

Eggheads Are Not Odd Fish

These days as the debate roars on and on about the quality of both secular and Catholic higher education in America, nobody pays much attention to the so-called eggheads, the one group of people very vitally concerned in the whole issue.

There has been all kinds of bickering over federal funds, revised curriculums, and who's who, but seldom a word about the people with the brains whom we urgently need to staff our classrooms.

Just about this time of year at least 100,000 young Americans must make their final decision as to whether they want to continue their education at the college level.

Test tubes, Geiger counters, laboratory apparatus have a distinctive lure to attract students to science courses.

The skilled trades offer the advantage of a reasonably adequate income without the need to wait for a college training.

Professional positions which require extensive education can assure graduates of prestige, social status and in most cases economic comfort.

But no matter which direction the aspirant chooses whether he wants to experiment in rocket fuels, lay concrete sidewalks, or remove tonsils, he needs to be taught; he needs a teacher.

So we obviously also need teachers, and in the years to come more than we have at present, if we hope to expand our educational opportunities to meet the challenges of our times.

Yet the hazards of the teaching profession are more than enough to frighten away any but the most intrepid souls. Apart from the fact that teacher's pay is comparatively pretty poor, what outlook does the average teacher have today?

There is, of course, the tremendous realization that shaping minds and hearts to know the truth and see the right brings a consolation superior to any achievements with atoms or diseased appendices.

BUT WHAT ABOUT the prevalent American attitude toward people with brains?

First, they are labelled eggheads and promptly dropped into the oddfish bowl.

The pupil who prefers to read a book rather than to boot a ball is virtually segregated by an unwritten law more effective than a race riot in cotton picking Alabama.

How many young scholars receive even a fraction of the cheers which go to a gangling adolescent who sinks just one basket in a game so crucial its score will be forgotten by spectators within minutes after the final whistle?

The average boy or girl in high school is bound to be swayed by the cheers of the crowd, and if baskets count more than brains then why waste time on studies?

That's how potential teachers and scientists go down the drain.

You would think America had adopted as its national motto, "If you have a brain, don't show it, and we'll love you anyway."

It seems to us we Americans need to build up a healthy respect for brainpower.

After all, most of the comforts we Americans enjoy today can be traced to the midnight-oil-burning of some so-called egghead. If it weren't for these eggheads we would still be living quite like Australian aborigines.

Furthermore, as Catholics we have a heritage of scholarship.

It was the brainpower trained in monasteries which lifted Europe from the Dark Ages.

It was the inspiration of our Catholic faith which produced artists, mathematicians, architects, and pioneers in modern science during the Renaissance period who are still acclaimed as geniuses.

WE CATHOLIC AMERICANS have, therefore, a double duty to buckle down and develop these brains given us by our Creator. He gave them to us not to squander on the idle chit-chat in which we too often immerse ourselves.

Our destiny certainly calls us higher than that.

Editorially Speaking

"... Perhaps a little more self-confidence is called for. . . . The kind of good-humored and, I think, unobjectionable self-confidence I have in mind is illustrated, in spirit anyhow, by a dialogue a year or two ago between Ralph de Toledano and his publishers.

"The publishers had sent de Toledano the proof sheets of his latest book. In going over them, de Toledano noticed that wherever the word Heaven or the word Hell appeared, they had not been capitalized, as the manuscript had indicated, but appeared, instead, in lower-case type.

"de Toledano corrected each of them and sent the proofs back. He received a telephone call.

"Ralph," said the publisher, "we have a set of style rules over here. Why do you insist on capitalizing Heaven and Hell?"

"Why," replied de Toledano, simply, "because they're places — you know, like Scarsdale. . . ."

From a Communion breakfast talk by Wm. F. Buckley, Jr., (April 22, 1956) quoted in THE TABLET.

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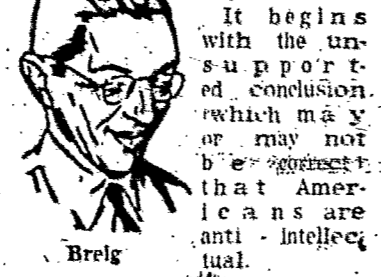
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JOSEPH BREIG
Curious Book

Msgr. John Tracy Ellis' book, "American Catholics and the Intellectual Life," is in some ways a curious document.



It begins with the un-suspected conclusion, which may or may not be correct, that Americans are anti-intellectual.

He goes on to assert that Catholic Americans BECAUSE THEY ARE AMERICANS, are anti-intellectual, too.

Gradually the book becomes a condemnation of Catholics as being, in this respect, shamefully more American than other Americans.

Then follows what I consider an undiscriminating criticism of Catholic education.

The alleged faults of Catholic schools are emphasized; the virtues hardly mentioned. THREE-QUARTERS through the book, Msgr. Ellis remarks, almost as an afterthought, that thus far he has been "assuming general agreement" with his lay estimate of Catholic scholarship and leadership.

He seems to realize suddenly that it is remotely possible that someone might inquire:

"Where are your proofs?"

Msgr. Ellis then offers, for evidence, his references to Who's Who and other sources, references which, I have shown to be meaningless.

Father John Cavanaugh, in his speech based on the Ellis book and his later letter to "America" magazine before his talk, also bluntly assumes general agreement with the position he and Msgr. Ellis have taken.

He talks about alleged Catholic intellectual inferiority as if it were unthinkable that anybody might question his opinion.

THE CONFUSION is compounded by the fact that Msgr. Ellis quotes, approvingly, a statement from a 1905 talk by the late Archbishop John Ireland of St. Paul.

Archbishop Ireland said: "This is an intellectual age. It worships intellect. It tries all things by the touchstone of intellect."

At this point one's mind reels. Does Msgr. Ellis want it both ways? We Americans are anti-intellectuals who worship intellect and try all things by the touchstone of intellect!

But Msgr. Ellis soon gets back on the track. He quotes the opinion of unnamed "visitors from abroad" that Americans are materialists who think only of making fortunes. It seems not to occur to him that visitors from abroad, whirling through America in a fortnight or two, may not be the best judges of the American people.

MSGR. ELLIS also forgets that material success is one of the chief requisites for being listed in Who's Who and that he himself has been in Who's Who as a stardard, and has deplored the comparative paucity of Catholic names therein.

AT THIS POINT, allow me to quote from a letter to "America," written by Msgr. H. D. Buchanan, a consultant of the El Paso diocese, who seems to be fed up, as I am, with this indiscriminate criticism of Catholics and Catholic education. He writes:

"... I wish someone would offer us a balance sheet, showing in what fields, intellectual and otherwise, we are up to par or possibly even ahead of others, and those in which we are behind.

"... Our critics have taken as definitive the non-Catholic estimate of what constitutes an intellectual. What is the matter with theology, philosophy and the rational sciences generally? Spirituality — the science of the saints — is regarded outside the Church as emotionalism.

"... It seems to me high time for someone to give us a full list of intellectual pursuits, with a fair estimate of the percentage of Catholics in each of them. Then we can consider 'Why?' and what we should do about it."

Why Do We Make Stations Of The Cross?

Catholics fill their parish churches every Friday night in Lent for the Stations of the Cross.

What is the reason for this devotion?

How did it get started? And where did the name "stations" come from?

Throughout the world today virtually every Catholic church and chapel has a series of fourteen pictures or carvings placed at intervals along the wall. Each scene represents an incident in the passion and death of our Saviour.

People "make the stations" by going from one scene to the next and stopping at each to meditate on the particular event represented. This practice of stopping at each scene gave the devotion its name, the "stations."

When the devotion is performed publicly, usually only the priest and servers go from station to station. The people remain in their pews but follow all the other rites of the priest — standing, genuflecting and kneeling as he does.

The devotion obviously is a miniature pilgrimage to Jerusalem — a substitute for those of us who cannot actually visit the holy places sanctified by the precious blood and tears of Jesus Christ.

Since our present day rite is a substitute, we can best understand it if we trace its origin back to the story of pilgrims who visited the Holy Land right at the dawn of the Christian era.

There are traditions which say that the Blessed Virgin used to visit daily the route taken by her Son as He carried the heavy cross to Golgotha.

St. Jerome, in the fourth century, describes the crowds from all countries who made the journey in his day, at the invitation of the pope, to the "way of sorrow."

When the Muslims cut their seventh century swath across Palestine they obliterated any Christian rites in public. Not until the Crusades captured Jerusalem in 1099 were Christians again permitted to follow the "way of the cross."

During the three intervening centuries, churches in Europe began to erect painted or carved scenes showing the various episodes of our Lord's journey.

THE NUMBER of stations differed from church to church — some had eight, one had thirty-four.

THE ORDER of events also varied as medieval imaginations filled in details which are not included in the Scripture stories.

The Bible, for example, makes no mention of Jesus falling as He walked to His crucifixion. German churches, however, counted seven falls in their stations of the cross, a number subsequently reduced to three.

Heroic Veronica pushing her way through the crowd to present her veil to soothe the weary Christ is also a bit of pious fiction. She is not mentioned in the gospels. As a matter of fact she makes her first appearance in the stations story only as late as the year 1485.

Yet other details definitely recorded in Scripture are omitted from the stations — such as Jesus refusing the narcotic drink offered to ease His torments, and especially His



WE ADORE THEE, O CHRIST . . . say Jane Smith and Scott Sullivan, fifth graders of Pittsford's St. Louis parish school, as they make the stations of the cross, traditional Lenten devotion in all Catholic churches.

Seven last words spoken from the cross.

It is safe to say, however, that the devotion of the stations of the cross is one of the most soul-stirring ceremonies of the Church. Its appeal has grown through the centuries and there is no evidence that it is in danger of dying out.

Many spiritual writers list the stations next to the Mass and Sacraments as the highest source of grace and inspiration for Christians.

Saints, including the famed St. Francis of Assisi and St. Alphonsus Liguori, have compiled manuals of prayers for people to use in making the stations.

THE CHURCH has added its own official encouragement by granting its richest indulgences to those who practice the devotion — a plenary indulgence to everyone who makes the stations and an additional plenary indulgence if Holy Communion is received that same day.

Sick people and others who

By FATHER HENRY ATWELL



IV — We Give To God

The offering, consecration, and communion are the three principal parts of the Mass of the Faithful.

In ancient times, only Christians who were baptized and loyal in the practice of their faith were permitted to remain for this second portion of the Mass. That is why it is called the Mass of the Faithful.

In the previous section of Holy Mass (called the Mass of the Catechumens), the ritual consisted of our speaking to God and His reply to us.

Now in the offertory and consecration, we will give our gifts to God. Then in communion, God will give His gift to us.

The Mass of the Faithful begins with the Creed. "I believe in which we profess our faith in all that God has revealed.

Again, as at the start of every important phase of the Mass, the priest greets the people. "Dominus vobiscum — The Lord be with you." We reply, "Et cum spiritu tuo — and the Lord is in your soul too."

THE PRIEST reads a short verse usually from one of the psalms. This is the remnant of what once was a stirring, congregationally chanted hymn, a morning song as the people of God brought their gifts to the altar.

EACH PERSON at Mass brought an offering — bread, wine, wax for the candles, fuel for the fire, gold or silver.

The priest turned from the altar as the people approached with their gifts. He accepted what was needed for consecration and communion. Then, put them on the altar and, after labor for the church and for the relief of the poor.

The presentation of each gift was a quite a bit of time so all piled in, singing an appropriate offertory hymn. In later years as the priest's time was reduced by the collection method, the hymn was abbreviated to its present one-verse version.

The ancient offertory procession dramatically portrayed the active role both priest and people play in offering worship to God.

But no matter whether we ourselves take our gift to the altar or have it placed there by another, we should remember that it is actually our gift, made possible by our generous contributions to the church.

Just as long ago as the first Holy Thursday, Peter and John prepared the table and brought the food for the Last Supper, the first Mass, so now it is the privilege of the people to provide through their collection time, the bread and wine and other requisites for Mass today.

In our present day offertory rite, the priest has the bread already prepared and waiting for the offertory. He removes the veil from the chalice, takes the paten (a gold plate) which contains the bread for consecration, holds it in both his hands up toward the crucifix and says, "Accept, O Holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this host for the all-holy sacrifice . . ."

The priest offers this gift of the people "for all faithful Christians living and dead." All are to be included; no one is excluded from this great sacrifice.

Small hosts are to be consecrated for the people's communion, they are placed in a ciborium, a gold cup with a cap on it, which stands next to the chalice on the altar.

With a sign of the cross, the priest places the host on the altar and then goes to the side of the altar where the servers present to him cruets of wine and water.

First the priest pours a small portion of wine into the chalice and then a few drops of water.

The wine will soon be changed into the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. The water, weak like ourselves, represents our human nature. For this reason, the priest blesses the

LENTE FEATURE
This is the fourth series of articles explaining the history and ceremonies of Holy Mass.

water before pouring it into the wine.

NOW LOOK into the chalice. What do you see?

The few drops of water are swallowed up, absorbed by the wine.

Such is a picture of what should happen to us at Mass. We are to be so united with Christ that we become one with Him, that our lives reflect and perpetuate His life of love for God and our fellow men.

Back at the center of the altar, the priest lifts the chalice of wine. "We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation." Then with the sign of the cross, he places the chalice on the altar behind the host. Bread and wine are now ready for the great moment of consecration.

A prayer of humility and an invocation of the Holy Spirit follow the offering prayers.

Again the priest goes to the side of the altar as in ancient times, he symbolizes the great purity which must characterize both priest and people as they approach the most sacred portion of the Mass.

Originally, the priest washed his hands as a practical necessity.

When the offertory procession was observed, he received the various gifts of the people — food, money, leaves of bread — no flasks of wine. Even today at solemn Mass, the priest enshrines the bread and wine in clouds of incense. So after handling the gifts as in ancient times, or the censor in our times, the washing of his hands is both practical as well as symbolic.

Returning to the center of the altar, the priest recites a prayer offering our homage to the Holy Trinity. He then turns to the people and urges them, "Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father almighty." This is an added reminder that priest and people are united in this mutual rite of worship to God.

Finally, the priest says the so-called secret prayer.

Really, it is not a "secret" in our modern sense of that word. Originally this was the only prayer said by the priest at the offertory. After the people brought their gifts to the priest, as described above, he set aside what he needed for consecration. He then said this one prayer dedicating the gifts for the sacrifice.

These dedicated gifts are called in Latin "secrets" and that is where the name comes from.

Since the gifts come from the people, the Church gives them the last word to conclude the offertory. As the priest finishes the secret prayer, he says, ". . . per omnia secula seculorum." And to give their firm stamp of approval to all that has been said and done during the offertory, the people voice their heartfelt "Amen."

Next week: Our gift becomes the perfect gift.

Strance But True . . .

WESTMINSTER ABBEY
is unique in England — it is NEW! NEW! NEW! — IS NOT SUBJECT TO ANY BISHOP, AND IS IN NO DOCESE. HAS A DEAN & CHAPTER, & TITLE, COLLEGIATE CHURCH OF ST. PETER IN THE COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX!

The word NEW — PRAY FOR US SWISSERS, NOW — in the Hall Mar. was introduced in 1568 when Christendom was best by the Turks.

JOSEPH CONRAD, 1857-1904. A CRUISE IN HIS LIFE, BUT ACQUIRED SUCH A COMMAND OF THE LANGUAGE THAT HE WROTE THE GREATEST SEA STORIES IN ENGLISH LITERATURE.

ORIGINS OF SANTA MARIA IN TRASTEVERE. HOME DATE BACK TO 229 B.C. — WASHINGTON BELIEVE IT WAS THE FIRST CHURCH OPENED FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP AFTER THE EARLY CHRISTIANS CAME OUT FROM THE CATACOMBS.

Daily Mass Calendar

- Sunday, March 16 — Fourth Sunday of Lent (purple), Creed, Lenten Preface.
- Each weekday of Lent has its own special Mass. If a feast day also occurs, the priest may choose either the Lenten Mass (purple) or the feast-day Mass. On Wednesday, all priests will celebrate the feast day Mass of St. Joseph.
- Monday, March 17 — St. Patrick, confessor (white), Gloria.
- Tuesday, March 18 — Sts. Cyril of Jerusalem, confessor (white), Gloria, Creed.
- Wednesday, March 19 — St. Joseph (white), Gloria, Creed, Preface of St. Joseph. (A new Mass text for this feast was published in 1956. Only Missals issued since then will contain the new text.)
- Thursday, March 20 — Lenten Mass (purple).
- Friday, March 21 — St. Benedict, abbot (white), Gloria.
- Saturday, March 22 — St. Isidore, farmer (white), Gloria.