

Mothers Tell How To Fight 'Battle Of Comic Books'

Fresno, Calif.—(NC)—How do you stop little Susie or Joe from reading trashy comics? You show them something better.

That's the system offered by two Fresno (Calif.) mothers who have changed their tots' literary appetite from gory picture-stories to material that's more tasteful—and more exciting.

WHILE CLUBS and civic groups throughout the Nation fight the flood of poor—sometimes downright sinful—literature that has made the country's newsstands pretty much of a mess, it's up to parents to use "pressure from the inside" by removing their children from the ranks of cheap-book consumers, these mothers believed.

The process employed by these two women—one a Catholic, one an Episcopalian—was a system of "graduating" their offsprings' taste. Here's how they went about it:

When Mrs. A. R. Dorn of Sacred Heart Parish, Fresno, came face to face with the problem of "funny books" it was through the trade system em-

ployed by children of the neighborhood. The "trades" that were coming into the Dorn household weren't of the quality that the Dorns purchased for their children.

"WE BEGAN to look at every book that came into the house on 'trade,'" Mrs. Dorn explained. "It was a task but we stuck to it."

But more important—"All the time we discussed the whys of our selections."

The Dorns made it understood that this wasn't a reasonable adult ban on books, but the same kind of parental guidance that helps growing-ups to learn how to eat correctly and what to wear.

Books that were sinful were pointed out as such. "We explained to them that other books were trashy rather than evil—harmful in the sense that they robbed them of time to enjoy good reading in the world."

CATHOLIC SCHOOL training was a help, Mrs. Dorn said, and the children's taste developed. "Today comic books aren't much of a problem in the Dorn household."

"My first impulse was to forbid them absolutely," said Mrs. A. E. Smith on the subject of low-grade comic books in her home. Mrs. Smith is an Episcopalian and a teacher at Fresno Junior High.

Mrs. Smith turned the tables, however, and used the comic books to interest her children in reading that led to higher things.

At first, if a book didn't pass the parent test, it went into the trash can. Each book represented a good portion of weekly allowance money—and the younger Smiths learned to invest more wisely.

NOT ONLY DID basic morality count in the Smith campaign, but good art and good taste did their bit. Books that were "just blobs of garish color" were pointed out as sloppy art work. As the comic books decreased in the Smith family, appreciation of what's good in art in writing and in morality increased.

Mrs. Smith combed the public library for exciting, well-written fiction that would replace what was now becoming dull reading for the Smith children. She found it there plenty—good literature so entertaining that it didn't have to be forced upon the children.

THE BATTLE had been won. The Smith youngsters, of course, hadn't forsown all comics. But the tasteful comics they did read provided a path to better things.

The similar methods used by two mothers in Fresno amounted to a lot of work and vigilance, she admitted. But the job proved to be front page material. Mrs. Dorn and Mrs. Smith received honors for fighting "the battle of the comic books" on Page One of the Central California Register.

June Workshops Washington—(NC)—The Catholic University of America has scheduled the seventh year of its workshop program during June, Dr. Roy J. Deferrari, workshops director, announced.

Art Talent Brought From Old World



SCULPTOR Otto Georg Hitzberger who lost all in Germany, brought his talents to this country. Some of his works in wood are shown above. Center top, is crucifix, corpus in basswood, cross in oak, at St. Anthony's Church, Cortland. Left and right, statue of St. Mary, 6 feet high in sugarpine and St. Joseph, 6 feet high, sugarpine, both in Christ the King Seminary, St. Bonaventure, N. Y.; scene from the Stations of the Cross, English Station, "Jesus Comforts the Women of Jerusalem," 11 x 12 inches in white mahogany, Christian Brothers Academy in Syracuse where Mr. Hitzberger makes his headquarters at 772 West Onondaga St.

Area Church Art Pieces Produced By DP Sculptor

A sculptor who lost all his work of 25 years and his home in Germany because of World War 2 has already produced most Holy Rosary Church, Syracuse.

He learned the fundamentals of his art at the famed Oberamergau carving school and finished his training at the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin.

AFTER LOSING his all in Germany during the war, he came to the United States with his wife and daughter in 1949. The two statues of St. Mary and St. Joseph in wood at Christ the King Seminary, St. Bonaventure, N. Y., are products of his hands. He also designed the in-

terior of the new school chapel at Christian Brothers Academy, Syracuse, and did the complete sculpture work, such as the main altar, two statues and 14 Stations of the Cross.

Through William J. Woerner and Sons of Rochester, Otto Georg Hitzberger, the former European sculptor was brought to Rochester to do a statue of Venerable Mother Theresa Couderc for the Religious of Our Lady of the Cenacle at 693 East Ave.

A DESCENDANT of an old Bavarian family of sculptors in wood and stone, Mr. Hitzberger has among other works in various churches of upstate New York, installed a twelve-foot high Crucifix in Indiana Limestone at Blessed Sacrament Church, Syracuse.

He has also produced two side altars in wood at Our Lady of Pompel, Syracuse, and a statue in wood of St. Christopher at Most Holy Rosary Church, Syracuse.

He learned the fundamentals of his art at the famed Oberamergau carving school and finished his training at the Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin.

In the following 15 years he had his own studio in Berlin and most of his work was with churches and architects. He also taught sculpture at the Art school and to private students in his studio.

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Nation's Colleges Produce 'Neurotics,' Educator Warns

New York—(NC)—The nation's colleges are producing not scholars, but "leagues of neurotics," a Catholic educator said in a radio broadcast.

Emphasizing the need for Christian philosophy in colleges, Mr. Williams T. Dillon said that today's youth in college "looks to us for food, and we give it scorpions."

A philosophy of frustration and evasion prevails in most colleges today, he said. Monsignor Dillon asked that ideals be given to college youth through philosophy. He suggested a "minimum" of philosophical principles on which all should agree.

"Sometimes I stand in awe of undergraduates who have done so much with so little help," Monsignor Dillon said, "who have kept their dreams when their mentors strove so monumentally to destroy them."

China Reds Open 'Reform' Seminary

Hong Kong—(NC)—The communist-controlled "Triple Self Reform Movement" of Chinese Protestants has opened a union seminary in Nanking to train leaders.

It will be a center of communist indoctrination and of tactical training for cadres or teams assigned to promote Red control in Protestant groups in China and possibly elsewhere in East Asia.

Eleven seminaries of various Protestant denominations have been merged in the new institution, named the Chiffi Ling Union Theological Seminary.

"The denominational concerns of these seminaries, as well as their thinking in modernist or fundamentalist terms, have been completely blotted out," according to an official Protestant organ published in Shanghai.

Many Churches Destroyed In Ravaged Low Countries

Antwerp, Belgium—(NC)—Numerous churches, convents, schools and other church institutions have been demolished in the devastating hurricanes which battered down dikes and spread death and destruction in the low countries. Historians are going back in the record books to 1421 to find a parallel for the present disaster.

BECAUSE OF the almost complete disruption of communications facilities in the stricken areas it was impossible to get an immediate estimate of the vast damages he Church has suffered in the disaster.

Isolated reports reaching here state that the Benedictine abbey at Termonde, Belgium, has been inundated. The St. Norbert Institute here was also flooded. The raging waters swept into the cellar and chapel of the institute and seeped through the tabernacle door to wet the Sacred Hosts.

BECAUSE OF the widespread flood crisis it was virtually impossible to hold Sunday Masses.

Meanwhile the papal representatives to the low countries have expressed the sympathy of His Holiness Pope Pius XII over the disaster.

Archbishop Paul Globbe of the Papal Internuncio to Holland, called on the Dutch government at the Hague to express the Pope's sorrow. Archbishop Fernando Cento, the Papal Nuncio to Belgium, called on the Belgian government at Brussels to do the same.

Vernacular Society Members Increase

Highland Park, Ill.—(NC)—The Vernacular Society, which promotes greater use of English in certain rites and prayers of the Church, now has more than 2,000 members it was announced.

This number includes 14 American Bishops. The Society advocates the use of some English in the Mass and the Ritual in parish churches, as leading towards increased congregational understanding and participation.

Pontiff Aids Flood Victims

Vatican City—(NC)—From his sick bed His Holiness Pope Pius XII has taken steps to console the victims of the hurricane and flood disasters in Holland, England and Belgium.

The Pontiff has selected Vatican officials to provide whatever material aid they can to the victims. He has also sent word to the papal representatives in these countries asking them to express his sympathy to the people in their hour of affliction.

Convert Poet Joins University

Iowa City, Ia.—(NC)—Robert Lowell, Pulitzer Prize poet and convert, has been named resident lecturer in creative writing at the Iowa State University here, it was announced. He will succeed Karl Shapiro.

A great-grandnephew of literature's famous James Russell Lowell, Mr. Lowell is a native of Boston. He was born March 1, 1917. He was educated at St. Mary's School, Southboro, Mass., Harvard University and Kenyon (O.) College. He taught English at Kenyon College and at Louisiana State University.

He was converted to Catholicism in 1940. The same year he was married to Jean Stafford, novelist.

Mr. Lowell became a consultant in poetry to the Library of Congress and was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry in 1947.

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