
Educating the Boor.

In the January 26 issue of America the leading editorial--Educating the Whole Man--comments on the Holy Father's allocution to the Carmelites on the importance of the "natural virtues." Although keeping on its toes is quite a feat, the Bulletin recommends that the campus boors--line-crashers at the dining hall, boors at basketball games, chislers and their ilk--instead of being hit over the head with a No. 1 crowbar to be wised up, be cajoled into realizing this editorial is meant for them.

Catholic schools at all levels proudly profess to educate for two worlds, for here and hereafter. The constant refrain is that we train the "whole man." But "in our moments of introspection and self-criticism, we sometimes complain that we do not prepare our young adequately for this world; or else we anathematize our schools for skimping on the next." The proper balance is a hard one to keep is the material on which we work is uncivilized--secundum quid.

His Holiness elaborated upon the basic theme that the man of grace is built upon the natural man. Grace perfects nature, does not supplant it.

Let them (the students) learn, therefore, and let them show by their conduct that they have learned, how gentlemen ought to act. Let their appearance and their dress be what it ought to be. Let their words be truthful and let them be true to their words. When they have given a promise, let them keep it. Let them be ever the master of their every movement and their every word. Let them show respect for all, disturbing no man in the peaceful possession of his own right (to study, for example). Let them bear unpleasantness graciously, be courteous always. And, most important of all, let them keep God's law.

These words were addressed to all Catholic educators in general, but there is no question about their applicability to the Catholic-to-be-educated in particular.

"The Holy Father's advice," says the editorial, "reminds us that the supernatural builds upon the natural, that the good Christian who cultivates the 'natural virtues' can find it easier to practice the supernatural ones. Education, in short, deals with the whole man. All the virtues that pertain to man, in the natural and supernatural order, need to be sown and cultivated, patiently, over the years."

There is a point in our harping on the priority of "being civilized" in relation to "being cultured." Catholic culture is the refinement of Christian civilization. Good breeding is no guarantee of holiness, but the holy man is enhanced by it.

What we mean to emphasize, continues America, is that our growth as Christians should imply our growth as human beings--on all levels. The possession of these "natural virtues," in a well-trained Catholic, is, in the words of Pius XII, a substructure which often "points up and calls forth the force and charm of the supernatural."

The editorial concludes: "Let our valiant teachers, in their endless war against youthful barbarity, take comfort. When they teach a youngster restraint in his manners, there is more hope that he will know restraint in his morals. A child who respects natural rights and duties will have a clearer eye for supernatural ones. Little (and bigger) ladies and gentlemen make better children of God."

Granted that divine grace perfects nature. We believe in miracles, of course, but no amount of God's grace will ordinarily make saints out of zoological freaks or psychological sneaks. . . Most of us are not human enough to be saints, but if a man can't be a well-mannered pagan chances are he won't make a well-mannered Christian either.
Prayers: father of Dick Leous, '50; Frank Rainboth; aunt and uncle of Father Gartland. Ill, Jim F. McDonald; Mary L. Foley; mother of Ed Schickler (B-P); mother of student.
4 thanksgiving intentions and 14 special intentions. (\$10 received for the poor.)