
"Religion is Not for the Low-brow."

We are warned not to believe all we see in the newspapers, but somehow or other the report of Dr. Wm. S. Sadler's address to the ministers assembled in the International Council of Religious Education meeting at Chicago sounds good enough to be true. Perhaps his title, "Director of the Chicago Institute of Research and Diagnosis," leads us to this conclusion: it is easy to believe anything that comes from such sources.

At any rate, Dr. Sadler is quoted as follows: "When the intelligence quotient runs low there is no hope. The Gospel of Jesus Christ will have no effect. For these people praying is a purely emotional experience, and they will go right from it back to sinning. Go ahead and preach the gospel to everyone, but don't try any personal readjustment for those who have not the intellectual foundation."

Well, Doctor, we can't help thinking you are a bit confused in the head. You speak of the Gospel, of prayer, of sin, and of readjustment. If you didn't mention specifically the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we might think you were referring to the gospel of Victor Hugo - Humanitarianism. If you had done that you might find us in partial agreement. Mentioning readjustment throws us over into the realm of psychiatry - and we might find something common to talk about there. But you mention the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you would have us exclude from its purpose those to whom Our Lord came to preach it.

It would have to be an excised Gospel, of course - something like the Old Testament after the Nazis get through with it. St. Peter was willing to forgive his brother "till seven times," but Our Lord told him that until it reached "seventy times seven times" it would not be enough. We are not told that the Good Thief's I.Q. was above 80, but Our Lord saw fit to admit him to paradise. The Pharisees at the home of Simon the Leper were unwilling to allow the Magdalene the benefit of the Gospel, but Our Lord had no such scruples. Our Lord came to preach to the poor and humble, He came to "call, not the just, but sinners to repentance," and He chose as his messengers men whose intelligence quotient would not rank very high, if we are to judge by the type of questions they asked at times.

And, Doctor, you have given us some interesting sidelights on the trend of modernistic thought. You say that for the low-brow prayer is a purely emotional experience - and not so long ago that was about all the modernist would admit prayer to be for anyone. You seem to imply now that it can be something else. You also admit the existence of sin - and that, so far as we can observe, is dragging a leg so far as present-day modernists are concerned. The rip-snorter modernist speaks of "anti-social conduct" and "unscientific living", but not of sin.

The Doctor has his remedy handy, of course. He is not concerned with the soul or the possible future life of the low-brow, of course, but he is concerned with the future of the race here in America. "Sterilize them," he says. "As long as the lowest one-fourth of our population is producing two-thirds of the next generation, how are our grandchildren going to pay taxes for their progeny? When we see from 18 to 20 per cent of the children of the inmates of asylums go out each year to breed children and then come back, we can appreciate that eugenics is the only way to stop the flood."

We don't quite follow the argument, but that may be quite all right. It seems that the I.Q. 90-plus citizens, constituting three-fourths of the population, are too smart to produce more than a third of our population, but not smart enough to pay taxes for the other two-thirds, so we'd better not have the other two-thirds. We will go back to the Director of Research and Diagnosis for a diagram. Meanwhile we have Dr. Sadler's word for it that the I.Q. 80 citizens were not meant for the kingdom of Heaven.