

University of Notre Dame
Religious Bulletin
March 26, 1934

"Evil Be To Him Who Evil Thinketh."

An under-the-counter book by one of the star Impuritans recently received a moral bill of health. The judge thought it an emetic. The average man, in his better moments, thinks it, not inpeccac, but dynamite. Its author is capable of brilliant satire, exquisite beauty, and damnable dirt.

It is hard to figure out the source of the saying, To the pure all things are pure. Is it jaded vice? Insincerity? Is it the Determinism and Irrationalism that grow out of the slime of Freud, the viciousness that says to self, Go on, get rid of your inhibitions and repressions? Or could it be just ignorance?

It seems that saying, To the pure all things are pure, is entirely like saying, To the healthy all things are wholesome, including rat poison.

The run of bad books betrays a public -- jaded, or prurient, or releasing its inhibitions, or what? -- which confounds art with photography, literature and life with debauch, decent reticences with prudery, self-mastery with futility, the psychology of the reader with effete rakishness, malarial swamps with wholesome atmosphere, and dynamite with non-explosives.

There is all the difference in the world between St. John, Chapter Eighth, which starts off with an adultery, and the sensual, serpentine stuff that oozes out of the print of bad books.

It is not to the point to stress the literary values -- and they are often great -- of some bad books. They may be ninety-five percent palatable, but poison in the soup has spoiled banquets.

Purity is not like cold, rugged granite, proof against all assault. It is a matter of prudence, defenses, discipline. And there is not much disciplined living without the discipline of the imagination.

Sow a thought, reap an action;
Sow an action, reap a habit;
Sow a habit, reap a character;
Sow a character, reap a destiny.

If thy right eye scandalize thee
pluck it out
and cast it from thee,
for it is expedient for thee
that one of thy members should perish
rather than
that thy whole body go to Hell.

Until to the healthy all things are wholesome, including rat poison, so long the bad book is the "eye" to be plucked out, the "hand" to be cut off. Strong language, but it's from the greatest sermon in history by Him who dared, and daring, spoke the truth.

PRAYERS: Deceased - Judge Victor Dowling, LL.D., '17; the father of Tad Huebsch, ex-'31; the mother of Don Tasley, '20, of the accounting office; Mrs. Semmes, of Memphis, godmother of Brother Dutton of Kolokai; an aunt of Jack Purdy; the father of Bill Bruno; three friends of students. Ill - Robert Fox (streptococci infection); John J. Murphy, ex-'31 (eye infection); the mother of Harold, '31, and George Stelzer, ex-'35; a friend of Andrew McMahon; a friend of another student. Two special ints.

MESSSES Tuesday - Brownson Memorial Chapel: 6:15, Bruce Crahan (Chemistry Club); 6:25, Wm. Bruno's father.