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## A Review of Moehlman's "School and Church: The American Way" \*

Which is "the American way" for the religious training of American children? According to Dr. C. H. Moehlman, Professor of the History of Christianity at the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, the American way is a different one from that pursued in Christian parochial schools. It is different, too, from the plan of "various religious groups" who "are conducting a vigorous propaganda for the return of the formal teaching of religion to the public classroom" (p. ix). The American way is to let public schools (in preference to parochial schools) and churches exist side by side, and to encourage them in at least much of the work they are now doing.

Dr. Moehlman is ready to give encouragement to the public school. His book, published this year, was written "in defense of public education" (p. ix). He is not so sure that the work of the Church can receive unqualified endorsement. "What must the American Christian churches do to be saved? Certainly not engage in a costly and futile struggle to reintroduce formal Bible study and catechism into public education. Let them rather undergird the indirect religious approach of our public schools by teaching their own constituency the principles and applications of religion which have weathered the attack of the power age" (p. 135).

Anyone who is familiar with the idiom of the representatives of the social gospel and of religious Modernism will understand when we say that Dr. Moehlman's book is one of the most vicious attacks launched in recent times against all that truly Christian churches and genuinely Christian schools stand for.

*School and Church* is not primarily an attack on the parochial school, although Dr. Moehlman devotes two chapters (5 and 6) to an unfavorable review of that institution. What makes Dr. Moehlman's book abhorrent to orthodox Christians is his rejection of the authority of the Bible, the permanency of Christian creeds, the sinfulness of man, the need of redemption, and the otherworldliness of the Christian religion, and his substitution of a religion of ethics and brotherly love. His attitude toward the basic concepts of Christianity, however, vitiates this whole educational philosophy.

Dr. Moehlman's "defense of public education" is not an attempt to safeguard the political rights and the legal status of the public school. In his discussion he becomes rather an apologist for the excellence, in fact, for the superior merit of the public school system. The advantage of the public school, he argues, is

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\* Moehlman, C. H.; *School and Church: The American Way*. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1944. X and 178 pages. \$2.50.

twofold. First, it recognizes that "religion cannot be taught formally, but must be absorbed indirectly" (p. 95). Secondly, it has succeeded in preserving the "values of religion" (pp. X, 97). Indeed, "the public school in a certain sense . . . is more distinctively the expression of the faith of all the people than the church" (p. 97).

The first of these two propositions is bad enough. Since when do "religious instruction and public education require very different atmospheres, attitudes, and methods" (p. 97)? It may be true that "the religious mood cannot be created by folding one's hands and naming the kings of Israel and the twelve apostles" (*ibid.*) — and some teachers of religion are justly censured by this passing dig at purely intellectual teaching — but why single out memorization items from a course of religious instruction? Moreover, the truth is that the "religious mood" is not an indispensable (although, of course, eminently desirable) accompaniment to profitable religious instruction. Many a Christian soldier has testified that passages which he had learned somewhat unwillingly and in a mood which was far from devotional have come home to him now and have belatedly but efficiently succeeded in establishing a "religious mood."

But the monstrously erroneous conception underlying Dr. Moehlman's educational philosophy finds expression particularly in his second statement, the contention that "the values of religion have always been in public education" (p. 27). Repeatedly he fulminates against those who speak of the "godless public school." "God was not banished from 'our schools' by Horace Mann" (p. 94). "What escapes the observation of so many investigators is that public education has not walked out on religion" (p. 97). "To call public education 'godless' betrays invincible ignorance, infinite prejudice, and complete misunderstanding of what religion is all about" (p. 98).

Evidently the question is in order, What does Mr. Moehlman mean by "religion"? He does not mean the doctrines which orthodox Christian churches have derived from the Bible. His discussion, conducted in the early chapters of *School and Church* from an ostensible objective and "historical" viewpoint, loses the dispassionate tone in later chapters and is marked instead by scorn and contempt for the presumably unscientific and unscholarly beliefs of Fundamentalists.

The reason why Dr. Moehlman rejects orthodox religious views is that he rejects the "traditional Christian mood toward an understanding of the Bible" (p. 109) as a source book of doctrine. The Bible, he declares, is not "static, absolute, authoritarian truth," but is valuable only because it gives information about bygone ages. "All that body of first-century knowledge has only archaeological.

significance. Knowledge of the original meanings of Biblical terminology, ideas, and ideology turns the historical student of the Bible into an historian of a slight area of the ancient world, and that is all" (p. 108). "What recent advocates of the formal teaching of religion in the public school fail to appreciate is that the Bible which disappeared from the classroom as a religious text in the late nineteenth century has also disappeared from history." "The dogmatic Bible of yesterday has evolved into the historical Bible of today. But the Bible historically evaluated can never be harmonized with the Bible verbally inspired in every 'i' and 't'" (page 120).

The truth is, says Dr. Moehlman, that "the Bible historically understood is exceedingly dangerous to the inherited traditional faith of the American child, whether in a Catholic or an orthodox Protestant church" (p. 121). The historical view of the Bible will show that orthodox dogma is not eternal truth, but ecclesiastical fiction. "Christianity has imposed the doctrine of original sin and all that has followed in its train upon a Bible utterly innocent of it" (*ibid.*). "Jesus seems unacquainted with man corrupted by an ancient fall." (P. 130. — But see John 3:3-6 and Matt. 15:18-20!) "The idea of sin is a primitive one. The story in Gen. 3 is an attempt to explain the origin of various ills to which mankind is subject, such as hard labor, pain in childbearing, etc. The sin here recorded was the violation of a taboo. After the sin had been committed, God feared that man would eat of the fruit of another tree, the tree of life, and thus magically become immortal; to avoid this, God punished man by expulsion from the garden. The Christian idea of total depravity, derived from the story, 'in Adam's fall, we sinned all,' is foreign to Old Testament thought" (p. 104).

"It was the Roman government which arrested, tried, and condemned Jesus to death. . . . Crucifixion was the Roman method of execution. Jesus was crucified on the charge of treason against the Roman state. Faith in his non-political messianity originated after the crucifixion and in Galilee under the leadership of Peter. The 'last supper' preceded the slaying of the passover lamb and was a 'Kiddush,' not a Christian communion service. The church at Jerusalem celebrated a rite known as the 'breaking of the bread' and was not familiar with the 'Lord's Supper.' Jesus became *soter* (Savior) only much later" (p. 119 f.). "Jesus did not die as a religious prophet, but upon the charge of revolution" (p. 130).

After designating as "ancient folklore" the stories about Balaam, Jonah, Daniel, and the serpent that conversed with Eve, Dr. Moehlman asserts: "Today, in the presence of a fully developed science of Biblical criticism, the Reformers' view of the Bible, interpretation of history, and philosophy of life cannot be ours.

If the earlier Protestant confessions of faith are at all to be accepted today by the intelligent laity, it must be on the assumption of re-evaluation in accordance with contemporary knowledge. The American environment endorses the scientific approach to the problem of the Bible" (p. 130 f.). In the chapter "Can the Bible Return to the Classroom?" Dr. Moehlman states: "It is trite to observe that the world of the twentieth century and the world of the first are incommensurable. The Christian ideology of the first century and that of the twentieth are not identical. . . . The fundamentalist preacher seems to be expounding the Bible as written, and the people like to hear him. That he is not doing this is not at all present in the minds of his audience" (p. 108 f.).

But Dr. Moehlman does not merely deny that "the fundamentalist interpretation of the gospels" (p. 160) possesses value today. He charges orthodox teachers with actually having been the cause of much social damage and harm. "Our contention is that the usual literalistic treatment of the following New Testament texts" [Matt. 27:15; John 19:15; Acts 2:23, and others] "has made it possible for the Christian conscience to look back upon the sufferings of Jews through the centuries with a calmness and indifference of which the non-Christian world has never been guilty. . . . By divine decree which was entered on the ledgers of heaven before the foundation of the world, because God had foreseen this base denial of Jesus before the Roman procurator, the Jews have been condemned to indescribable humiliation and suffering since A. D. 30. This interpretation" [of Acts 2:23] "has made it possible for devout Christians to condone the imposition of heavy penalties upon the Jews by king, emperor, dictator, crusader, mob. Apparently the Jewish hope of escape from brutality rests with historical-minded Christians and the non-Christian world, which is unfamiliar with this peculiarly Christian ideology" (p. 160 f.). "John 19:16 is a slander contradicted by the whole history of Israel and Judaism" (page 130).

Since Dr. Moehlman rejects the orthodox conception of "religion," what does he understand by that term? For him religion consists of ethical precepts and moral behavior. "Vital religion" is not "narrow denominationalism. It is the pursuit of the good life. It is reverence for the human personality. It is dependence upon God" (p. 126). Deeds, not creeds, constitute religion. "The tragedy of Protestantism is that its theology was 'crystallized into creeds which are still held binding on the great Protestant churches' before genuine historical method had come to birth, before natural science had formulated its mode of procedure, and before the advent of the critical philosophy" (p. 130). Today "religion has become functional rather than institutional, and education has become 'the

acquisition of competency to interpret life" (p. 101). Hence the student must be taught that "with the rest of humanity he forms a world brotherhood. What he needs most is" [not faith in Christ's redemptive work but] "stability, balance, the power to be patient and to endure, and intelligent optimism. There will always be mystery in life, as there has always been. What counts is the way one takes his failures and successes" (p. 100 f.).

Religion, Dr. Moehlman pontificates further, must be "intellectually defensible" (p. 133). It appreciates and understands what science solves and explains. "Religion is concerned with awe, wonder, reverence, mystery, the unknown, faith in God. It must get rid of its ancient shells which prevent the new life from expressing itself" (p. 133). Having social obligations, "religion must bring the ways and methods of society and the state before the judgment bar of the Eternal" (p. 134). Furthermore, "religion must face the future, not the past, if it would lead" (p. 135). That means that "literalism" must be abandoned and that "the church of the twentieth century which identifies the ideal with some ancient expression of the ideal commits the unpardonable sin" (*ibid.*).

The "age-long development of religion," Dr. Moehlman declares, has proved the following faith to be tenable at all times:

1. Religion has been not only the quest of God, but the quest of the higher cultural values as well.

2. Religion is indestructible, because it originates on the borderline between the known and the unknown.

3. The choice before man is not that of religion or no religion, but of what kind of religion. Shall it be a religion of superstition, of magic and cruelty, or a religion of intelligence, beauty, and ethics?

4. Religion at its best desires to teach that love is at the heart of the world. When the total record is in, the universe will be seen to be dependable and good (p. 135 f.).

Proceeding from premises of that nature, Dr. Moehlman can logically find "the values of religion" in public education. After listing the aims of public education as formulated by the Educational Policies Commission (self-realization, human relationships, economic efficiency, civil responsibility), Dr. Moehlman asserts: "Accepting this description of the objectives of public education, it is clear that the values of religion are present in each of the four main objectives" (p. 98). Arguing the same point, he states that "one may turn to the statement published by the National Education Association only to discover that the religious emphasis is again indirectly present. The seven aims there mentioned — health,

command of fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure time, and ethical character—have been the handmaids of religion from the dawn of conscience until today" (*ibid.*). Although "formal religious exercises have disappeared from public education," Dr. Moehlman insists that "reverence has increased. 'Appreciation of health, love of beauty, enjoyment of intellectual discovery, devotion to freedom and democracy, interest in play and recreation, social uses of wealth and invention, the enrichment of social fellowship, and the spirit of altruism permeating all relationships are no less than in colonial days.'" (P. 101 f.) These are the values of religion!

These are the reasons why Dr. Moehlman asserts that "far from being 'godless,' the public schools are the principal instruments for the perpetuation of religious values among us. In fact, the religion of public education is a more powerful factor in American life today than that of the churches" (p. x). The latter statement is probably only too true, but it is not true that "functionally viewed, American public education emancipated from sectarianism is indirectly the only universal teacher of religious values in the United States" (p. 85). Religious values comprise much more than the aims of public education, and even these can be truly achieved only by the Gospel proclaimed by orthodox churches.

Dr. Moehlman has a message, however, also for the churches of America, especially for the great church bodies that subscribe, at least officially, to orthodox beliefs. *They should change their religion.* He warns them that "what has actually occurred in the U. S. since the adoption of Amendment I has been the gradual depreciation of the Christian Church as an institution of religious control and the corresponding appreciation of Christianity as a functional value in American life" (p. 59 f.). He contends that "through lack of historical perspective and the lamentable mistakes of their leadership, many of the Christian bodies in the United States have lost connection with on-going life" (p. 128). He reminds them that their "philosophy of supernaturalism, constancy, theology, discipline, and miracle" will be difficult to maintain, because on every hand they are confronted by "assumptions of law, change, scientific method, adaptation, and process" (p. 80). He counsels: "If Christianity would live vigorously in the American environment, it must apply faith and hope and love to the problems of today and emphasize principles and attitudes of primary concern to the American way of life." (P. 135. — See also p. 133.) And he concludes his book with this challenge: "A desperate world looks to Christian leadership to help. If that leadership instead of defending its mistakes and its passing dogmas could only appreciate its opportunity in the world it so naively calls 'materialistic,' the

will of God might at last be done on earth. Alas, within the churches the millenarian fever is rising, not subsiding, and 'apostolical succession' and sacramentalism are gaining in Protestantism. Must a waiting world in the interest of world peace turn even further away from organized Christianity to achieve world brotherhood?" (P. 136 f.)

It is high time that the churches adopt the religion of ethics. Such a step would help them to see not only that "the values of religion have remained in the public school" (p. x), but also that the political structure of our nation is itself religious. "Our American democracy comprehends the values in Christianity. The older forms, expressions, and postulates of religion are rapidly vanishing among our intellectuals. Traditional Christianity is disintegrating so far as its institutional manifestations are concerned. But the Christianity that can never die, that has functional value, is interwoven with all our democratic activities" (p. 125). "For all Americans the postulates of the democratic way are also sincere religious convictions. . . . American democracy subscribes to tolerance, sympathetic understanding, religious idealism" (pp. 124, 125 f.). Orthodox Christians will go along with Dr. Moehlman in saying that patriotism is part of their religion and an expression of it. For men of Dr. Moehlman's type, however, good citizenship is the essence and acme of religion. Odd? Well, what do you expect of a man who intimates that the American "Old Testament" is Washington's Farewell Address and its "New Testament" Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, or who asserts that our "poems and hymns about Washington and Lincoln stir deep religious emotions"? (P. 124.)

Thus the principal error of Dr. Moehlman's discussion is a theological fallacy, and an evaluation of his book must be conducted on a theological basis. The great gulf between the standpoint of men like the author of *School and Church* and our own churchmen is caused by the difference of opinion as to the "values of religion." These values are not primarily the ones mentioned by Dr. Moehlman. The Christian religion places chief emphasis on a transformed heart. "Ye must be born again" is its humiliating reminder. "Repent, and believe the Gospel" is its universal message. If the principles underlying the story of Calvary have been adopted by a man, the ethical changes which men of Moehlman's stripe so dearly love to call "the values of religion" will be forthcoming, for as soon as a man is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature (2 Cor. 5:7) — and not before! To speak of "the values of religion" without emphasizing the Gospel's *principal value* as a heart-transforming, faith-begetting agency is a gross and tragic distortion of Scriptural truth.



It is that kind of loose talk that prompted Dr. J. Gresham Machen to say in regard to "character education" in public schools: "What surprises me about this program is not that its advocates propose it; for it is only too well in accord with the spirit of the age. But what really surprises me about it is that the advocates seem to think that a Christian can support it without ceasing at that point to be Christian. . . . Character building, as practiced in our public schools, may well prove to be character destruction. . . . If the Law of God is proclaimed in public schools, to people of different faiths, it is bound, in the very nature of the case, to be proclaimed with optimism; and if it is proclaimed with optimism, it is proclaimed in a way radically opposed to the Christian doctrine of sin. By hypothesis it is regarded as all that good citizens imperatively need to know; they may perhaps profitably know other things, but the fundamental notion is that if they know this, they know all that is absolutely essential. But is not a Law that is proclaimed to unredeemed persons with such optimism at best only an imperfect, garbled Law? Is it not very different from the true and majestic Law of God with its awful pronouncements of eternal death upon sinful man? The answer to these questions is only too plain. A proclamation of morality which regards itself as all that is necessary . . . is very different from that true proclamation of the Law of God which may be a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. It is not merely insufficient, but it is false; and I do not see how a consistent Christian can possibly regard it as providing any part of that nurture and admonition of the Lord which it is the duty of every Christian parent to give to his children" (*The Necessity of the Christian School*, pp. 10—12).

The Lutheran confessional writings say the same thing when they declare: "The adversaries consider only the precepts of the Second Table, which contains civil righteousness that reason understands. Content with this, they think that they satisfy the Law of God. In the meantime they do not see the First Table, which commands that we love God. . . . But the human heart, without the Holy Ghost, either in security despises God's judgment, or in punishment flees from, and hates, God, when He judges. Therefore it does not obey the First Table. Since, therefore, contempt of God and doubt concerning the threats and promises inhere in human nature, men truly *sin* even when, without the Holy Ghost, they do virtuous works, because they do them with a wicked heart" (Apology, *Concordia Triglotta*, p. 129 f.).

Anyone who has not grasped the far-reaching and sinister theological implications in an assertion which contends that "the values of religion" are present in the non-religious educational program of the public school, will find it difficult, if not impossible,

to see why we say that we cannot agree with the conclusions reached by Dr. Moehlman in *School and Church*.

On the other hand, all who recognize the significance of Dr. Moehlman's statements about "the values of religion" will see clearly how completely Dr. Moehlman contradicts the Bible when he declares: "The religious element in public education is everything that promotes faith in the higher values of life. Religion is not something apart, but a continuous part of our experience. Public education is designed to prepare the American child to live creatively in the American environment. Although the public school may not and should not teach religion directly, everyone should understand that public education always has inculcated religious and ethical attitudes indirectly. And we submit that these emphases matter more than the names of the kings of Israel or of the apostles and an alphabetical list of scripture verses" (p. 100). When Dr. Moehlman says that "public education is concerned about citizenship and character and the integration of personality" (p. 95), he has mentioned the essence of the "religion" about which he is concerned. That is why he is satisfied when public school activities are based on "ideas and ideals that seek to develop successful living" (p. 100). Ethics is his religion.

Thus Dr. Moehlman's reason for opposing the teaching of religion in public schools is by no means based primarily on political considerations. Any Lutheran who welcomes Dr. Moehlman's assertions with "Hurrah! Here is a man who speaks our language and shares our views in regard to separation of Church and State" betrays his ignorance of the author's objectives.

Dr. Moehlman's arguments against the return of formal religious training to the public classroom (p. 126) may be summarized as follows: Religion cannot be taught (pp. 95, 97, 100), and dogma should not be taught in the public classroom. ("No dogmatic reconstruction of the historical facts would long be tolerated."—P. 131.) Moreover, religious instruction in the public school is not practicable. Because of the variety of opinions represented among the pupils, "some other way must be found to make the churches more effective in the American way of life" (p. 122). This is true enough, but Dr. Moehlman holds that the absence of religious instruction constitutes no serious loss. "The reply of public education to those churchmen who continue to insist that religion has a monopoly on character education might well be: So sorry, but psychologists, penologists, psychiatrists, and criminologists doubt your claims" (p. 127). In fact, religious knowledge is said by Dr. Moehlman to be in dire need of supplementary agencies if it is to achieve practical results. "The longer a student studies the Bible historically, the more exact data he gets on first-century Christianity,

and the less competent he becomes in Christian work of today, unless at the same time, by work in history, philosophy, psychology, ethics, and so on, he learns how to re-evaluate his first-century materials" (p. 108). Because the public school operates directly or indirectly with these supplementary influences, and because it recognizes that "knowledge has become relative, instrumental, and fragmentary" and that "experience is basic and induction the method of learning" (p. 94), public education is doing a good job of preserving "the values of religion." Old-fashioned Bible study would merely cumber the educational ground. Public schools, on the other hand, by being "concerned about citizenship and character and the integration of personality" (p. 95) successfully "deal with the enduring values. And this they do through the living contacts of the teachers and the taught, pupil and pupil" (p. 99).

It is in the light of these assertions about religion and the presence of the values of religion in non-religious education that we must judge Dr. Moehlman's statements about the parochial school.

Dr. Moehlman is opposed to the principle of the parochial school. He grants that "the American educational plan is twofold: tax-supported universal public education, and the recognition of values in and a benevolent attitude toward private schools" (p. 128), but his own attitude is far from benevolent. He states not only that "the parochial school is definitely on the defensive" (p. 84), but also that "contemporary public education has a formidable case against parochial systems" (p. 95).

What is that "case"? The parochial school, says Dr. Moehlman, fosters sectarianism, and "sectarianism . . . contradicts the implications of American democracy" (p. 90). Proceeding from the premise that "when separation of church and state is superimposed on a theocracy, public education must become gradually but permanently a state function" (p. 29), Dr. Moehlman points out that "the general cultural trend frowns upon any attempts to make education denominational or sectarian" (p. 95). "Education for life" cannot be sectarian, denominational, or pre-1791 in the twentieth century. It must be of a different pattern" (p. 1). Dr. Moehlman endorses Horace Mann's assertion that "the national safety, prosperity, and happiness can be obtained only through free public schools, open to all, good enough for all, attended by all" (p. 86). "The religion of the American majority is democracy" (p. ix). "Hence to some the parochial school seems to be an island within contemporary American life. The segregation of Catholic or Protestant children by the parochial school is therefore to be criticized as inimical to social welfare. Whether or not such schools are un-American in aim and present practices is often debated. It cannot be denied that it would be easily possible for the church

to condition the child's environment and limit knowledge to its own selfish ends. And whatever the aim, it is true that the segregation of children in parochial schools tends to limit the basis of common knowledge and common experience, both of which are essential to a common understanding of civic relationships" (p. 82).

The harm that parochial schools are doing is illustrated by the mischievous results of even so feeble an attempt as the released-time plan of religious instruction. "New evils begin to make their appearance. Feuds between different religious groups are growing more and more. Where formerly the race issue was no problem on the public school campus, it is becoming so because the matter was discussed in religious education on released time" (p. 132). Fortunately, "the only religion with which the great majority of American youth ever come into contact is the religion of public education, where intolerance, bigotry, and race prejudice are not at home" (p. x). But because of the harm which the churches are doing to the cause of democracy, Dr. Moehlman declares: "When the study of religion in 'released-time' religious educational classes issues in religious persecution and race clashes, public education might properly ask whether the churches do not owe it an apology" (*ibid.*).

Everything would be lovely "if Protestantism should ever be courageous enough to let the Bible be taught historically in its parochial schools" (p. 68). Then its school program, like that of public education, would become "emancipated from sectarianism" (p. 85) and from "dogmatic theology" (p. 91) and would cease trying "to dominate dogmatically men's minds" (p. 86). Then, no doubt, we should all become enlightened enough to see that the differences separating the churches are only minor and that there should be one great American Church for all who wish to attend.

At present the teaching methods of parochial schools are as wrong as their religious materials are antiquated. By implication Dr. Moehlman makes Hitler typical of the kind of pupil that is graduated from parochial schools. After quoting a statement by George Bernard Shaw that "the only remedy for war is conscience, and you will not have that until you have religion carefully taught and inculcated," Dr. Moehlman declares: "But Germany throughout the nineteenth and the twentieth century had compulsory religious education. Hitler learned the catechism and got 100 per cent." (P. 140. See also p. 80.) Evidently Deut. 6:7 does not hold for the religious training of twentieth-century children. The truth is, of course, that here, as elsewhere in his discussion, Dr. Moehlman employs a loose and slipshod kind of argumentation. Since when have orthodox teachers held that everyone who is instructed in the Christian religion will remain faithful to its principles?

Dr. Moehlman's dislike for parochial schools leads him to become guilty of exaggerations and half-truths. He insists, for example, that "the Protestant parochial school has collapsed" (p. 68), but ignores almost entirely the splendid educational work being done by the Lutheran Church, except for a brief acknowledgment that "the Lutherans account for 180,865" of the 275,643 children enrolled in Protestant parochial schools. His assertion that "Protestant parochial effort has signally failed and the necessary emotionalism for it cannot now be artificially stimulated" (p. 95) is effectively contradicted by the remarkable and healthy increase in deep interest and vigorous activity for Christian education manifested by Lutheran congregations and other American religious groups from east to west in our country.

We can agree with Dr. Moehlman when he states that one of the reasons for the decline of Protestant parochial education was this, that "financial support was too meager" (p. 68; cf. p. 84). In fact, he gives an excellent description of the colossal presumptuousness of certain Protestants who expect the State to introduce and provide religious instruction because they are too stingy to make the necessary expenditures for an adequate religious educational program by their own Church. "This type of Protestant desires religiously controlled and motivated education, and because he cannot [?] pay for it, he feels the state must. For it is unblushingly admitted that although 'week-day religious education with the co-operation of the public schools has made considerable headway, quantitatively speaking, it is but a meager attack upon the problem. The Protestant churches seem to be confronted with the choice between developing extra-school religious education on a scale hitherto unapproached or working out with other religious groups some plan whereby religious education can be incorporated in the school system.'" "Let non-Christians pay for the religious education of Protestant children and thus reduce the cost of maintaining Protestant Sunday schools" (p. 2 f.).

It is another matter, however, when the decline of parochial schools is charged to the fact that "not even at that time (1854) could parochial elementary education compare with the public brand" (p. 68) or when the statement is made that at denominational colleges "teaching faculties selected only for denominational reasons are almost always weak faculties. . . . The best men are constantly rejected, and the poorer men taken, for denominational reasons only" (p. 69) or when the "case against parochial systems" is based on the following assertions: "Some parochial schools lack competent teachers, cannot sufficiently expand their curricula to meet current needs, and must get on with inferior and inadequate equipment. 'You know that the parochial schools have never been

able to furnish education of the same standard as in our public schools' " (p. 95). Carefully maintained records in bulging file folders tell an utterly different story about the efficiency of Lutheran parochial schools: they show that the graduates of Lutheran elementary schools as a rule become good and frequently top-notch students in public high schools and are frequently honored as valedictorians. They and the graduates of Lutheran high schools and colleges are in great demand among businessmen who value character and ability. When a school system like that of the Missouri Synod is staffed by more than two thousand teachers, it is bound to happen that "some parochial schools lack competent teachers," but the same condition is found in public schools, and thus the statement is gratuitous and viciously unfair.

The matter of "inferior and inadequate equipment," mentioned above, appears also on page 80, where the statement is made that the parochial system "has not the economic means to parallel the vocational training of public education." It would only disgust Dr. Moehlman to remind him that some Christian parents are so "otherworldly" in their affections that they do not regard the advantages of vocational training as being decisive in any comparison of public with parochial schools. But it may not be out of place to point to the increasing number of businessmen who emphatically demand that schools go back to stressing the three R's of education.

Another unfair charge in the "case against parochial systems" (and this one is leveled specifically at Protestant parochial schools) is the one implied in the statement: "American children should be educated as Americans" (p. 95). This is an outrageous vilification of the instruction given by parochial school teachers and of the civic attitude of parochial school graduates that hardly deserves to be answered. The truth is that hundreds of American men and women trained in Christian parochial schools have served their community and their nation well; many of them have become prominent in exemplary discharge of civic and governmental responsibilities. The statement is furthermore a slanderous misrepresentation of thousands of Christian boys and girls who are at this very hour serving with conspicuous faithfulness in the armed forces of our country and who have born enthusiastic testimony to the civic value of their parochial school training.

But the most vicious accusation Dr. Moehlman brings against parochial schools is that they teach too much religion. He quotes men who speak of church school graduates that have gone wrong (pp. 69, 80) and on the basis of their observations says: "Judge what a return to Protestant parochial schools would signify today" (p. 69). In fact, he insinuates that churches, especially the orthodox churches, are likely to become breeders of crime. He refers

to a crime study which discovered that "most criminals belong to some church and frankly admit the fact," and quotes another investigator who "associated 'the heaviest ratio of homicide with religious fundamentalism'" (p. 127). We knew it all along: David's adultery and murder, Absalom's rebellion, Peter's denial—they were all the result of "too much religion." Christian teachers, you owe the American nation an apology!

It is difficult to avoid the impression that Dr. Moehlman is writing from a biased viewpoint and that he is not so much interested in facts as in giving preconceived notions the semblance of plausibility. *School and Church* reads well and brings much valuable information as it traces the development of American education. Of particular interest just now are its observations about the released-time plan (pp. 131—133) and its judgment that "the released-time plan for religious education seems doomed" (p. 133). Dr. Moehlman is probably right in stating that "Protestants . . . show no great interest in the released-time plan" and that "the desire of children for released-time periods can hardly be called pronounced" (p. 132). For the most part, however, *School and Church* is a false guide in matters of religious education. Its view of the past is heavily colored by prejudices, and its predictions for the future are marked largely by wishful thinking.

Basic in the wishful thinking of the author is his view that "the Bible as a religious text has disappeared from history" (p. 120). Following as a natural sequel, and a close second in importance, is his contention that "the Protestant parochial school has collapsed" (p. 68). The latter is the logical outcome of the former. The chief reason for Dr. Moehlman's attitude toward the parochial school is his attitude toward the Bible.

The best answer to Dr. Moehlman's denunciation of revealed religion and the educational policies of its adherents is renewed determination to expose the insufficiency of the religion of ethics and fervent prayer for increased zeal in the use of those agencies which teach the eternal Gospel of redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ.

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