

## DOBLE CARA

We here speak of a startling phenomenon that has intrigued us for quite some time.

### DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

Let us put it this way:

Mr. X is a government official. He is also a Roman Catholic. As such he sends his children to the better known Catholic institutions of learning in Manila. There can be no gainsaying his apparent quiet determination to have his sons and daughters properly instructed and trained in the principles that make for satisfactory Christian lives.

Yet mark!

This very same man, in his official capacity, would have the Assembly Hall resound with his objections to having a more extensive teaching of religion in our public schools. He would deny the little shoeless boy on the street who has to go to public school the right to learn even the bare rudiments of his basic relationship with his Creator.

Put it in a different manner.

Mr. Z is another government official. As a Roman Catholic he subscribes heartily to the doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage—as far as his own is concerned and that of his relatives and friends

We had to add the qualification because—

Watch!

In the short distance that he travels from his house to his office, he undergoes a turnabout. In the latter place he would push through a bill for more liberal divorce laws.

There is something uncanny about this.

We are sure they do not do it with mirrors.

Why this dual personality?

Why this double face? Or is it double talk?

Herewith we try to explore into the reason behind it all. We may not be able to explain everything fully but the speculations might prove of interest.

### EASY COME, EASY GO

To begin with, it could be a weakness in our underlying faith in our religion. There is always the possibility that our adherence to the Church is prompted not so much by a deep-seated belief in her doctrines as by a passive acquiescence to custom. We are there because the waters around us flowed gently past and carried us. And it is but the goodness of Providence that the current was headed in the right direction.

In a child of tender years, we might hope that circumstances be that helpful always. We expect in the growing mind of the young not so much an intellectual grasp of all the dogmas as a trusting faith that may be nurtured in due time and with due care into a truly clear-sighted and reason-bound Catholicism.

Trouble is, such politicians as we have described are no longer adolescents. They are already full grown adults. Physically, at least. We sometimes are led to believe that they are still children being wafted towards wherever whimsy decides.

We have always had the sneaking suspicion that the conversion of the early Filipinos into Roman Catholicism was altogether too easy, too quick. It is axiomatic that whatever comes in easily goes out with equal facility. If anything does stay on, it is but a dim shadow of what it should be.

### VANITY FAIR

In the first case cited, the person seems strong in his faith, seems firmly rooted in his beliefs and shows it by sending his children to the better known Catholic colleges. That is a legitimate rebuttal to our statement that his faith could be weak.

On closer examination, however, we are questioning even this evidence. Does it prove his unshakable Catholicism when a man sends his children to expensive Catholic schools? He could be merely striving for that sense of social importance that a recognized college—it is fancied—gives even to the most ill-born demeanor. It is not unheard of to have young men and women attend famous institutions just for the privilege of pasting a distinctive seal on the windshields of their cars.

We might be called cynics for this, but our stand remains: that many of our officials are not so steadfast in their principles.

Granting then that the faith is weak, the next step in our analysis of the startling phenomenon centers on an erroneous assumption.

There can be no doubt but that there is a subconscious assumption amongst us that religion is something that pertains only to specific

acts of individuals. As a private citizen, Mr. X feels that he should do what his conscience tells him is proper; as an official of the government, he should do that which the government expects him to do.

This does not yet completely explain the duality of personality because his objection to the teaching of religion in the public schools is an individual act of morality that concerns himself. He cannot get out of that even if he is unaware of it.

Neither can Mr. Z

This second step, however, bites a little deeper into the question of why the sudden change in attitude from home to office. We can now ask:

Why is the government official or employee expected to act in a way contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church?

Pushed this far, we are face to face with the ugly fact that our government, in common with most governments of the present world, has a distaste for religion. A prejudice against religion has been insidiously absorbed by our political body from the rabid agnosticism of past years.

We have to blame the Masonic movement for one thing. It was once the goal of every aspiring politician who wanted to get ahead fast to be admitted into its ranks. And once in, they outdid each other in the expression of their profound conviction that they were men of the world and had outgrown the ignorance and superstition of religion.

Happily, this is not the case so much now, but the aftertaste lingers on.

#### THE LUBITCH TOUCH

We have to blame too, that worship of the material that has come with some of the exponents of so-called progressive Americanism. Our instinct for imitation is such that we as a people do not stop to pick and choose. And in our haste to put on the borrowed garments, oftentimes, we fail to see what is appropriate and what is not.

Certainly we have failed to perceive that the greatness of America has been founded on the observance of strict, puritanical and straightlaced religion, and not on Hollywood chromium-plated materialism.

This brings us, we think, right up to the case of Mr. Z. His advocacy of divorce might be just a subconscious attempt to attain that supposedly high degree of sophistication as glamorized by the

Lubitch touch.

The thought progression goes something like this:

"It's the smart thing to do. The smart people of Beverly Hills do it. Let us be smart too. Why not?"

Unconsciously, therefore, our government acquired a definite repulsion towards the Catholic Church that, fortunately, is dying but has not totally lost all its strength. Taking its place is a rapidly spreading indifference for everything spiritual that is just as bad, for it, as efficiently as the former, still inhibits the flowering of genuine religious fervor in our government officials no matter how sincerely moved they may be to put their faith into practice in the Philippines.

#### LOOKING FORWARD

In France, England and the United States, thinking men are slowly awakening to the fact that a return to the appreciation of the right spiritual values is needed if this chaotic world is to be set right again. We will most probably follow suit; but must it be, as usual, after the other nations have long profited by it?

True, there are in our midst some valiant souls who have shown no fear or timidity to put their Catholic principles into practice in their private lives. These are the men who can and who are giving real, lasting solutions to the many irksome problems of our country.

But these men are few.

The great portion of them are timid and fear-ridden about their faith. Pathetic this, that in their frantic struggle for pre-eminence they should not avail themselves of such an indispensable ingredient to real greatness; that they should unwittingly throw away that powerful factor that would transform them from mere politicians to real statesmen.

Modern philosophy defined: A blind man searching in a dark room for what is not there.

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"Jesus is ideal and wonderful," said Bara Dada, the philosopher of India, "but you Christians—you are not like Him."