

Let Us Pretend

By Brother Leo

ALTHOUGH it sounds a little like just another horrible example of pedagogical jargon, that word impersonation really means something. It stands for a process based on the principle of "let us pretend," and therefore in consonance with a deep and prevalent human instinct.

We are all actors at times, and we all love acting; as the spectators as spectators we find satisfaction and delight. To pretend to be somebody else is to act; Walter Hampden pretends to be Macbeth, Katharine Cornell pretends to be St. Jeanne d'Arc, Mrs. C. C. Kimball pretends to be the first of Virginia; little Ralph, by disguising his natural voice, pretends to be Brother Terentius in the boarding school dormitory.

Although its forms may change and its ideals vary and its technique differ from age to age—the age of the world and the age of the individual—the drama is always with us. I see no reason why it should not be with us in spoken and written English.

"LET US PRETEND" is the basic idea of many childhood games, and it is so closely associated with impersonation that actors and writers have called plays, yet not all impersonation is play. The sort of acting here suggested for the English class is work-work with its sense of responsibility, with its crescendo of joy with its high and exacting standards of perfection; but like much work, in the world as in the school, it utilizes the play instinct.

Impersonation in the English class need be play no more than impersonation on the professional stage. While it is not the only means of aiding the student to speak and write better English, while it should not be employed to the complete exclusion of other methods and devices, impersonation offers a fertile field for student activity, the legitimate discharge of student emotions, and possibly for even the seasoned teacher a fresh approach to an unending task.

IN RECENT YEARS we have grievously, yet ludicrously, overdone the practice of encouraging the pupil to express his personal personality. Sometimes the result has been a precious little prig. Instead of broadening his horizon and getting him out of his shell of ignorance and selfishness and prejudice by urging him to express his own feelings, we have fostered his feeling of self-importance and started him on the road to that minor but not unimportant phency which is a minor bare in this best of possible worlds.

Specifically, by over-emphasis on the "what-think-of-this-and-that" type of writing, we have hampered our pupils as potential speakers and writers. We have produced a generation that in English usage manifests unmistakable symptoms of the "stagnant and colorless lapse" no extensive and discriminating vocabulary, no variety and charm in sentence structure, no ability to follow the best advice on the art of writing ever written, to "sift the action to the word, the word to the action."

INSTEAD, therefore, of writing or speaking in "should the Method of Bleeding Class Officers Be Changed?" let our pupils take as some of their themes "A Letter Written by General Burgoyne After the Battle of Saratoga," "The Memoirs of Simon of Cyrene," "What the Father of St. Francis of Assisi Thought of His Son," the unrecorded "Speech of Cassius After the Assassination of Caesar," "A Conversation in Heaven Between St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. John Baptist de La Salle."

Also, through this impersonation method in English, other subjects will become more real and vital. The class, let us say, has been reading "Julius Caesar." To write an imaginary speech of Cassius, they obviously have to study the character and motives of that complete politician. They have to go back to the play, and to a book on Roman history and perhaps to Plutarch, with the result that Cassius becomes as real to them as General James Farley or the late lamented Huey Long. They will enjoy their work, which is important; and their writing and speaking will widen and intensify their knowledge of human character and public life in their own and in other centuries.

THEN in the study of literature itself, the impersonation method in composition will clarify their conception of what constitutes good English and quicken their appreciation of the properties of style. Topics designed to produce those two commendable results are: "The Fordham-St. Mary's Football Game Described by Macaulay," "Cleopatra Discussed by the New Deal," "Shakespeare's Advice to a Hollywood Producer," "Cardinal Newman on Catholic Action," "A Conversation about Mussolini," "Chesterton and Bernard Shaw," "Gulliver and Don Quixote Visit the Empire State Building." Every live teacher—and we can't do much about the unburied dead—can readily think up dozens of such subjects; and the pupils will not less readily suggest others. Everything goes—provided only that each subject requires the impersonation of somebody else. It will speedily occur to him that to impersonate a writer or a character in history he must study what the writer has written and what the character has done.

AS HE continues to engage in this impersonation process in speaking and writing, the pupil will

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OUR SCHOOLS SAVE U. S. \$140,000,000

Outline Provisions Of Free School Bus Law For Children

Diocesan School Head Cites Authorities On Measure Taking Effect Sept. 1; Rules Given for Grammar and High School Children Under Law

To guide pastors in the application of the new school transportation law which takes effect, Sept. 1, the Rev. John M. Duffy, Superintendent, Catholic Schools, Diocese of Rochester, this week, issued a statement giving authoritative interpretations of the free bus measure.

In his statement, Father Duffy announces that arrangements are being made for the use of Rochester city buses and that those concerned will be so advised at a later date.

The statement sent to all pastors in the diocese follows: "An outline of the application in an individual school district of the new transportation law for school children effective September 1, 1936, the following official interpretation of the State Education Dept. is set forth:

"Where transportation has been authorized for elementary and high school pupils in any school district, children attending private or parochial schools are entitled to receive transportation at the expense of the school district in accordance with the same rules and regulations as are now in effect for transportation for the public school system. Where transportation is furnished for children attending private schools, the facilities furnished must be substantially on a par with those provided for children attending public schools. An adjacent district must be construed to refer to a district within a reasonable distance.

"Elementary School Children: When a district contracts with another district for the education of all or any part of its children and furnishes transportation, it must also furnish transportation for children residing in the district who desire to attend a private school outside the district within a reasonable distance.

"Where a district furnishes transportation to the school within the district, it must furnish transportation for children attending a private school within the district or an adjacent district.

"High School Children: When a district does not maintain a high school and the district and furnishes transportation for its high school pupils to a public high school without the district, it must also furnish transportation for high school pupils residing in the district who wish to attend a private high school located within the district or an adjacent district.

"When a district maintains a high school and furnishes transportation for children attending a private high school located within the district or in an adjacent district.

"May elementary school children

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FIRST GRADUATION AT NIAGARA SET FOR THIS YEAR

Extensive Expansion Program Outlined by Acting Dean

Niagara University's eighty-first year will be marked by the graduation of the first class from the University School of Business.

The Rev. Dr. William J. Mahoney, C.M. J.C.D., Acting Dean of the Rochester Division has announced an extensive expansion of the program of courses to be offered during the coming school year.

In addition to the established professional and cultural curriculum, courses in advanced Accounting, Finance and Economics will be offered including C. P. A. Problems and Reviews, Personnel Administration, Systems Accounting and complete courses in the History Principles and Methods of Education.

Additional Faculty Members The addition of several instructors to the faculty of the Rochester Division is expected to be announced by September 1st. The University will continue its policy of faculty appointments among individuals who are qualified not only from the standpoint of educational experience, but also on the basis of successful business practice covering their respective pedagogic lines. Carl D. Thomy, B.S. C.P.A., has been appointed Head of the Department of Accounting.

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SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT STRESSES NEED OF A CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Cites Unreligious Education as a Danger to Our Modern Youth

By THE REV. JOHN M. DUFFY

Diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools

The Catholic schools, both elementary and high, of the diocese of Rochester will open Tuesday, September 8th, except the Aquinas Institute, which will begin September 1st.

It may be timely to say a word to Catholic parents about Catholic education. The law of the Church declares "that parents are under a grave obligation to see to the religious and moral education of their children, as well as to their physical and civic training, as far as they are able, and to provide for their temporal well-being."

Catholic Schools' Plans Need we remind parents that the religious and moral education of their children can be provided adequately only in Catholic schools?

The separation of secular education from religious and moral training is wrong in principle. It implies that a child is sometimes a mere creature of this world and sometimes a creature belonging to God. Such a distinction is wholly untenable for the simple reason that the child (and the adult too) belongs entirely and continually to God.

The Greatest Tragedy An education need not be unreligious, which is dangerous. An education which is unreligious is often more dangerous for the very reason that religion is ignored as a negligible factor. Any educational program, then, which tends to rob the child or youth

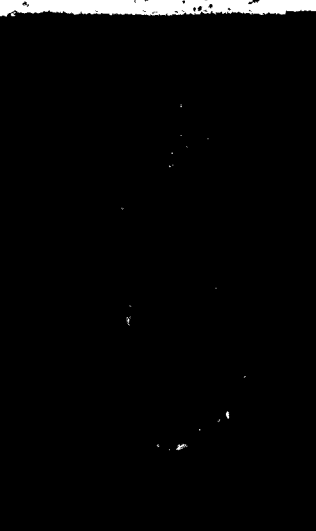
of his Faith, we regard as the greatest tragedy.

What is more? Whence did he come? Why is he here? The man without Faith will regard such questions as purely academic—unworthy of serious consideration.

For the man with Faith, these questions are of the utmost importance. Human conduct is determined or influenced by ethical principles, which in turn are rooted in theology or religious principles.

Education's Weak and Weak But if an educational system has no room for religion, where are to be found the ethical principles which are to guide those who are being educated and also those who are educating?

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Teaching Should Be Regulated by Christian Spirit, Priest Says

thousandth time that there can be no sound ethical standards without sound religious principles. This is why religion should form the wool and warp of education. In fact, religion is the highest and deepest education.

The Modern Lament A recent writer was lamenting and bewailing "crimes without spread and shocking corruption breaking forth with baffling violence, periodical industrial crises bringing poverty and misery in their train, vast areas of rural and urban slums, civil liberties as often trampled underfoot—the spirit of ignominious, natural resources wasted, newly aliens in our midst treated with heedless cruelty, religious intolerance stirred by partisan editors, intolerance with present in government and economy, preparations for wars notwithstanding the pledges of the Kellogg Peace Pact, vulgarly disseminated and worshipped as a national goal, and American civilization challenged as the apostrophe of materialism."

Yet, strange as it may seem, this Modern "lament" a profound act of faith in Progress. Honestly, how can anyone talk seriously about Progress unless he has some fixed point or some fixed standard? If everything is relative, or if we start at zero and end at zero, shall we not be compelled to agree—for good or ill—that we are making no progress?

So again we arrive at the question: "What is the standard?"

But if an educational system has no room for religion, where are to be found the ethical principles which are to guide those who are being educated and also those who are educating?

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1936-Official School Calendar-1937

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS-DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

Approved by MOST REVEREND EDWARD MOONEY, D. D. Bishop of Rochester

1936	1937
Sept. 4—Teachers' Institute.	Jan. 4—Classes resume.
Sept. 8—School Opens (Aquinas Sept. 1)	Jan. 12—Diocesan examinations begin.
Oct. 13—Columbus Day—Holiday.	Jan. 15—Regional examinations begin.
Nov. 11—Armistice Day—Holiday.	Jan. 22—Opening of second semester.
Nov. 25—Thanksgiving Holiday begins at 12 P. M.	Feb. 15—Washington's Birthday—Holiday.
Nov. 26—Classes resume.	Mar. 15—Joseph's Day—Holiday.
Dec. 5—Immaculate Conception—Holiday.	Mar. 25—Easter Vacation begins at 12:00 P. M.
Dec. 25—Christmas Vacation begins at 12:00 P. M.	Apr. 5—Ascension Day—Holiday.
	May 10—Vestition Day.
	May 31—Memorial Day—Holiday.
	June 15—Diocesan examinations begin.
	June 16—Regional examinations begin.
	June 18—School closes.

IMPORTANT
An special holiday or half-holiday declared for the public schools of any locality shall be observed by the Catholic schools of that locality. The Pastor's Day and the Community Day are approved holidays. Otherwise the Archbishop's "Official School Calendar" should be observed.

Says Sister Cecil: 'Our Catholic Schools Need A Non-Fiction Program To Acquaint The Children With The Part Played By Catholics In History, Science, Art And Music'

By SISTER CECIL, C. S. J. Professor of Children's Literature

The College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, Minn.

Does reading play any part in the formation of a child's character? To answer this question on the basis of the number of articles in religious and secular magazines on the subject of "Reading and the Youth Movement," I would answer in the negative.

Out of approximately 400 articles listed in the indexes to periodical literature for the past six years under the caption "Youth or Youth Movement," only one dealt with the influence of reading. Is this a correct proportion?

To answer this question, let me ask another: What is the purpose of the Youth Movement and for us, the Catholic Action movement among boys and girls? In general, we can say that the purpose differs with the different countries that are interested in this phase of the development of its citizenry.

However, the decrease in the percentage of those who cannot read together with the deluge of printed matter for all levels of reading aggravate the problem for leaders of youth today.

Investigations show that in 1910 the number of different copies of newspapers and magazines published was more than five times that in 1880. In 1925 it was 10 times that of 1910. The circulation of books in one of our large public libraries in 1920 was 25 times that of 1885, while the population of the city increased only five times. These facts will give you some idea of how reading conscious the American public has become within the past 50 years.

Now, let us look at the content of the books during the last few centuries. In the first century of this country's history the literature written for and read by children was saturated with religious teaching.

Writing of Patriotic Nature With the coming of the Revolutionary War, the tone of the literature changed. This was the period of the orator, thus the reading selections were of a patriotic nature. However, these were in part religious and in part secular, and in almost every case loyalty to God and Country were the dominating themes.

The new day of Catholic juveniles must see the birth of a body of non-fiction. Recently, The Publisher's Weekly, American book-trade journal, carried this statement: "Copy for copy, non-fiction has undoubtedly outlasted fiction. This trend has been increasing steadily during the past few years until it seems now definitely established that the majority of novels do not approach the sales of comparable non-fiction."

of the Catholic children do not receive more than an eighth grade education under Catholic auspices. During these years do they come in contact with biographies of Catholic scientists, historians, statesmen, artists? Do they come in contact with stories telling them of the history of the world, of man, of science, of art? We have no Catholic juvenile non-fiction.

I do not wish to be understood as advocating a duplication of the excellent collections of non-fiction in the children's rooms in the public libraries; but I do beg leave to insist on a body of Catholic non-fiction which will acquaint Catholic children with the part played by Catholics in history, science, art, music; and with stories about children of Catholic countries. This knowledge should be part of their Catholic background.

Reading is today the most accessible and the most used medium through which indirect experience can be acquired. Since indirect experience has influenced the development of mankind, there seems ground for the assumption that it can effect a change in the life of the individual. No great movement for good or evil has had its initiation or extension without the aid of the printed word.

What is needed is a service that brings to youth reading matter directly pertinent to its momentary interests and activities in connection with their recreational centers, guidance clinics, study and discussion clubs. To make real contributions we seem to bid to work out a solution along largely novel lines. Such a challenge needs the most careful thought of all in this profession.

able but as an absolutely necessary complement to any organization concerned with the direction and guidance of youth. We must give more direct help to those boys and girls who are wide awake, interested, and puzzled concerning the religious, social, and political problems of their day. We have a duty to help provide that we see the need and have the desire.

It is important that boys and girls be taught to choose the best of the literature of the day. Catholic newspapers, magazines, and books should be part of the equipment of every Catholic grade and high school. The importance of early forming the habit of reading Catholic literature can no longer be overlooked.

Reading Program Suggested In conclusion, what is necessary for the carrying out of a Catholic reading program as a part of the Catholic Action movement among our boys and girls? First, a body of teachers who know from first-hand contact, juvenile literature, both religious and secular; second, a library of Catholic literature in every parish school; third, guides or aids to book selection; and fourth, a literary society or club in the parish school to take care of the reading interests of the Catholic eighth grade graduates who go into the public high schools. Has any of these suggestions received attention?

Taken in order the following have been done: first, an increasing number of Catholic institutions are offering courses in children's and adolescent literature in their summer school sessions; second, a library of Catholic literature in the parish school; third, considerable attention is being given to the selection of books for the children; fourth, the publication of the book "The Children's Book Club" by the National Catholic Book Concern; fifth, the organization of a Children's Book Club in every parish school; sixth, the organization of a Children's Book Club in every parish school; seventh, the organization of a Children's Book Club in every parish school; eighth, the organization of a Children's Book Club in every parish school; ninth, the organization of a Children's Book Club in every parish school; tenth, the organization of a Children's Book Club in every parish school.