

● One of the greatest gifts an alumnus can offer to his Alma Mater is to give her honor by his being given a Papal Award, the *Medal Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* besides distinguishing himself as Congressman for many terms. In this scholarly speech he analyzed the effects of years of godless education in the Philippine educational system.

With due allowance to Human failings, many social inequalities, crimes, divorce, birth control, greed, lust for power, dishonesty, government abuses and excesses, and other evils that afflict us nowadays are traceable to a large extent to either ignorance or misconception

Your Excellency, Archbishop
Rosales,
Reverend Fathers,
Papal Knights,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Permit me to express my profound gratitude to the Holy Father for the honor he has bestowed upon me; to His Excellency, Archbishop Rosales for his kindness in making arrangement for the holding of my investiture.

According to His Excellency, Archbishop Reyes, the award, *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* has been given to me for my work for the religious instruction of our youth. I would therefore ask indulgence of this distinguished gathering to allow me to make a few remarks on our youth.

To the students of the different Catholic schools I send my warmest greetings. I particularly salute my beloved Alma Mater, Colegio de San Carlos, now the great University of San Carlos.

On the whole, the Catholic school is the best in any country of the world. It is regarded with great sympathy even in non-Catholic countries. It is attaining an amazing progress in the United States. Notwithstanding the extreme nationalism of the Japanese people, the University of German Jesuits and the schools for girls of the Spanish, Italian, and French nuns in Japan enjoy a great prestige.

We are all familiar with the high standing of the Catholic schools in the City of Cebu and with their phenomenal growth. Their future is still better and brighter. Possessing the advantages of the strong organization and permanent vitality of the religious Orders that are running them, the Catholic schools in Cebu will certainly survive the many vicissitudes to which are subjected, the other private schools whose existence depends largely on the life and changing personal fortunes of their individual founders and owners. Those of us who have had the privilege of being educated in Catholic schools must keep in mind this thought: That our foreign religious teachers came to the Philippines at a great sacrifice. They left their countries, their homes,

ON RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION

By Hon. Miguel Cuenco

Congressman, 5th District of Cebu



Alumnus Congressman Miguel Cuenco comments on the present Educational system in the Philippines on the occasion of his getting the Papal award *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*. "Fifty years of godless public school system in the Philippines are already bearing their fruits," he observed.

families, and dear ones not to seek wealth nor earn a livelihood but to teach us to become good Christians, to make out of us fine Catholic gentlemen and ladies.

I venture one humble suggestion. I wish that the great encyclicals of Leo XIII, Pius X, and Pius XII (the reigning Pontiff) on the social question, on government, on marriage, on education, and on international peace be taught in the collegiate courses of our Catholic schools. These enlightening documents are works of wisdom and of holiness, and of moralizing influence. They declare and elucidate the truth about grave questions that confront society and man at the present time. The encyclicals cannot err because they express the teachings of God, Our Creator, and of Jesus Christ, Our Redeemer.

of Catholic teachings.

Fifty years of godless public system in the Philippines are already bearing their fruits. The old God-fearing Filipino generation, steeped in piety, is dying out. The great majority of Filipinos below 45 years of age do not know the Ten Commandments, nor have they any idea about God or of His Son, Jesus Christ, True God and True Man. They do not go to confession nor receive communion, nor do they pray, for many of them cannot even say The Our Father or the Hail Mary. We reap what we sow. A wave of crime is sweeping the country. The number of prisoners sentenced to death and burnt in the electric chair in Muntinlupa during the last two years, convicted of murder with robbery,

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sober with words and measures his impressions.

The active soul pours itself into action independently of results, whether his honor or glory is at stake or not. He acts because the idea spontaneously conveys itself to movement. For him leisure is a torment, a veritable punishment. Whereas the inactive feels an inner resistance to work. Rather than labor, he prefers to read something agreeable, or dream. If he acts, it is solely out of motives extrinsic to his work.

The resonant man who reverberates to all impressions falls into an important class. Any external change finds a re-echo within himself. If he reacts rapidly to first impressions leaving no impressions upon the soul, he is classed as reverberant to primary impressions, a creature of primary reaction. To such people impressions may strike but once and ramify over their whole being. Although impression may penetrate slowly, yet its effects may last a long time, even for life. Those of primary reaction reverberate suddenly to an offense and often no matter how violent, forget soon. While others of secondary reaction react less fervently, but hold the offense much longer. They belong to the group who say, "I pardon, but do not forget."

Of course, these several groupings do not comprise the total amplitude of an entire person. Many other so-called accessory elements can be added. His intellectual qualities may be either analytical or synthetic. In addition other tendencies or drives might be included, as self-love, avarice, sensuality, prodigality, etc. Though very important in moral issues, yet they are not the elements constituting a temperament, since they do not form the psychic material out of which a temperament results. Rather these accessory traits merely condition these three constitutive elements, and all taken together form one entire temperament.

Take for example the emotional type where non-active and subject to primary reaction. Being very sensitive to the variations of the external work, their humor alters with the change of environment. And in as much as they are inactive, they usually live in an inner world of reverie and ideal. Such characters are usually gifted

with generosity, originality, quickness of apprehension and often disposed to art. They suffer one serious defect, instability. Men as Oscar Wilde or Byron belong to this group. Even the great St. Francis of Assisi numbers himself in this class. Reacting vehemently to the misery of his times, he gave himself entirely and forever to relieve the state of poverty. As a non-active individual he preferred to enter himself, instead of following his father's profession. Reacting immediately with impulsiveness, he changed his clothing and became the beggar of Rome. St. Francis was an artist and remained one after his conversion by giving renunciation a taste of poesy, and making austere life agreeable. Some say that St. Francis was the holiest of all Italians, and of all the most Italian.

Such temperaments require a firm and understandable director whose guidance preserves their flame of enthusiasm aglow by illuminating their intellects with the language of the heart.

There are other souls active to impressions of secondary reaction, and inactive as well. These are usually more introverted, and inclined to be reflexive and meditative. Although constant, yet they have tendencies to over-analyze, and often fall into scruples and problems. Many atheists and pessimists have joint this group, such as Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard. Another personality belonging to this class is the holy Curé of Ars. He bore a strong compassion for the poor, avoided military service and almost ready to abandon his seminary studies, because the branches were too rugged. He remained a pessimist all his life.

Such personalities need a guide who can encourage and prompt the heart with an affective type of meditation leading them to confidence and love.

Others again are listed as emotional, active and individuals of primary reaction. They are impulsive, revolutionaries who make good demagogues, but often lack constancy to continue. Mussolini and Mirabeau belong to this class. Being enterprising and bursting into action with lack of reflection, they endanger themselves to dissipation and lack of interior spirit.

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is much higher than all those sentenced to capital punishment for the same crime during more than three hundred years of Spanish rule and American rule put together. Profit physical and material well-being are considered as the paramount human values. The result is that the rate of thefts in private enterprises as well as in government offices is very alarming.

Crimes are not mere violations of penal laws. They have a much deeper significance. They are clear symptoms of the spiritual and moral disintegration of society itself.

This moral decay should cause us the greatest anxiety. We cannot sit idly by and fold our arms. We must do something about it quickly and positively. We are mindfull of the difficulties that the government interposes with regard to the effective teaching of religion in the public schools. But in all candor we must, however, admit that the teaching of religion to our children, inside or outside the public schools, leaves much to be desired.

We propound no charges nor raise recriminations. We blame nobody, much less the parish priest. Unlike the American or Spanish parishes, ours are usually very large, in the United States there is one parish priest for every five thousand inhabitants. In the Philippines it is one for about fifteen thousand people. The parish priest alone therefore has not the means to provide for the religious instruction of his parishioners. He needs the cooperation and the support of all of us. The problem concerns everybody, the layman as well as the churchman. It is a practical problem which calls for organization, for collective action, for the concerted efforts of all Catholic forces. With all humility I respectfully suggest that His Excellency, the Archbishop call a meeting of members of the Catholic Action, Papal Knights, Church dignitaries, Knight of Columbus, Members of the Legion of Mary, and Catholic educational leaders to devise ways and means for the effective teaching of religion in the public schools. We face a great responsibility to God and to our country; a responsibility which we cannot shirk. I thank you.