they themselves leave off they must train them to endurance instead of comfort.

Cardinal O'Connell recently called attention to another form of goofiness prevalent among many Catholics today in these words: "I used to think, O, some time ago, that it would be a fine thing to help along our Catholic people to become materially very well-to-do and prosperous. I have given it up. You lose them when they do. I do not know why it should be so, but it is so. I won't say in every single case. There are noble men and women, Catholics, who have become enormously wealthy and who live simple, beautiful lives. I wish it were not so; I wish I had not to say it; but it is the common sentiment of all of us who know, that some of the Catholics had better have remained poor than to have acquired large fortunes; much better for their own lives, for their prospects of heaven; better for their own characters; because we so often see the results of a sudden attainment of wealth that ends in the silliest kind of vanity and pride."

The Fourth Commandment is becoming obsolescent because silly parents do not enforce it. When the family rosary was universal in Catholic homes, children knew the duties of obedience, respect, deference to their elders, honor and decency. With the Americanization of the immigrant simple faith, our only real heritage from our European ancestors, has been badly strained. American-plan children have a harder time saving their souls than did their hand-me-down grandparents.

The following classes of parents may expect to be disgraced by their children:

1. Those who know more than priest or Pope;
2. Those who try to "keep up with the Joneses";
3. Those who lie for their children;
4. Those who can't stop making money long enough to make a home;
5. Those who can't say No to their children;
6. Those who refuse to believe that their children are also human.

Novena for Pentecost.

This Novena is for conversions. It begins next Friday. Place the names of your friends in a sealed envelope and leave it in the basket in the basement chapel. The names will be placed near the tabernacle during the nine days.