

- The uses and purposes of school as against the family.

## FAMILY AND SCHOOL

The fullest aim of education cannot be fulfilled through limited learning only in science or technology, or even in exclusively humanistic or cultural areas. In the pre-highly specialized stages of education, the school's aim should be to synthesize knowledge of this world's elements with equal depth-proving of spiritual values. The richness of training in natural truth should be matched by proportionate training in the theological truth for the cultivation of Divine insights and a sound conscience.

Can the school cultivate these ends by itself? Thoroughly dedicated as the school may well be to the foundations of society in truth, to the requirement of justice and to the embrace and driving force of love, and the glories of freedom, the school may well be a voice crying in the wilderness.

The teachers — the great and distinguished teachers — hold a detached, normative, and critical position in society. They cannot enforce the truth; they can teach it well and the students can learn it intellectually. But there is no assurance that the student will live it. Teacher's influences can readily be neutralized at the heart of the society — the family. Or from the start, the drive and power of the school may be frustrated by the arm and the milieu, of which the school servant of society — the government. Likewise the total is a part (especially, is a silent and frustrated part), may lack understanding or the will to demand comprehensive learning of the schools, and thereby compound the evils.

Schools and teachers are ultimately dependent. The bedrock foundation of all is the family. We often speak

of the school and the family being counterparts, and so they are. But each is an entity and cannot be confused with the other. Each has its power and responsibilities, but in all they must coordinate their initiatives.

The family presumes an internal unity for the physical, moral, social and intellectual growth of the youngsters so that they assume responsibility according to their years. The family is the first school for the child's self-control, emotional maturing, or the exercise of initiatives, and the achievement of a value code.

The family provides a background for the child's achieving knowledge. Attitudes and motivations are molded within the family circle: attitudes to knowledge, to people, to natural and other projects, to human activity, to personal choices and their effects on others, and to decisions.

Above all, the family's fundamental gift to the child is stability and the solidifying assurance of love, lack of

which education cannot insure a steady and balanced progress in the child.

That seems just to absolve the school and the teachers from all responsibility for the outcome of their ministrations! But not quite.

The school is the scene of the child's first prolonged and continuous excursion in the world outside the family circle. The good school is ordered to such discipline and social relations as to favor gradual learning according to the abilities of the pupil. The school should present a comprehensive program with aims that are testable, and as well have the means in equipment and library to achieve these ends.

The school will naturally require favorable conditions for leaning on the part of the student, such as intellectual effort and success, active participation in the learning process, value judgments, self-control, initiatives, etc. The school's function is to arouse and develop these characteristics in the students also. — *By Rev. Augustine Philip, FSC.*