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C O N T E N T S

What Do Christian Schools Accomplish?

The Evangelistic Note in Our Education

Nature Study Outdoors

Junior High Education in Short Pants

Climate for Learning in the Christian College

Freshman English in College

Book Review

EDITORIAL

By THE EDITOR

What Do Christian Schools Accomplish?

The *Phi Delta Kappan*, one of the better educational journals, has devoted considerable space during the last few years to discussions on the issue of federal aid to education and related problems such as the place of religion in the public schools and the role of the non-public schools. It must be stated, to the credit of the editor, that the various sides of the issues were usually presented.

In the recent December issue, however, the editor shows his bias. In an editorial, "What Do Parochial Schools Accomplish?" he asserts that parochial schools do not reach the goals that they set out to attain. He concludes that since this is the case it would be well for Catholic parents to send their children to public schools and to supplement this education with religious education that is given in special Catholic schools set up for that purpose. This, he argues, can be done at a very nominal cost to Catholic parents since "only four nuns can give 1,000 public school

children an excellent religious education" and it will help to solve the Church State problem in education.

We comment on this editorial for two reasons. The first is the specious reasoning on which the editor draws his support for his contention that parochial schools are not accomplishing what they set out to accomplish. The second is to indicate some of the implications of this kind of strategy for the future of non-public schools.

Unattained Goals

The first exhibit which the editor introduces is a statement attributed to Donald A. Erickson, a professor of education at the University of Chicago. The statement was made at a symposium held in Boston last July. "For several months I have sought evidence that sectarian schools really do affect the values of children, evidence that the parochial schools make their children more religious, more loyal to the church, etc. As yet I have found no evidence whatever that holds up." Mr. Erickson is reported to

have added that "the differences in values, attitudes, and habits between school populations are more likely attributable to differences in home background than to school experience."

We have not read the complete address of the professor (it has not yet been published), but the quotations strike us as immature and arbitrary. To begin with, the techniques used to gather evidence, the kind of evidence sought, and the data upon which his judgment is based are not given. We are asked to accept the statement as a fact upon the professor's say-so.

It is curious, too, that while the professor claims in the first quotation that sectarian schools do not affect the values of children he admits in the second quotation that there are differences in values. He attributes these differences to home background.

Anyone who claims to speak with authority in this area should know that sectarian schools are set up especially for the purpose of teaching the ideas and ideals of the parents to their children. The fact that there are differences in values between children in public and sectarian schools should therefore not be attributed to home background but rather to the success of the schools in instilling in their pupils respect for and adherence to the convictions of the parents.

The second exhibit is a quotation from *The Parochial School*, a book by Rev. Joseph H. Fichter of the Lovola University in New Orleans. Rev. Fichter "studied a typical Catholic school in South Bend, Ind., for a full year and compared its students with those of a typical public school nearby." From this study of only two schools Rev. Fich-

ter draws the conclusion that: "There appears to be little difference between parochial and public school children in their standards of conduct. The children in both schools accept and demonstrate, in about the same proportion . . . honesty, obedience, gratitude, self-control, and kindliness."

With due respect for Rev. Fichter's ability as a sociologist, we direct attention to the fact that his statement is based on a study of pupils in only two schools. This scant sampling hardly warrants the conclusion that parochial schools as a group have failed to attain their goals.

Neither does Rev. Fichter refer to any motivation for the behavior of the pupils. Behavior is directed largely by one's basic philosophy of life and of the world. To imply that pupils from different schools, in spite of differences in the philosophies taught in these schools, behave and will continue to behave in the same way is tantamount to implying that any basic outlook on life or philosophy of life is as good as any other. We doubt if Rev. Fichter meant to make such an assertion.

We are tempted to ask, Is this the best evidence that can be adduced to prove that sectarian or parochial schools are failing in their function?

A New Strategy

The editorial is significant also in that it gives a hint, if not a warning, of a change in strategy on the part of the enemies of the non-public schools. So far they have claimed that non-public schools are not entitled to public funds, but this line of action has placed them in the unfavorable position of having to produce evidence for their

The *Christian Educators Journal* is published by the Christian Educators Association, whose members teach in, or are committed to the idea of, Christian day schools, whether at the elementary, secondary, or college level.

The general purpose of this journal is to foster the continuing improvement of educational theory and practice in Christian schools. Therefore, its pages are an open forum for the publication of significant articles and studies by Christian educators on Christian teaching. All articles and editorials appearing in it are to be regarded as the expression of the viewpoint of the writers and not as the official position of the Christian Educators Association.

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claims. They are now shifting the burden of proof to the supporters of the non-public schools by demanding that the latter indicate in what way or to what extent their schools accomplish what the public schools fail to accomplish.

It is well to ponder what such action will mean for the future of the Christian day schools. Will it place emphasis on results of education to the extent that all planning and all changes will be considered primarily in relation to their bearing on the evaluation that will be made of their pupils and grad-

uates? And will concern for a thorough and sound educational program be subordinated to the concern for what others outside of the Christian school system say about our students?

It is also well for Christian school teachers to contemplate the future of their profession if they will be compelled to consider the results of education to the exclusion of the child and if they have to place major emphasis on the end product of learning rather than on the process of learning.

"The Evangelistic Note in Our Education"

BY REV. D. H. WALTERS*

We have always said that America's hope lies in the education of her children. Leading educators once thought that illiteracy was the root of our national problem, and considered a sound education for all to be the only answer. But education as such was not the answer. We need Christian education — no, we need more than that; we need *Christian Evangelistic* education.

Evangelical vs Evangelistic

We believe that our education must be *evangelical* — that is, touching or reflecting the truths of the gospel. It means the strong assertion of all the fundamental doctrines of the Protestant faith. This is a big order. To instruct the

children in the great truths of Christianity as we know it from the Bible and from our historical faith.

But our education must be more than that. It must also be of the nature of missionary or soul-winning. It must be *evangelistic*. It must concern itself with the soul of the child. To be Christian education, it must seek to make Christians!

It happened in one of our Grand Rapids schools a few years ago that a saintly, good Christian school teacher taught the lesson in Bible on faith — the four kinds of soil in Jesus' parable. She not only taught the lesson objectively, but applied it and said, "We need true faith, boys and girls. The other soils rep-

resent a faith that is not lasting. How many of you have true faith?" It was just before recess period and the bell rang and several of the boys and girls remarked, "What concern is that to her, whether we have true faith? That is the preacher's business." I felt very sad when I heard this. Have we cut up the teaching of our children into segments? Is only the minister concerned about their soul? Should not everybody in a Christian school be concerned about one another's spiritual welfare?

Our Observation and Interpretation

We observe that it is possible to develop a theistic philosophy of education, which will acknowledge God, even as the Jehovah of His people, our Covenant God. It might satisfy a Jew, as long as it is silent on the concepts of salvation, redemption, regeneration of the soul and call of the Gospel in *Christ*.

We interpret Christian education to be that instruction that arises out of the believing, regenerated, redeemed grace-consciousness of Christian parents, and aims to give a *Christian* World and life view, to youth that is regarded and respected as lambs of Christ's flock, those that are "sanctified in Christ."

Implications of the Question Raised in the Topic

- We raise the question whether in our present parental, convenantal interpretation our philosophy of education has not left out the ideal of "saving" the child's soul.
- We raise the question whether the original ideal of our Christian school fathers was not more redemptive than we interpret it today.
- We ask the question whether great emphasis on academics has not brought the head way beyond the heart and the will.

- We raise the question whether parochialism may not have a more "saving", "confirmation" ideal than the parental ideal as we interpret it today, of giving a Theistic World and Life View.
- The implication is a return to the evangelistic as *the* Christian ingredient in our Christian education.

Arguments for the Evangelistic Element in Our Christian Education

- Our Christian education grows out of the Antithesis concept. All of human life and history is in the light of it. The seed of the serpent versus the *Seed* of the Woman. That puts the *Christ* at the foundation of all instruction.
- Our Christian education grows out of the *Covenant of Grace* revelation. Believers and their children are the redeemed, blood-bought race. Christ is the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace; there is no Covenant without *Him*.
- Our Christian education, although very much committed to the general revelation of God and the field of common grace, still is not to divorce these realms from God's special Redemptive Revelation and God's saving grace program. Is our education Christian at all if the scarlet line of redemption is not evident? As J. B. Phillips points out in his essay on Plain Christianity where he describes this planet (our earth) as the Visited Planet, so we are to see this great Christ visit as *the* characteristic of this earth's history and worth in God's sight. This is Christian interpretation.
- Evangelism is not only the opening of the door for a sinner, who after Christ is confessed (or who is assumed to be a regenerate confessor) can then live by General Revelation and Common Grace. Says Dr. A. C. Gettys, Professor of Religious Education at Baylor College, "Evangelism means telling, teaching, or proclaiming the evangel, the good news of the Christian religion in such a way that people will understand, accept, and live the message. In the deepest sense and broadest sense of the word, the central aim and purpose of all Christian religious education is evangelism."

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- An evangelistic note in education offsets the possible undesirable effects of an extreme Presumptive Regeneration emphasis.
- As all our education is dealing with youth and immature humanity, the Christian teacher is never through with the evangelistic presentation and establishment of the evangelical content.
- In our Christian schools the evangelistic approach is the best and most effective approach in all disciplinary matters. It deals most fairly with the offender. It appeals to a Christian

conscience. It prevents a guilt complex through the message of forgiveness in Christ. It only has the appeal of avoiding offense before the world.

- As Reformed Christians we have a Theocentric emphasis which centers around a Christo-centric gospel.
- John Calvin's motto and his song, "I greet thee who my sure Redeemer art", certainly stress evangelistic truth.
- The evangelistic note is an essential ingredient in our education to keep it "Christian" education.

NATURE STUDY OUTDOORS

By PAUL E. TAYLOR*

How much use have you made of God's outdoor laboratory in the teaching of natural science? For the Christian teacher the potentials for pursuing nature study in the field are tremendous. But from personal observation, this is a much neglected area in Christian circles. This fact is difficult to understand, for the created world about us is God's handiwork. Although it is incomplete and sometimes marred, it speaks to us of God. It is God's natural revelation to all men everywhere. Romans, Chapter 1, verse 20 is clear: "For the invisible things of him (God) from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

With few exceptions, boys and girls have an innate interest in the

out-of-doors. Given a little encouragement, this interest will be greatly increased.

Reasons for Outdoor Nature Study

Why should nature study outdoors be encouraged? Although there are many reasons, four important ones are:

FIRST - Each pupil is able to become personally involved. Being in close contact with the out-of-doors he learns by experience that, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork," Psalm 19:1. For the child, it is a natural step from the physical evidence in the universe to God's special revelation, the Scriptures. From the Scriptures he learns of God's principles governing the order in the world of nature and His working in history, including His plan of redemption

through His Son, Jesus Christ. He comes to know personally that the Bible and science are not contradictory but supplementary to one another. Very clearly, the child's association with nature is one of the best means possible for stimulating God-consciousness.

SECOND - The out-of-doors provides a wholesome atmosphere free from the artificial values of materialism. Jesus often found it necessary to go into the wilderness or to a mountain to meditate and pray. He took time to observe the creatures about him, the flowers of the field.

Most boys and girls today (including many from Christian homes) are caught up in our too fast pace of life and have neither the time nor the correct atmosphere for the development of the proper values of life.

As children are taught that our wildlife and natural resources are not just things to be killed or destroyed, that they are rather to be used wisely, appreciated and enjoyed as a vital part of the Creator's plan, very favorable and noble attitudes - kindness, love, fairness, unselfishness - are usually developed.

THIRD - Exploration in the realm of nature provides opportunity for many learning experiences. Children develop their powers of observation while familiarizing themselves with the world about them. They become more aware of their surroundings and learn to analyze what they see.

This happens in many ways. When I took my class on a hike to a pond one day, a small flock of ducks was spotted. In attempting to identify the species, some pupils made quick and accurate observations - identification by accumula-

tion of certain characteristics and field marks. Others spent time carefully weighing the evidence and checking the field guide. One pupil, by observing what the ducks were not doing or did not have, came to the correct conclusion by the process of elimination.

FOURTH - The future welfare of our God-given natural heritage is in the hands of tomorrow's citizens; and tomorrow's citizens are the boys and girls of today. These boys and girls need to know personally about the need for conservation. They must be given to know that there is not always "more where that came from." Basically, it involves the matter of Christian stewardship, which was characteristic of our Pilgrim and Puritan forefathers.

Preparation for the Teacher

Some special preparation will be necessary in studying nature outdoors, especially for the teacher who has done little or nothing in this area before.

A few good books should be read and studied.¹

The following titles should be helpful in suggesting the general approach:

Wildlife At Your Doorstep, Glen Rounds (Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey)

Handbook of Nature Study, Anna Botsford Comstock (Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York)

Conservation For Camp and Classroom, R. O. Bale (Burgess Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minnesota)

¹(The listing of a book in this article does not mean a blanket endorsement of that book by the writer, especially when Christian understandings are involved. It does mean that the book is helpful in the particular area it covers.)

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General information about the natural world will be found in such books as:

The Continent We Live On (Young Reader's Edition), Ivan T. Sanderson (Random House, New York)

Land Alive, Ronald N. Rood (Stephen Greene Press, Brattleboro, Vermont)

There are many excellent books about specific areas of natural science. The following have been of real value to me personally:

For the study of wild flowers —
Beginner's Guide To Wild Flowers, Ethel Hinckley Hausman (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York)

For bird study —
The Bird Watcher's Guide, Henry Hill Collins, Jr. (Golden Press, New York)

A Field Guide To The Birds (of the East), Roger Tory Peterson (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston)

A Field Guide To Western Birds, same.
Birds Of America, T. Gilbert Pearson, Editor (Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., Garden City, New York)

For the study of trees —
A Field Guide To Trees And Shrubs, George A. Petrides (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston)

For insect study —
Field Book of Insects, Frank E. Lutz (G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York)
A Field Guide To The Butterflies, A. B. Klots (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston)

For the study of reptiles and amphibians —

A Field Guide to Reptiles And Amphibians, Roger Conant (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston)

The Reptiles Of North America, Raymond L. Ditmars (Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York)

For the study of mammals —
A Field Guide To The Mammals, William H. Burt and Richard P. Gross-

enheider (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston)

In many of these areas the little Golden Nature Guides are very satisfactory. This series also includes guides on *Fishes*, *Seashores* and *Weather*.

The above list is far from exhaustive but should prove more than adequate for most needs on an elementary level.

Participation in the activities of local nature clubs and membership in such groups as the National Audubon Society (which sponsors Junior Audubon Clubs) will provide many opportunities through publications, trips, meetings and nature films for increasing your understanding and appreciation of our wildlife and natural resources. Information about the Society may be obtained by writing to the National Audubon Society, 1130 Fifth Avenue, New York 28, New York.

It may be necessary for some teachers to overcome certain prejudices concerning different wildlife forms so that wrong ideas will not be conveyed to the pupils. For example, if you have a fear of snakes and yet you realize that these creatures, being a vital part of God's check and balance system, will likely be found in the course of your explorations with the class, it may be helpful to visit a reptile collection and talk with a competent herpetologist. When such personal fears are overcome, the teacher in turn will have the privilege of helping others to overcome similar baseless fears.

The more time you personally spend in the field alone or with your class, the more you will learn and the better equipped you will be for teaching nature study outdoors.

Methods of Stimulating Pupil Interest

Children's interest in the out-of-doors may be stimulated in various ways.

Visits to local, state and national parks are always fine. But just as rewarding are walks through fields and woods, hikes along the seashore, lakeside or river bank and explorations beside a pond. Just stopping to examine carefully a small area to discover the life and activity it holds provides a genuine learning experience.

The field guides mentioned earlier should be available to the children. Some may wish to purchase copies of their own. To help with identification, nature slides and wildlife films are excellent. For use in the field, the availability of a pair of 6 x 30, 7 x 35, or 7 x 50 binoculars is practically a necessity.

If you take pictures, teaching your pupils to use a camera in photographing wildlife will develop skill and true sportsmanship. Some in your class may be interested in making sketches of certain nature subjects.

The use of nature games is an excellent way to increase pupil interest and learning. Listening

quizzes are good. So are games using flash cards. Electrically wired quiz games can be made which cause a light to flash or a buzzer to sound when the answer is correct.

In late summer and early fall you might try observing a bee gathering nectar, or a praying mantis stalking, catching and eating another insect. This is also a good time to observe the many different kinds of seeds.

During the winter, feeding stations can be planned and set up, each pupil having a part in the maintenance of the station. Of course, care should be taken to insure the safety of the creatures which come to feed.

You may want to encourage the keeping of a check list of some kind, after making an appropriate introduction to the particular field of interest. For example, having the class begin individual bird check lists on the 1st of January teaches each pupil how to keep records and to be accurate in his observations.

All these means and many more, adapted to the particular age level you teach, will serve to create proper understanding regarding the world of nature and the One who is its author.

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"What are the requirements of a teacher that he may thus perform his holy office to do his share in the unfolding of the child and in preparing it for a complete and significant life? This is our most pertinent question. In answering this question we point to three elements that are of necessity implied in the position and work of a real teacher. The first is authority. The second is a vital interest in the child. The third is a genuine enthusiasm for the ideals of life for which the child is being prepared." Rev. G. W. Hylkema in **Foundations in Christian Education**.

JUNIOR HIGH EDUCATION IN SHORT PANTS

By NORMAN DE JONG*

Our Christian schools are rooted firmly in Scriptural mandates. This may sound trite, but it is necessary and proper, whenever discussing Christian education, that this be the basis for such discussion. This emphasis within the Christian Reformed denomination is older than the denomination itself, but even today we cannot allow this emphasis to stand without explanation.

Educational Objectives

To base our total educational program on Scripture means that our educational leaders must explore and digest the many mandates of Scripture, organize these principles into related areas of thought, and then be able to develop and articulate a meaningful, orthodox philosophy of life and the world. This has been done for us most clearly by John Calvin, but if this philosophy is going to have a bearing on our thoughts and actions today, it must be interpreted afresh for each generation. Recognizing that this philosophy has been articulated, and assuming that it has been freshly stated in the recent past, the next step is one of outlining the goals or objectives toward which our educational program should be striving. Once these objectives have been clearly stated, we can then attempt to determine by which courses, textbooks, activities, and teachers we can arrive at those objectives with the greatest efficiency and accuracy. A final step in this laborious pro-

cess of establishing education is evaluation, or testing, to see whether the objectives have been met.

Inter-Varsity Athletics

The theme of this article is not the Scriptural foundation, the world and life philosophy, or the Biblically-oriented objectives. Rather, the theme of this article is a particular facet of our school's activities by which we supposedly are attempting to meet our objectives. This particular activity is the inter- varsity athletic program being conducted in many of our junior high schools.

If the reader will kindly consent to the primary thoughts as expressed in paragraphs one and two of this article, I think we can proceed into a worthwhile discussion.

Does It Aid In Attaining Our Objectives?

Why do we have inter- varsity athletics on the junior high level? Are we attempting to meet some specific objective, or any objective, for that matter? Are inter- varsity sports on this level defensible in the light of our Scriptural foundations or our Biblically-based philosophy? Have we ever tried to give a purpose to these activities? If you have presented a rationale for your program, which came first, the program or the rationale?

Have we ever attempted to evaluate and test these activities so as

to determine whether they are a help or a hindrance? If your school, or you as an individual, has evaluated these, was that evaluation objective and clear-headed, or was it emotion-packed?

These are hard questions to ask, but even harder to answer. However, ask them we must. Crisis in education is just around the corner, if not already in open view. That crisis may take many forms, but when it comes to your school door, your forward march may hinge on your ability to state your purposes and objectives with clarity, depth, and conviction.

For this reason, if for none other, we would do well to evaluate further at this time the activities under consideration.

In the author's opinion, admittedly based on a limited number of situations, inter- varsity athletic competition has grown and increased in importance without much rhyme or reason. In most schools this type of program has probably evolved quite naturally out of a weak physical education program and was pushed into existence by one or more staff members who held athletic interests. Such a beginning would seem to be quite natural in the light of the current American spirit. During the past few decades Americans have become increasingly sports- minded, if not sports- mad, with very few ever stopping to assess its merits. Occasionally some supposedly far- out psychologist analytically stabs at the sports world, but his analysis is most often the object of scorn and derision. In connection with this, it is interesting to note that, despite our heavy emphasis on sports at all levels, it is necessary for the President of the United States to cite the physical

flabbiness of the American youth. This, I think, is an indictment against our practice of glorifying the few and causing the masses to become spectators. In some cases this practice may prevent our physical education program from reaching the minimum level as set by our state departments of public instruction. I don't feel that any one person can be accused of creating this mad sports whirl. All of us are at least partially at fault. All of us enjoy a lively basketball game. In fact, all of us can become a bit hysterical in tense situations. Girls frequently cry, grown men occasionally shed a tear or lose their temper, and frustrated fathers can become loud in their derision of the "lousy" coach who didn't include Johnny on the team roster.

This type of activity is exciting. It occasionally raises money for the needy physical education program, and it creates a lot of interest amongst the student body. Why stop it?

Does It Aid the Learning Process?

The first reason is that no worthwhile objective is being met. This assumption has been negatively dealt with in preceding paragraphs and will be more positively explained later in this article by use of two counter-arguments.

The second reason is that inter- varsity sports on all levels, but especially in the junior high, is frequently detrimental to the participant's academic program and the development of his Christian character. To many students that the author has personally observed, the school's athletic program has become a definite block to learning. So much of their mental energy, so much of their physical energy, so much of their emotions, and so

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much of their conversation is devoted to athletic success that these students can't possibly achieve academically with any degree of efficiency. But most of us teachers become involved ourselves to the point where we unconsciously refuse to recognize this as a learning block. If we do consciously recognize it, we are frequently reluctant to attack it. No one complains, or almost no one, when the team is about to bring home glory and put the name of our school on the map.

While our athletic program is creating learning blocks in many of the participants' minds (incidentally, some of these blocks remain immovable for years) it also is helping to create an undesirable system of values for our students. Students are led to believe that athletic success is more important than academic achievement because the high-scoring forward is more apt to be the hero than is the studious academic leader. Most children (and adults) want recognition, and these students know where it can more easily be found.

Does It Aid in Developing Christian Character?

In addition to the creation of undesirable value systems, I think it both possible and plausible that basketball games contribute to the weakening of morals and the disturbing of emotions in our growing young people. Allow me to explain. When we conduct gym classes in grades 9 and above, most of our schools insist on boys' and girls' classes being held separately. This is done so that the opposite sexes won't observe each other engaging in physical activity while wearing abbreviated garments. This is wise

because these young people are just beginning to realize what it means to be a man or a woman in the physical sense of the terms. But, do we adhere to this thinking at the time of the game? The answer is obvious. At such a time we actually encourage the most attractive girls (generally known as cheerleaders) to don free-flowing skirts and stir up enthusiasm. Meanwhile ten young boys or twelve young girls nervously provide the entertainment in the name of education. Junior high education in short pants.

Some Pertinent Considerations

Some of the proponents for inter- varsity athletics build their case around the idea of competition. They argue that our schools are attempting to prepare our growing young people to lead a successful adult life. They further point out that the adult world is a fiercely competitive one, and that success or failure depends on a person's ability to face and cope with this competition. The conclusion of their argument is that one of the best ways to develop such personalities and characters is by having our future adults engage in highly competitive sports.

Let us, for now at least, accept their basic statements, but withhold judgment on their conclusion. Assuming that we are preparing adolescents for adult life, and assuming that adult life is fiercely competitive, should not we then strive to give this type of character-building experience to every adolescent placed in our care? Should not every youngster have the opportunity to engage in athletic competition? I think they should. For this reason the author is a strong advocate of a good intra-

mural program on the junior high level. A desirable program of this sort would involve every able-bodied student in grades 7 through 9, whether they be male or female. This intramural competition should take in many sports, ranging from "touch" football, softball, volleyball, basketball, and field hockey to such indoor activities as table tennis and badminton. Such an intramural program should be closely planned and supervised by staff personnel. In the supervision of such, aspects of play dealing with cooperation, teamwork, good sportsmanship, and leadership must be emphasized.

Such a program will involve a good deal of work, but if we truly be attempting to prepare youngsters for entering the competitive adult world, then this program must take precedence over any inter-varsity program. Also, the glory and the prestige will be appreciably lacking, but it isn't for such passing things that we operate schools, is it?

There are other favorable aspects to be considered. An all-student program such as has been recommended above does not require hours of precious practice time. Such a program will not become as competitive or as partisan as an inter-varsity program and thus will not tend to warp aspirations or value systems of the participants. In addition, intramurals are not apt to glorify the minority at the expense of the few.

The arguments of the inter- varsity proponents can be approached from another, and possibly better, angle. In this second attempt to counter their conclusion let us again agree to their two basic assumptions, namely, that the world of adults is competitive, and that

we are coaching youngsters for those eventful years. In again withholding judgment of their conclusion, let us attempt to weigh the transfer value of inter-varsity sports.

Is the life-battle of adults fought with basketballs, baskets, referees, cheerleaders, and hoarse mobs on the sidelines? Or is it fought with words and ideas and logic? From my experience, I would have to judge in favor of the latter. Success or failure depends on clarity of expression, on clear articulation of thought, and weight of logic. Why not, then, prepare our youth accordingly? Why not, then, train them, already as junior high students, in debate, original oratory, extemporaneous speaking, and interpretive reading? Certainly these activities will have definite transfer value. But how much do our schools do with these activities? Practically nothing! Our junior high schools that do emphasize this type of extra-curricular activity should certainly be commended and should forge into positions of leadership. And, in case anyone should venture to say that they don't have time, let them first admit that they don't have time for an inter-varsity athletic program.

As a former high school debate and forensics coach, the author knows the frustration of recruiting debaters and speakers from a class of tenth graders, none of whom have had experience. But, as a former debater and extemporaneous speaker, the author knows that the skills and discipline that were at least partially mastered can repeatedly be called into play and will never be lost. I think all of our schools would do well to assess their over-all extra-curricular offerings with the personal future of

their students firmly in mind. Forensics and debate have definite transfer value and could easily be begun on the junior high level, but it is difficult, if not impossible, for these programs to live and grow in importance if the program itself has to compete with softball or basketball or cheerleading. Anybody with a clear vision can see where the immediate glory and prestige lie. I only hope, however, that there are enough people with vision clear enough to see where the value lies.

Hopefully, our junior high schools will have a strong physical education program, and the word "strong" here does not mean one physical education class per week, lasting thirty minutes per session. Hopefully, our schools will have a worthwhile intramural program where students learn the importance of cooperation and many new games. Hopefully, our schools will have a

budding, lively debate and forensics program to accompany their choir and band. If these be in vogue at your school, and if the academics are pursued with any vigor, will there be any time left for inter-varsity sports? Throw into the extra-curricular pot a mixture of piano lessons, a school newspaper, a school annual, a skating party or two, Cadet and Calvinette meetings, and maybe a little family life. We could add more, but the mixture is already running over the sides and into the academic pie. With the academic pie so quickly susceptible to spoiling, wouldn't we do well to re-evaluate the extra-curriculars? Had not we better analyze carefully to determine which of those extra ingredients has the least long-range value and which has the most acidic bite on the lives and values of the covenant children we are supposed to nurture?

* * *

"Our desire for the child should be that he live simply, that he care deeply, that he live energetically, that he live passionately in order that living thus he may develop every capacity and live fully in every relation of life." Henry J. Ryskamp in **Foundations in Christian Education**.

* * *

"Teaching is not a lost art but the regard for it is a lost tradition." Jacques Barzun in **Teacher in America**.

CLIMATE FOR LEARNING IN THE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

BY ROBERT VANDER VENNEN*

In what kind of educational climate can learning best take place in the Reformed Christian College? The characteristic aims of Calvinistic higher education should give us guidelines for classroom instruction but also for developing a total college environment in which college students can most fruitfully mature.

What Constitutes A Christian College Education?

The need to examine and consciously to develop a unified educational climate comes from the fact that college students are not merely told what to do and what to learn. Students have many choices and their education can take many possible directions within the scope of the college program. Therefore we need to consider the educational objectives to which we are committed and how college is able to help students, within these objectives, to formulate their own educational goals and move toward them.

The Reformed Christian College centers its instruction on the liberal arts. Historically, the liberal arts were studied by the economically privileged, freemen who did not themselves need to learn the skills of an occupation. They could give attention to those studies which freed the mind and spirit of man from prejudice and dependence on the opinions of others. This learning was for the cultural and intellectual advancement of the learners,

and through them for the benefit of other men. It is necessary for the Christian college to transform the meaning of the liberal arts from that tradition of man-centered learning. At Trinity, learning is seen as the fullest possible development of the individual personality in the service of God. The direction of Christian education is toward God, and the Christian's calling is to serve his Maker and Redeemer.

We ask that each student at our college take as his own goal for life the fullest possible development of himself in the service of God. We teachers pledge to give ourselves fully to assist in this.

Although we are interested in the student's total development, our major thrust is toward intellectual development, while recognizing that no person can be compartmentalized and that true understanding requires the support and resources of the total personality. At college the student builds significantly on high school studies to inquire deeply into the nature of the physical world, the nature of the human person and the human forces operating in the world, all considered in relation to God who made and sustains them. Intellectual development will be most significant when the early educational experiences of the college student are as varied as possible, so he can discover in the world and in himself a richness that he has

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not seen before. This can open his personality to a greater responsiveness and open more possibilities for future professional study. It will also discourage a student from the early narrow specialization which will too early limit his self-conceptions and social roles to those consistent with members of a certain specialty group.

It Is More Than Gaining Information.

Gaining information should not in itself be the major objective of education. College teachers are becoming increasingly aware that college education must go beyond the student's acquiring information. Of course, information that is as complete and relevant as possible must underlie all distinctions, analyses, value judgments, and applications. And, in many pre-professional programs the student must master certain factual information before he can advance to more sophisticated levels of understanding and professional application. The student of chemistry, for example, needs to know the basic data and theories of general chemistry before he can undertake more specialized study. But even here we face the complication that new information is increasing at a faster rate than we can teach or students can learn.

The amount of information we can learn in college is so limited, and we forget so easily. These difficulties are not new but they have a new intensity. The problems of the world are becoming so vastly complex, and the demands upon leaders become correspondingly greater. Colleges must find new ways to teach, and must concentrate on leaving the student with a valuable residuum from college after the information he has learned

in college is no longer of use to him.

However, our Christian colleges ask that students share with their teachers goals of which acquiring information and skills is only a part. Our colleges cannot justify their existence from the information which our students can learn. They can accomplish this at a secular university as well as with us. Teaching at our colleges tries to use new understanding to develop new values, attitudes, and motivation for living the Christian life. The instruction and the entire educational climate must be interpretive, from such a perspective that students can see that even the stones speak praise to God who made them. From this kind of knowledge will come deeper faith which works itself out in lives of dedicated service.

The Christian liberal arts college justifies its existence when students are freely motivated to attitudes and behavior patterns which reflect the goals of the college. We expect the actions of students in the years after college to show that they have been at our college. For this, the education we offer should enter the student deeply enough to affect his personality structure—to affect him at the heart of his being. There is education and there are courses that have no deep effect, that remain somewhat peripheral to the student's inner nature. But at least some of the education must strike home deeply for us to call our colleges liberal arts colleges, and to call them Christian.

It Leads To Independent Judgments.

For recent high school graduates college is a bridge between the dependency of adolescence and the

independence of adulthood. Even in a day when young people have much freedom, students must conform to rules of conduct set by parents and high schools. Especially in homes and churches that are religiously conservative there are strong pressures on young people to conform not only in conduct but also in values and attitudes. If these values are basically good, it is during these transition years that the young person should find in himself the change from accepting them on the authority of parents and church to accepting them out of the inner compulsion that these basic values alone are right, that they alone give a meaningful pattern for living in the world as it really is.

To achieve these purposes the college education must go beyond transmitting knowledge and skills. It must open up the student to be responsive in new ways to new knowledge and new problems. It must help him move from a condition of dependence on the authority of others to independent ability to analyze new situations, evaluate the insights and responses of others, and arrive at conclusions and a course of action which significantly arise from his own insights and developed abilities. Moreover, college education will need to motivate the student to keep on trying to learn after he has left college.

The college must address itself to these larger needs if it is to serve the student and the community effectively. This must be a cooperative concern of the college, the students, and the community. There must be a total climate of many elements bound together to make

possible full Christian liberal arts learning.

It Is Based On Student Participation.

What are some of the elements we need to have an effective climate for learning? Clearly the student will need to be an active participant in his education, not simply the recipient of pre-packaged instruction. Each student will need to bear a large responsibility for his own education if it is to affect him deeply as a person and train him to continue his education when he can no longer depend on teachers. As a high school student he has looked to teachers to supply him with the material he must learn, that is, with the answers every student must know. But if, when he is a college graduate, he is to find uniquely and responsibly solutions to the problems of his time, then when he is a college student a significant part of his education will need to come, not as answers, but in the form of questions. The answers to these questions come from personal struggles, with sympathetic guidance from the teacher, to evaluate the information and formulate satisfactory answers.

From this viewpoint the emphasis in college education is more on learning than on teaching. The teacher uses whatever educational methods are appropriate to facilitate that learning. In courses with significant liberal arts impact there will be emphasis on wide and deep reading, with the student led to evaluate critically the thinking of others. But the best learning takes place when questions arise which are important to the student himself, and he uses the library, teach-

ers, classmates, parents — every resource he can — to arrive at answers to stand up under close examination. For this kind of learning the teacher is a guide who enables the student to see order in a complex subject, asks clarifying questions, and evaluates critically student work, always keeping a Biblical Christian perspective clearly before the student. Over a period of time the student develops a competence of his own so that he becomes less dependent on the teacher.

If an objective of liberal arts education is to bring the student to a greater independence and personal responsibility, the teaching methods and the entire educational atmosphere will need to give the student sufficient range for his educational searches. The studies of the Christian student need to range as widely as there is need for Christian witness. This means, too, that investigations will at times move across subject area boundaries, so that the resources of more than one department of study will be used in working at certain questions.

We must be alert to the constant temptation — a most alluring one in Christian colleges — to give the student “safe” answers in a protected environment. The student must study and discuss ideas that have originated within his own religious heritage, but also ideas hostile to it. He needs to understand and appreciate Calvin’s *Institutes*, but he also needs to understand clearly the ideology and slippery methods of communism. When the student leaves our college he will be living in a real world where there are real problems. We may not neglect or sugar-coat these problems, hoping

the student will never need to face them. We believe that a purpose of Christian education is to enable students to develop their personal resources to understand and vigorously combat the anti-Christian and less-than-Christian currents in the world today and the world of tomorrow. Reformed Christianity has not been content merely to denounce from a distance ideas hostile to it. At its best it has confronted the world with the transforming power of the gospel to bring under Christ all the actions and thoughts of men. For this our students need to be deeply and anti-sympathetically informed about false ideas, by understanding them from the inside. Writings by Marx, Darwin, and Faulkner appear in our library. We hear speakers we will not agree with so we may understand the ideas they actually advocate, may ask them critical questions, and analyze and contrast their ideas with our own views. These are discussed in the classroom and argued in the cafeteria. There is no better way for these problems to be met than in an atmosphere where students can be guided and supported by well educated Christian teachers.

Such an educational program needs administrative support to develop a unified climate for learning. The administration should take the lead in interpreting to the supporting Christian community the educational purposes and methods of the college. It should also work with teachers in evaluating and arranging teaching situations so there will be the most favorable educational and spiritual student growth. And if a major college goal is to develop student responsibility and mature independence in learning, the same approach should be

taken toward student conduct on campus. Rules for conduct should give students room to see the need for developing the responsibility that must be the counterpart of adult freedoms. Students must assume much responsibility to set good patterns of ethical conduct, including integrity in course work and respect for the property of others.

Learning in this educational climate will bring greatest satisfactions to students who have the personal openness to benefit from teaching that is less highly structured than they have been accustomed to. It will appeal to students with strong intellectual curiosity. Creative students will find encouragement to go beyond answers that others have given. On the other hand, students who are very dependent on their superiors, have a strong need to conform, who are passive, or who study best when the subject matter is neatly organ-

ized for them will be less comfortable than they were in high school study. They should be led to understand their own needs in relation to this need: that higher education be not only deeper study but also study of such a kind that the student must begin to make his own order out of the complexity of the world. And the college will need to have the flexibility in its program to work effectively with a diversity of students.

This is a call for college education which is an inquiry into all facets of the world as God’s revelation to us. It is a committed inquiry. There is no limit to the subjects we can study, but there is a limit to what we will embrace. We submit all our teaching and learning to Him whom we know to be our Lord and King and Judge. We say with Augustine: “Let the good and true Christian understand that wherever truth may be found, it belongs to the Master.”

Adapted from the address by Dr. Robert E. Vander Vennen, Dean of Faculty and Associate Professor of Chemistry, given in September 1963, at the fifth annual convocation at Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, Illinois.

FRESHMAN ENGLISH IN THE COLLEGE

BY MERLE MEETER*

The English Teacher's Problem

Twelve years of formal language instruction and eighteen years of exposure to varying levels of usage in everyday situations complicate the instructional task of freshman English in college. Moreover, as college students come from many parts of this country, and also from other countries, their preparation in the various categories subsumed under the heading Freshman English has been shockingly diverse, varying even from school to school within the same system or school district.

Indeed, even teachers in the same school commonly indulge their predilections, sometimes candidly, sometimes covertly: one spends six weeks on diagramming, another derides or ignores the device; one has a unit on logical approaches and fallacies, another merely mentions the hasty generalization; one tolerates colloquial and slang in student essays, another, a purist, slashingly gores *kids*; one teaches the grammatical constructs, diagnosing and binding all split infinitives; another cannot differentiate participle and gerund.

However, there are even more serious disagreements on course content and aims. Many students enter college with no experience in diagramming or parsing; many know nothing about the paraphrase, the précis, the book review (not the plot-summary book report), dictionary labels and mark-

ings, library research, footnoting and bibliography. But these gaps can be closed. The gaps I mean are those that cannot be filled, or even bridged, by two semesters of freshman English. For example, the student who has never written an essay in high school gets therapeutic *D's* on his college essays only through an abeyance of pedagogical integrity. The student who has not been taught the peculiar uses of the semicolon, colon, and dash can memorize the rules, but he cannot master the practice in the few class periods that seemingly must be scheduled for punctuation review. And for a college freshman who has never before been excited, or even expected, to write a short story, dialogue, sketch, or poem, any creative writing assignment evokes the concomitants of ignorance: revulsion and fear.

Whereas some high school curricula stress grammar and rhetoric, many other high schools have but one year of language instruction, followed by three years of literature — and the literature may be anthologies, paperbound novels, short-story collections, magazines, the *Reader's Digest*, or anything verbal that reflects the interest of the teacher. Obviously, therefore, the college instructor in freshman English can assume no congruity of literary or language experience among his students. And if he *could* rely on consistent, catholic training, the whole gamut of in-

tellectual and creative ability — product of interest, curiosity, inspiration, enthusiasm, disciplined study, religious commitment, vocational dedication — would continue to present such unclassifiable disparity that there would persist the embarrassing dilemma of remedial versus honors sections.

Preparation and personal abilities of freshman being widely diversified — especially in colleges that have liberal admissions policies — the English faculty must start anew in whatever it demands that freshmen know; to presume student competence in any phase of language study would be fatuous. Even good students need intensive review; but how review? Workbook drill proves unsatisfactory, for there is little transfer of knowledge to actual writing experiences; and even after such drill, remedial students continue to fail standardized tests. (Several universities now "advise" linguistically defective students to employ an upperclassman tutor at \$1.00-\$2.00 an hour — a Pilate-like repudiation of the problem.)

To keep the review of rhetorical fundamentals from eradicating all pleasure from written composition, and to retain the respect, or at least the toleration of the linguistically astute student, honors programs in freshman English have been devised. Dartmouth freshmen, mostly above average in language sophistication, study Milton and Shakespeare during the first semester, embark on individual research projects in the second semester (See A. R. Kitzharber's *Themes, Theories and Therapy*,

McGraw-Hill). However, in the less selective college, it would be stultifying — for teacher and students — to be deprived of the three or four A students who occasionally animate a class of 25. For every class of honors students, there will be five or six deprived classes of "average" students; and pity the man who must teach three of these "regular" sections.

A Proposal

To teach heterogeneous classes* of freshman English is possible, however, if the course emphasis is what I believe it should be: written expression. A few colleges still insert a unit on speech; but as a round of speeches takes over three class periods, most freshman English courses omit oral training to save time and to preserve some unity of focus. I have concluded that the principal purpose of freshman English should be more mature written composition; instruction which perceptibly enhances the clarity, aptness, vigor, and felicity of student writing is the desideratum. (There are at least two important textual supplements to the instructor's peculiar dicta, but these aids I shall detail later in this essay.) To make a specific attack on each student's unique language problem is, therefore, an obvious *sine qua non* of responsible teaching in freshman English: the x-ray of critical acuity must sear-ingly probe each student's verbal malignancies as they are diagnosed in his written prose and poetry. And personal prescriptions should be interpolated or appended to the student's writing attempts.

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*Testing out the capable student and permitting him to take sophomore American or world literature immediately is a defensible alternative.

Expunging barbarisms and improprieties, ordering syntax and rhetorical structure, revivifying trite and torpid diction, deleting redundancy, condemning irresponsible spelling and punctuation — this complex and redoubtable job must be accomplished by personal affront, by invading the precincts of the student's habit and self-esteem. Such apodictic criticism must be advanced honestly but with charity and delicacy, for its subject is not merely a student essay, it is the student's self. The greatest personal influence that the teacher has on a student in freshman English is his written and face-to-face commentary on that student's writing. Therefore, the student should write often — once every two or three class periods — on a variety of carefully considered subjects, and in various expository, critical, and creative genres.

A comprehensive handbook (e.g., *The Harner Handbook*, third edition) and an anthology of classic — and respectable contemporary — literature are beneficial aids. The handbook offers guidance in the somewhat mechanical details of style; the anthology of literary types (sonnet, lyric, ballad, narrative, ode, elegy; essay, review; short story; novella; drama) provides more ingenious and indefinable suggestion on stylistic facility. Thus, these textbooks supplement each other; but whereas the handbook is mainly a reference book like a dic-

tionary (one of which, incidentally, each student should be required to present) or a cookbook, the literary anthology is the repository of concepts which may ignite potentially flammable intellects and thaw to sensibility apprehensions frozen by ennui.

The treadmill monotony of English instruction that begins early in the elementary school culminates in a giddy nausea as the college freshman enrolls in what he prays will be the end of a dismal, traumatic apprenticeship. Perhaps, soon, he will be able to concentrate on what others have said, rather than how *he* should say it; but he wonders whether it is worth the effort, and, really, he hardly cares anymore.

To make freshman English something more pleasurable than a reaffirmation of student fears and a reinforcement of inuring prejudices, there must be a noticeable maturation in the college's approach to the study of that discipline. A continuing classroom preoccupation with the routine of drill, diagramming, handbook exercises, and explanation of definitions already clarified and exemplified in the handbook must be superseded by a program designed to improve the student's written expression through personal, instructive comment and through the sensitive scholarly study of worthwhile literature in several genres.

Poor teachers make the subject easy, but make it seem hard. Good teachers make it hard, but make it seem easy.

According to the N.E.A. Research Division, about 59 per cent of the American public school teachers agree that children and youth today get too little exercise and are soft physically, but about 70 per cent of the teachers believe that the schools devote sufficient time to physical exercise.

BOOK REVIEW

Robert F. Drinan, *Religion, the Courts, and Public Policy*. N. Y.: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1963. 261 pages. Price \$5.95.

The proposal to grant federal aid to elementary and secondary education has led to considerable discussion and much writing about the role and the rights of the non-public schools in the United States. A large part of the writing has dealt with specific aspects of the subject and has been the expression of particular points of view. Very little of the writing has attempted to deal with the problem as a whole and with the various facets in their relationships. This is the contribution that is made by *Religion, the Courts, and Public Policy*.

The author, Robert F. Drinan, is Dean of Boston College Law School. He is also a corresponding editor of *America*, the national Catholic weekly.

Dean Drinan's development of the history of our present impasse in the problem of Church State relations in education is very interesting. *America*, he claims, "is the only land founded by Protestants with no prior Catholic population or tradition." The Protestants were very confident from the very beginning of the history of the United States, therefore, that the government was very favorably disposed toward them. And since government was largely under control of Protestants, there was little hesitation in making the Protestant schools public schools.

The composition of the citizenry changed over a period of years, however. The Catholic population increased and so did their schools. When the Catholics requested a share of tax support for their schools, the Protestants demurred.

They permitted and even encouraged the enactment of laws forbidding grants of tax money to private schools and based their action on the assertion that Catholic schools were religious schools. In doing this, however, they were implying that the public schools were non-religious, or secular. This action was to haunt them later. "In agreeing to the secularization of education Protestant sects did not perceive that they were in effect surrendering to Caesar some of the things which belonged to God."

Since 1900 there has been a large influx of non-Protestant groups in the United States and this has caused the Protestants to lose their control of the public schools. The public schools have ceased to be the "exclusive" domain of the Protestants. The latter have attempted to counteract the influence of non-Protestants by seeking to insert religious values in the public schools or by claiming that the public schools are not secular. Both attempts are being frustrated because of Jewish groups who resist adoption by the schools of any values that are even remotely sectarian and by other groups who are determined to have the public schools completely secularized.

We are now in a predicament. Secularization of public schools is being enforced by groups who claim that the State should adopt a policy of nonencouragement of religion. Yet our American society is basically religious. There have always been friendly alliances between Church and State as evidenced by tax exemption of religious institutions, exemption

from military service for seminarians, clergymen, and conscientious objectors, appointments of chaplains for prisons and military installations, tax assistance for the work of sectarian social agencies, and so on. Such a religious society can be maintained only if there is some guarantee of its preservation by the State.

Rigid separation of Church and State in education, however, practically forces the adoption of the policy of nonencouragement of religion. This, in turn, will virtually change the religious basis of the American society.

If Dean Drinan is right in his contention, the question of separation of Church and State in education has tremendous implications for the Christian people of the United States. It involves far more than mere tax support of non-public schools. It touches the core of our continued existence as a Christian nation.

There is more to this book than the historical development of our present predicament, however. The problems that have beset our society in dealing with non-public education are dealt with in detail and in most cases the laws enacted and decisions reached are not only cited but also carefully analyzed. The author points out some striking inconsistencies in court decisions and leaves the reader with the conclusion that the thinking of the people goes a long way in determining court decisions.

If this is the case the question may well be asked why Protestants do not unite in securing for religious groups the support needed for maintaining schools for the teaching of religion.

This well written book should be read by everyone who is ready to learn about Church State relations in education. It is interesting, revealing, and challenging.

J.A.V.B.

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