

BARBAROUS BABIES

by **Right Rev. Msgr. Peter M. H. Wijnhoven**
Editor-in-Chief, Catholic Action of the South
FIRST YEAR AT SCHOOL

When a youngster graduates from school with high honors, it is a proud day. When daughter, so lovely and sweet in her bridal gown, walks up the church aisle, these are moments of deep emotion. When big brother, in young manhood, leaves the parental home to accept his first position in a distant city, that opening is of grave concern. It is far more important than education, marriage or career is the time when five-year-old George goes to school for the first day. On his adjustment and adaptation to school life in its beginnings will really depend his future fate, his happiness and success.

This step is more serious and of greater consequence than the average parent seems to realize. It is, to a considerable degree, a break in a child's life. The mother whose dominant thought that day is a hidden but sad reflection that she is losing her baby and will miss him during the day, is not correctly concerned about her child's welfare. Father and mother should grow up with the child and each step in his progress interesting and exciting. Beginning school should be a thrill for them as well as for the child rather than a good way of getting rid of him for a five- or six-hour period, as sometimes the parental attitude appears to be.

Going to school for the first time is something enormously momentous for a child. It is his first great experience in life. During his early years of his existence, he learned certain ways of reacting to people and things; now he has to readjust himself; he must reconcile himself to the change from the intimate life of the family to the institutional life of the school. He leaves the shelter of the home, where he received all attention, he comes into an existence of a more complex nature, where he has to share direct, personal interest with thirty or forty other children whom he does not know. His entire behavior has to be changed. His freedom is curtailed. Mr. Elkind puts it, "It is a difficult jump from relative protection of the family and a few playmates to the rough and tumble of the early grades."

The child is bewildered. The change to close relationship with a person other than the parent but who shows similar authority, control and interest, somewhat perplex him. He loves his teacher but tries to classify her with his mother. But still there is something wanting. He does not understand; he cannot figure out why he is different from his mother, he is not all to him. He does not realize that he has to share this

mother person with other children of the same classroom group. It is his first social adventure, the reactions to which must be closely watched and guided. This transfer for a considerable portion of the waking day into a new and larger society, ordered and governed as it is by new sets of rules involving many new kinds of competition plus a different setting for carrying on the old ones, will have to be explained in a simple, natural and sympathetic way to the immature, still-unreasoning mind.

The main requirement for the child's successful adjustment to the school situation is the parents' attitude. They should reason away any objection or aversion the youngster may unreasonably entertain. If there is a well-founded certainty that an expressed dislike has some merit, a consultation with the teacher should be had, because, as a rule, she does not want to fail any more than the parents will enjoy failure. A revelation of a child's background, constitutional peculiarities or handicaps, often causes a teacher to change her approach to the particular child.

Unless a child loves his first teacher, the battle is half lost. Therefore, the parents should do all in their power to make the youngster look up to her as a semi-goddess, an angel from heaven. If the child is somewhat backward, and does not easily mix with other children, special care should be taken to make certain that he meets a few of his classmates and gets chummy with them. In this matter, particular efforts should be made, occasions actually should be created, to bring about the desired end. And, with this program a success, the child will, as a consequence, acquire the confidence and self-reliance necessary to happiness in his school associations.

It is wrong of parents to expect little ones in their first year at school to bring home a report that is excellent in every respect. Such an expectation will tend to push the child beyond his capacity of absorption; it is likely to create in him a strong fear of failure, with which, in his first year of bewilderment and adjustment, he is unable to cope.

Never mind his academic attainments. The principal objective of his first-year school experience is that he should like school. Irrespective of the otherwise tangible results achieved, this is the most important step forward. From there on, with the proper encouragement of his parents and the kindly interest of his teacher, he will soon catch up on any little time that may have been lost.

A child's first-year teacher does not have to set the world afire with intellectual brilliancy. Her chief stock in trade should be good common sense, discernment, and a motherly approach to the child.

St. Charles Borromeo Parish

ALTAR SOCIETY LISTS PARTY

Rosary and Altar Society is holding its meeting on Tuesday, March 17. A picnic lunch will be held afterwards. Hostesses for the affair are Mrs. Henry Kadlec, Mrs. Cortez Kaefe, Mrs. Richard Shay and Mrs. Hector Lorenzini.

The annual St. Patrick's Day party has been cancelled this year because of existing conditions.

The use of the hall and equipment has been granted to the Ladies Auxiliary of the American Legion for Thursday, March 19. This will be the occasion of their annual birthday dinner.

Rev. Francis J. Pegnam, assistant pastor at St. Patrick's Church, will speak on this Wednesday on "Christ and My Worship." On March 25 he will conclude his series of talks. The topic will be "Christ and My Sin."

Rebuild Cathedrals

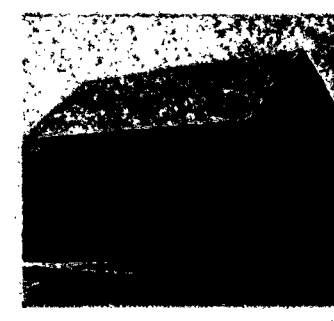
Vichy.—The Cathedrals of Amiens, Rouen and Beauvais—cities in northwestern France which were practically destroyed in the battle of France—are to be repaired as soon as possible.

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Anglicans Halt Russia Debate

LONDON.—(NC) — A debate on Russia was adjourned in the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury after a speaker had pointed out that it might give rise to the impression at the Vatican that the Church of England was going Communist.

At a previous session of the Convocation a resolution on Russia was debated, and on the final day it came up again in this form:

"That, stirred by the courage with which all Russians have rallied to defend the soil of their Motherland and rejoicing at the success which in response to their spirit of unflinching sacrifice has already been vouchsafed to Russian arms, this House records its hope and confidence that, having achieved final deliverance, the Russian and British nations will go forward together to bring in a new age of free and equal brotherhood and of mutual service among all men and all nations."

The Rev. W. R. Johnson, of Truro, opposing the resolution, said it would give a handle to those who were trying to cause mischief in his country. It might very well be seized upon by German propagandists, and it might get to the Vatican and to Spain, that the Con-

vocation of the Province of Canterbury (which they would identify with the Church of England or with England itself) was going strongly Communist along with Russia after the war.

It was agreed to adjourn the debate to the next group of sessions, to be held next May.

Attendance At Army Mission Totals 4,645

FORT MEADE, Md. — Attendance at a three-day mission here for Catholic members of the 29th Division totalled 4,645, the Rev. Harold F. Donovan, Assistant Division Chaplain, has announced.

The five Redemptorist missionaries from Philadelphia, who gave the mission, heard 505 Confessions and distributed Communion to 1,510 soldiers. Host to the missionaries during their stay was Lt. Col. Thomas Shrock, Commanding Officer of the 170th Field Artillery Regiment.

We assume the fellow in Rome who does as the Romans do these days is saying, "Ja, Father."

Memphis Commercial Appeal.

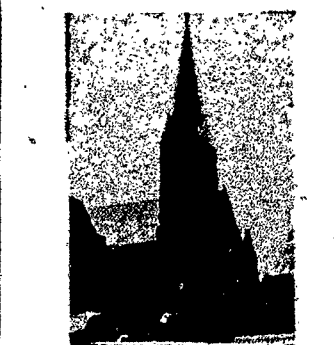
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