

BARBAROUS BABIES

Right Rev. Msgr. Peter M. H. Wyszynski
Editor-in-Chief, Catholic Action of the South

PARENT-AND-TEACHER CO-OPERATION

The unflattering picture of a mother leaving her washbasin or cookstove and storming full sail to the school to ask the teacher, "How come?" has, thank God, become rare. Should a parent go to the school and see the teacher of her child to discuss his welfare? Yes, she should, by all means—but at the proper time and with correct and polite motives.

One mistake, made especially during the child's first year, is that most parents neglect to pay the teacher a friendly visit to talk things over. The only time this thought occurs is when things do not seem to go so well with the child at school or when real trouble has arisen. If this happens to be the case, then, very often, the parental visit already is too late. A stitch in time is always much easier than to mend a big tear. Much trouble often can be avoided if parent and teacher get together in time.

School and home must co-operate. It is no longer considered interference if the parent comes to school unsolicited, nor does it mean that, when a teacher visits a home, it is solely for the purpose of complaining about the children. Parents and teachers are partners, their objective is the same, their respective interests center in the same children. If a problem begins to crop up, it can best be forestalled by co-operation, mutual understanding and appreciation.

Practically all parents think the monthly report card always gives a complete and true picture of the child's progress at school. Often they take his word for it that everything is velvet. Not that the child wants to deceive, but he does not understand or realize the full situation. And the facts are not all disclosed by the written reports. For instance, the class standards may not be high enough for a particular child; he learns his lessons without effort, he gets in the habit of taking it easy, he may become lazy. The high marks in this case can fool both parents and child and trick them into wrong attitudes. Hence, well-timed visits between parents and teachers are most commendable. If everything goes all right everybody is happy, and no time is wasted, if there is danger lurking, it can be got under control in time.

Then, there is the question of a willing child for whom the classroom task seems too hard or who has trouble with one or two subjects. Retarding this pupil may prove detrimental, for he is thereby taken out of his age group or size. This may embarrass and discourage him to the extent that he gets disgusted and hopeless about it all. Teachers and parents in

consultation have to provide special, tactful help for him, just as they have to add work for the bright one in order not to allow indolence to become a characteristic, in his case.

Indiscriminate punishment for tardiness may, in some cases, prove unfair to a child and make him antisocial and obstreperous. If a youngster happens to be regularly late in some cases out of ten, the cause lies at home. Sending notes to the mother may not get to the source of the trouble; punishing the child makes things worse, most probably. A visit to the home will often help to clarify a situation that can be remedied with a little good will, if conditions are properly discussed and understood. Playing hooky is not always corrected by the truant officer's "scaring the kid out of his wits." The child may be so miserable that he does not care whether he goes to jail or to a reformatory. There are many reasons why a youngster can dislike school and feel antagonistic about it, especially among the poor. The embarrassment in having to wear shabby clothes or "hand-me-downs" which are too large for him and make him look and be referred to as a scarecrow, or in being singled out as one from a family who is "an rebel" or whose father is this, that or the other thing, this is often too much of a humiliation for a child to bear. He keeps away from the place where his feelings constantly are being hurt on account of conditions that he cannot help.

Whenever a child dislikes school, sometimes to the extent of hating it, there is a definite reason. It is for the teacher to try to find out what is wrong, so that she may help to solve the complication. A teacher who is not heartless and mercenary always will try earnestly to do something about the unhappy conditions that cause truancy.

Of course, there is not much hope for correction when one is working with parents who are offensively ignorant or who have used school as a threat of discipline to little children under school age. Many mothers who have been unable to correct their children are hopeful that the teacher will be more successful; so they apathetically resign themselves to the unworthy expedient of letting the school do the whole job. This condition is totally devoid of any promise of improvement, because, first of all, there is no help to be expected from the parents, and secondly, the teacher is pictured in the child's mind as a mean, hard-boiled, overstrict disciplinarian.

Teachers and parents should always go hand in hand in planning and working out the remedy when there is a threatening turn in a child's conduct or when he is tending toward some unfavorable action.

1,000 Men Attend Mexico City Rites

MEXICO CITY.—More than 1,000 men attended the spiritual exercises held in the Cathedral here under the auspices of the Diocesan Union of Catholic Men. There has been too little spirituality among the men of this century, the Most Rev. Luis M. Martinez, Archbishop of Mexico, said when he addressed the retreatants.

Let freedom ring on Uncle Sam's cash register! Buy U. S. War Bonds and Stamps.

Holy Redeemer Parish

H. R. Y. A. TEA DANCES

Don Aman, president of the Holy Redeemer Youth Association, has announced the beginning of a new series of Sunday afternoon Tea Dances at the Parish Hall, starting this Sunday, Apr. 12. Popular Johnny Wernsdorfer will return with his band to resume the series he started so successfully during the winter months.

Committees in charge of last Monday's Easter Hop will continue their excellent work in arranging for the Tea dances. President Aman announces, Miss Virginia Minola, general chairman, will be assisted by Ed Holtz, chairman of House Committee; Al Walz, chairman of the Milk Bar; Dom Bruno, house manager; Alma Powers, office.

Dancing will be from 2:30 P. M. to 8:30 P. M. Admission is 25 cents, tax included.

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A Maryknoll Sister in Honolulu and her troop of Girl Scouts responding to an S. O. S. for fracture pillows. Scattered reports filtering through from Hawaii indicate that the 4,347 Girl Scouts there served as messengers during the emergency, helped in canteens, with evacuation, with caring for children, and all without a single casualty. They had been training for defense activities for nearly a year.

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