

to what they say when we have disappeared, we should hear something very different. When they were of an age to be presented in society the two girls made their first appearance at an evening reception to which their mother had invited a great many guests. All lavished praises on the charming young girls. In the drawing-room there was an alcove concealed by a large curtain. Curious to hear what would be said of them in their absence, the two agreed to slip out and hide behind the curtain. Scarcely had the attractive objects of the general admiration vanished than the praise which had been kept within due bounds in their presence was redoubled. The two girls admitted afterwards that they experienced an indescribable revulsion of feeling; they thought that everything they had been made to believe must be false, and they determined to throw themselves headlong into the pleasures of the world. They even renounced religion altogether for the time being; and had afterwards, as they said, to reconstruct their lives afresh, learn for themselves the emptiness of social brilliance, and embrace the truth of religion anew.

It has been frequently said that the education of the imagination on a basis of fancy prepares the soul of the child for religious education; and that an education based on "reality" is too arid and tends to dry up the fountains of spiritual life. Now every truly religious person knows well that faith and fable are "as the poles apart," since fable is in itself a thing without truth, and faith is the very sentiment of truth. Religion is not a product of fantastic imagination, it is the greatest of realities; the great danger of fables and fairy tales is not that they are harmful in themselves but that they spoil the relish the child should have for truth and reality.

THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT IN CHILDREN.

Very lately a series of experiments into the existence of religious sentiment in the native heart of the child has been made with surprising results. In this as in every other psychical investigation the truth continues to be brought home, that it is never the function of the educator to create; his work is but to develop what God has already implanted, and no teacher can put into a child what is not there already.

One of the most remarkable manifestations of the spontaneous religious sentiment inherent in every child was the case of "Little Nelly of Holy God," who, of her own accord when scarcely five years of age, asked for the Holy Eucharist on her death-bed—a fact which greatly influenced Pius X. to allow Holy Communion to very young children.

Madam Montessori tells of many remarkable instances in her own experience of children whose parents were hostile to religion and endeavored to bring them up "neutral." In every case she found that such children, in spite of every inducement to the contrary, were unhappy and restless, and devoured such scraps of religious instruction as came their way, in the same manner as a famishing man devours food. She tells of a rich child whose parents lavished on her every mark of affection and devotion but were determined to keep her altogether free from religious influences. Wonderful children's parties were arranged for her which were veritable works of art, but they seemed to make her only more restless and cynical, as if she were suffering from some disillusionment. One day, however, she was found with her face aglow, and unable to conceal her agitation. She had been talking to an orphan child who happened to be brought to her home and the child had repeated to her the Lord's Prayer. The girl's heart had at last found what it wanted. Children have repeatedly said "I like this subject or that subject very much, but I like religion best."

The conclusion drawn from all these experiences is that in the heart of every child there is an insatiable longing for God—abyss calleth unto abyss—and without true religious training no human being will reach the full development of his powers of mind and soul. "As the hart panteth after the living waters" so does the soul of man after the living God.

"A REIGN OF LAW?"

Thus F. O'D, in *An Saoghal Gaedhealach* :—

The air is clearing. The Peace Conference bubble is burst, and we had better rub our eyes of the transient glitter of it, and take stock of the cold, ugly facts. For the framework of the social system that is being created is ugly and menacing for Ireland, and for the masses of the people everywhere. Our rulers are clever and efficient, terribly, mercilessly efficient; and they are callously planning a cold-blooded scheme of world and wealth domination, labor exploitation, and robbery everywhere of the people's rights and the fruits of their toil. And all this with tears in their eyes for the sorrows of the suffering peoples, and the polished phrases of hypocrisy flowing like poisoned honey from their lips! They have used the great words Right and Justice, and they are proving apt pupils at learning the meaning of them—the Imperial meaning of them. Truly this is a great thing for which millions of men have died—a great thing for the men's masters!

Hitherto the world was governed by groups of wealthy capitalists who exploited the people, and robbed and ruled them by controlling their labor and their brains, playing off one class against another, and maintaining an unrelenting mastery over all. Now all that is to be changed to meet the higher aspirations of a world which has drawn new ideals of right and justice from its recent welter of blood. The isolated groups of robbers are entering into a holy partnership, that they may more effectively exploit the people, and deprive them of the fruits of their labor thereby.

Ireland, for instance, instead of being exploited and robbed by one Empire as in the past, will under the new scheme of things be accorded the privilege of being robbed by a combination of Empires. Injustice and tyranny will permanently assume the mask of law, national and international. "Small nations" will become mere geographical expressions; existing by a special dispensation of Providence in the shape of a League of Nations, to be protected and saved from turning into painted savages by the civilising hand of one of the great ones of the earth. The business of governing in the interests of the governors will become the chiefest art in the new world which is to arise.

Once in the better past the light of Irish civilisation shone steady and constant in the northern ocean, and the brilliance of her culture illumed a darkened world. That destiny which shapes the ends of nations seems likely to place Ireland again in the van of the world, a leader, a prophet, a martyr too, mayhap. For Ireland will not, could not, submit to this indignity with which it is sought to enslave humanity. Ireland has ever resisted, ever defended her birthright against, the armies of a merciless oppressor. Shall she cease to resist now, shall she be silent and passionless in her strength when she was defiant in her weakness? A trial is coming at which the wisest may waver, the best leaders falter; but the Ireland of the O'Neills, the land that nursed Mitchel and Tone and Emmet, that cradled Pearse and Connolly, will know her duty again, and go out to it unflinching.

To young and old, to great and small,
Some day there comes a time to all,
A time of sickness and distress,
When timely aid we grasp and bless.
It may be when poor and old,
Or maybe when we've cough and cold;
But whenso'er it be, we're sure
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