

Modern Questions

IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN
PRINCIPLES AND THE TEACHING
OF THE PAPAL ENCYCLICALS

A DISCUSSION CLUB MANUAL
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUPS

by *Rev. RUDOLPH G. BANDAS*

SERIES FIVE



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James Mosley

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A Discussion Club Manual for Young
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Rev. Rudolph G. Bandas

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Introduction

The chapters in this book are brief explanations of topics which proved interesting to open forums and discussion clubs of young people as well as of adults. The chapters do not pretend to be exhaustive explanations of the subjects but serve rather as an introduction to the question. They contain basic principles which are indispensable for the proper evaluation of any modern problem.

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Chapter I

SPIRITISM

The word *spiritism* is applied to the theory that, given a certain favorable environment, the living can communicate with the souls of dead persons; it also designates the various means by which such communication is effected. The purpose of spiritistic inter-communication is to obtain information about various topics, especially about the state of the departed and about the nature of life beyond the grave.

A *medium* is a person through which communication with the spirits takes place; a medium is said to be endowed by nature and by education with those psychic and magnetic gifts enabling him or her to serve as an intermediary between the living on earth and the spirits.

A *trance* is a sleeplike state—produced artificially, hypnotically or automatically—in which the medium becomes dominated by another personality; the spirit replaces the medium's personality and uses the medium's bodily organs as if they were its own. The medium does not communicate directly with the soul of the departed one but with a "controlling spirit" on the "other side" who supplies the information on the person with whom communication is desired. In spirit materialisation the controlling spirit is said to abstract from the medium's body a vaporous material and gradually to assume the appearance of the departed person. This process is said to prove extremely exhausting to the medium.

A *seance* is a place where spirit-communication takes place—a place especially adapted and equipped for spirit-manifestations. The following phenomena, indicative of spirit-communication and manifestations are said to take place in a seance: knocks, raps, taps in answer to questions; automatic writing and trance-speaking; planchette writing; tipping and rotating tables without any physical contact; appearance and movements of objects without any physical support; levitation of objects and of the medium by superhuman force; spirit-materialisation; spirit-photography where features of the materialized spirit resemble those of the photographed deceased person.

The roots of spiritism are to be found in the magic, divinations, occult practices, and necromancy (art or science of evoking the dead) of ancient peoples. In its actual form Spiritism dates from the experiences in 1848 of two girls at Hydesville, New York, Margaretta and Katie Fox. The Fox sisters heard strange sounds and rappings in their home. These knocks were gradually explained as coming from the spirits who wished to communicate with men upon earth through the mediumship of the Fox Sisters. A close scientific investigation, however, revealed that the mysterious sounds were due to the movements of the girls' knee-joints. The Fox girls at first admitted but later, for pecuniary reasons, denied the fraud. In the meantime the movement kept on developing in enthusiasm and in the number of votaries. Mediums in various parts of the world proclaimed themselves the providential intermediaries between the spirit world and our own world. The evil spirit, the "father of all lies," apparently insinuated himself at this point into

what was at first an amusing enough though contemptible human deception. From popular interest the movement gradually passed into the stage of serious inquiry and scientific investigation.

The popularity of spiritism is due to several causes. In the first place, the movement is a reaction against the gross materialism of the day. Man's innate desire for personal immortality and for perfect happiness is not satisfied by the empty babblings of atheists about an ideal survival and immortality in the thoughts and souvenirs of men. Spiritism offers an escape and relief from this intolerable philosophy of life. Secondly, spiritism is a reaction against agnostic and Kantian philosophy. Kant and his followers closed all avenues to the world beyond, contending that man can neither know nor affirm anything about the things outside of the domain of the five senses. Spiritism offers a shortcut to the domain of spirits and of personal immortality. Finally, spiritism is a substitute for the disintegrating Protestant sects and churches which leave unsatisfied man's interest in the next world. In itself, however, spiritism is a vague and uncertain groping after those great religious realities which the Church has from the very beginning placed before her followers in the teachings of faith.

Spiritism is forbidden in the earliest pages of the Old Testament. In the Book of Deuteronomy we read: "Neither let there be found among you any that consulteth pythonic spirits or fortune-tellers or that seeketh the truth from the dead. For the Lord abhorreth all these things"⁽¹⁾.

The legislation of the Church is no less precise and emphatic. Speaking at once of magnetism,

(1) XVIII, 10-12.

hypnotism and spiritism the Holy Office in 1840 published the following decree: "Where all error, sorcery and invocation of the demon, implicit or explicit, is removed, the mere use of physical means which are otherwise legitimate, is not morally forbidden, provided it does not aim at unlawful or evil results. But the application of purely physical principles and means to things or effects that are really supernatural, in order to explain these on physical grounds, is nothing else than unlawful or heretical deception."

The decree was repeated in 1847 and again in 1856. In the statement of 1856 the Holy Office complains about the alarming spread of the practice of divination: By purely physical means and legerdemain men are trying to come to a knowledge of invisible, occult, unknown and distant events; nay more, some men even attempt to "call forth the souls of the dead."

The second Plenary Council of Baltimore (1866) Decree 36, describes spiritism as the principal error of the day which is contributing in no small measure to the ruin of souls. "After due investigation," the Council continues, "it has become clear that many of the marvelous phenomena said to take place in spiritistic seances are wholly deceitful and produced by the fraudulent collusion of the spiritists; or they are to be attributed to the imagination of the medium and to the credulity of the spectators; or to a certain human dexterity; some of these phenomena are no doubt to be attributed to Satanic intervention."

The practice of spiritism, whether as medium or as inquirer, is gravely illicit. In 1898 the following case was put before the Holy Office: "Titius,

excluding any pact with the spirit of evil, is accustomed to evoke the souls of the deceased. He proceeds as follows: Being alone, without any kind of ceremony, he prays to the leader of the heavenly hosts to grant him the power of conversing with the spirit of some definite person. He waits for a little time and then he feels his hand, prepared to write, moved, and by this he becomes certain of the presence of the spirit. Then he explains what he wants to know and his hand writes the answers to the questions which he had proposed. All these answers are in accord with the faith and with the Church's teaching concerning the future life. For the most part the replies relate to the state of the soul of some dead person, the need that it has of prayers and the complaints of the negligence of its relatives. In the circumstances explained it is asked whether the practice of Titius is permissible." The Holy Office handed down the following answer: "In the circumstances explained it is not lawful," and the decision was approved by His Holiness, Pope Leo XIII, on April 1, 1898.

In 1917 it was specifically inquired of the Holy See, whether it was permissible to take part in spiritistic seances of an unfradulent and reverent nature if the one present expressly or tacitly protests that he wishes to have nothing to do with evil spirits: "Is it permitted, through a medium or without a medium, whether hypnotism be employed or not, to assist at spiritistic seances or manifestations of any sort—especially such as present an appearance of sincerity and piety—by interrogating souls or spirits or by listening to the replies given, or by merely looking on, having made a tacit or express protestation against wishing to have any deal-

ings thereby with the evil spirit?" The Holy Office replied in the negative to every part of the question, and the decision was approved by Pope Benedict XV. The Holy See answered in the negative because such assistance favors curiosity, undermines faith in Christ's Divinity and in Christian doctrines, favors superstition, and finally leads to a complete loss of faith.

Students of spiritism and contemporary scientists acknowledge the intricate, complicated and serious character of spiritistic phenomena. They realize that the happenings of the seance rooms are not to be lightly brushed aside or dismissed as insignificant trivialities and passing fads. In trying to arrive at some explanation of these mysterious facts they have adopted solutions which have already been suggested by the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore. They are the following:

1) *Human dexterity*: Some mediums are so dexterous in the use of their mental and physical powers, so quick in managing complicated and difficult situations, so skillful in inventing expedients, so sure in manipulating things, that they can produce unusual and even stupendous effects in a purely natural way.

2) *Fraud*: The methods used by the mediums are so cunning, subtle and tricky, their legerdemain is so deft, that even scientists and experts are deceived and misled. Fraud is all the more easy with the devotees of spiritism who are exceedingly credulous and who see in every stir in the seance room an activity of the spirit world. The emotion, excitement and suggestibility of the seance room contribute indeliberately to this deception.

3) *Radiations from the subliminal self*: Be-

neath the threshold of consciousness there is the subliminal or subconscious self. In this subconsciousness are stored up emotions, experiences and ideas which we have forgotten long ago. Effusions from this subconsciousness penetrate other souls. In the seance room the medium is receiving impressions from the minds of both the spirits and of the sitters.

4) *The double self*: According to some psychologists each man has a double made of a certain astral, psychic and vaporous stuff. In the seance room it is the "double" of the medium which communicates with the spirits.

The first two theories are partial explanations; they do not account adequately for all the spiritistic phenomena. The other two theories—strongly contested and openly rejected by a great number of students—presuppose the intervention of spirits in seances and pretend to explain how spirits can communicate with mediums. Most students of spiritism today admit the activity of non-human intelligences in the seances. The question which now arises is this: What kind of spirits are they? Are they souls from Purgatory or from the Beatific Vision? Or are they the souls from limbo or the damned souls from hell? For a departed soul must be in one of these four places. Or are they the evil spirits or demons?

They are not souls from purgatory or from heaven. a) *The souls in purgatory* are in the "hand of God." They are sure of their salvation and can sin no more. They "rest and sleep the sleep of peace." Shorn of all earthly impediments and placed beyond the world of sense, they now concentrate their attention wholly on God. They are tormented

with an agony of love of Him Who still hides and withdraws from them. b) The *souls in heaven* have a clear and intuitive vision of the One and Triune God. They see and know all things which pertain to their own state. They embrace the Supreme Good with a beatific love and with an absolute conformity of their will to His, experiencing at the same time the ineffable "joy of the Lord." They enjoy the companionship of the elect and with them as co-heirs of the same glory they reign in God's eternal kingdom. They experience in this Beatific Vision and love a complete satisfaction, happiness, and delight.

Now it would be against God's holiness and majesty to permit His chosen souls to wander about spiritistic seances, satisfying the vain and morbid curiosity of the devotees of this cult. It would be against the dignity of a soul in purgatory or in heaven to come to us through the raps and taps of a rotating or tilting table or through the tricks of a weird seance. Communications from the blessed depend upon God and are extremely rare (e. g. Lourdes). They occur only for most serious reasons and cannot be elicited by the commercialism of a spiritistic center. The blessed are not at our disposal to satisfy our vain curiosity and our quest for earthly gain. The Church prays for the dead indefinitely, thereby indicating that the lot of the departed, apart from canonized saints, is not to be ascertained on this side of the grave.

In addition, messages from our departed friends are unnecessary. God's mouthpiece on earth is the Church, which is fully qualified to instruct us about the next life and about salvation. Communications from the souls in purgatory and heaven are outside

of the divine plan and arrangement. Dives in hell besought Abraham to send Lazarus to the five brothers in his father's house "that he might testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torments. And Abraham said to him: They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. But he said: No, father Abraham: but if one went to them from the dead, they will do penance. And he said to him: If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead" (2).

Every indication seems to point to the conclusion that *if any spirits intervene in spiritistic seances they are evil spirits*. "By their fruits you shall know them." The following characteristics of seances justify this conclusion:

1) The physical phenomena accompanying the seances are often vulgar, coarse and obscene.

2) The communications are frequently trivial, frivolous, irrelevant, inane, vapid, intellectually worthless, self-contradicting—so unlike what one would expect from the serious world beyond the grave. Often they contain evasions, falsifications, gross lies, and prevarications.

3) The communications give an erroneous notion of the soul, picturing it as an exact duplicate of the body, even in outline and color. They ignore divine revelation and tend definitely to alienate men from Christianity. God is represented as impersonal, man as a spark of the Deity, religion as mere feeling. The messages are definitely antagonistic to the Divinity of Christ, to the Incarnation and Redemption. Heaven and hell are said to be mere mental states. The next life, where we shall receive another chance, is much like the present one.

(2) Lk. XVI, 27-31.

4) The moral tone of the messages is usually very low. They stress the relative human character of all moral laws, and pass over in silence the justice of God and future retribution. They contain hints and suggestions which have led to a disruption of home and family life and caused endless misery and sufferings. The spirit often parades under the assumed name of great celebrities and fails utterly to reveal his identity. All this befits not good angels but the "father of all lies."

5) The fact that devils are fallen angels and that like the good angels they have great power over matter and can assume bodies, explains the possibility of spirit-materialisation and spirit-photography in the seances.

6) Spiritism has disastrous effects on both the medium and on the sitters. The passivity of the medium in the trance, the disintegration of her personality, the entrance of foreign personalities, leads to a weakening of the normal personality, to a disequilibrium of the mental powers, and to eventual insanity. The sitter is gradually overcome with lassitude and apathy, and in the measure in which he becomes addicted to spiritism suffers a deterioration in his mental, moral, and physical powers.

Discussion Aids

1. Define: Spiritism. Medium. A trance.
2. Give a brief history of spiritism.
3. How account for the rapid spread of spiritism?
4. Enumerate the principal rulings of the Church concerning spiritism, and briefly summarize the contents of each.

5. Can spiritistic phenomena be sufficiently explained by fraud and human dexterity?
6. What are the theories of the "subliminal self" and double self?
7. Are the spirits present in the seance souls from purgatory? Souls from heaven?
8. Give some reasons why these spirits are not the good angels.
9. Spiritism is a distortion of what Catholic belief and practice?
10. How would you counteract the influence of spiritism?

Religious Practices

1. I will frequently dwell on the consoling doctrine that the Church Militant, the Church Suffering and the Church Triumphant are intimately united in the Communion of Saints.
2. I will often pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sufferings and admitted into the joy of the Lord.
3. I will not indulge in a vain and idle speculation about the lot of the dead but by a virtuous life on earth prepare to be numbered among the saints.

Chapter II

FORETELLING THE FUTURE

“Let steps be immediately taken against such people as, for the purposes of divination, practice the study of signs or points in rocks, trees or papers and the like things—and this is known as *Geomancy*, also against those who make a study of signs to be found in water—and this is known as *Hydromancy*; or signs in the air—*Aeromancy*; or in the fire—*Pyromancy*; or in dreams—*Onomancy*; or the marks and lines occurring in peoples’ hands—*Palmistry*; or who devote themselves to *Necromancy* when, that is, they cause the dead to rise in appearance, to speak or teach; as well as all other witchcrafts and superstitions of this sort which cannot be indulged in without at least a tacit compact with the evil one”⁽¹⁾.

The foretelling of the future by improper and inadequate means is frequently characterized as divination. The practice of divination is an attempt to obtain knowledge of future, hidden, and distant things by means of the help or counsel of an evil spirit, who is either expressly called upon to give his help, or else thrusts himself in secretly in order to foretell certain future events unknown to men but in some way known to him. The means of divination are very numerous, as is evident from the decree of Pope Sixtus V quoted above. We shall enumerate and briefly describe the principal methods of divining.

1) *Astrology* explains the effects of stars upon

(1) Decree of Pope Sixtus V, 1585.

human conduct and tries to foretell the fate of individuals and of nations from the positions and aspects of planets. The astrologers divide the globe into twelve "houses" by running circles from pole to pole. Each one of these spaces between the lines is dominated by one of the celestial planets. The respective sign of the zodiac exercises its characteristic influence and control over the "house." Each one of the "houses" passes by the sun, moon, and planetary system every twenty-four hours. Hence the "houses" vary in strength, advantages and disadvantages. A *horoscope* is the position of the heavens at the moment of birth. From this many astrologers pretend to foretell a man's future.

2) *The Ouija Board* is a small board supported by casters or wheels at two points and by a vertical pencil at a third. When one or more persons rest their fingers on it, it begins to move of its own accord while the pencil point below traces out words or complete sentences.

3) The nature, arrangement and succession of images and emotions in *dreams* frequently serve as a basis for divining the future.

4) *Palmistry* is the art of determining a person's conduct and character and of predicting his future from the lines and marks in the palms of his hand.

5) The visual images produced with the aid of one's imagination by *concentrated gazing upon a crystal or into a cup* are frequently said to be indicative of one's future.

6) *Augury* is the foretelling of the future from the flight, chattering and singing of birds.

In examining these various methods of divination we shall first lay down certain general princi-

ples which are applicable to all of them. We shall then devote special attention to some of the more popular practices. In this critical study we shall take as our guide Question 95 of the Second Part (of the Second) of the "Summa Theologica" of St. Thomas.

General Principles

Future events can be known in their causes or in themselves. According to St. Thomas all future effects may be grouped into three categories.

1) Certain causes produce their effects of necessity and always. Such effects can be foreknown and foretold by a mere consideration of the cause. Thus astronomers predict eclipses with absolute accuracy hundreds of years in advance.

2) Some causes produce their effects in the majority of instances. Certain atmospheric and climatic conditions bring about a certain kind of weather; certain conditions in the body give rise to a certain kind of disease. Hence the predictions of the weather forecaster and the diagnosis of a physician are usually sound and well-founded inferences.

3) Certain future events depend upon chance and upon man's free will—causes which have not a determined inclination to a certain specific effect. These future events cannot be foretold or inferred from their causes. We shall be able to know these only when they actually happen. God alone, Who in His eternity sees the future as though it were present, can know the events which belong to this third class.

Now what is the fundamental common-sense reason why no fortune-teller, crystal-gazer, cup-reader, or palmist can predict future, distant or oc-

cult events? The reason is this: There must be a proportion between the cause and the effect. The knowledge of future events entirely exceeds man's natural cognitive powers. In the present order no knowledge can possibly reach the mind unless it has first entered through the portals of one of the five senses. If all our senses were defective our mind would forever be a blank. If our eyesight or hearing were defective our knowledge would in that measure be imperfect. Now future events, our future conduct and actions, cannot possibly affect the senses of the palmist or fortune-teller because they do not as yet exist. Stimulate the cognitive sense faculties as much as you like, the psychological law still holds that the cognitive faculty cannot attain future and distant events. If the fortune-teller or palmist is in possession of such knowledge, he has it not of himself but from a superior intelligent cause.

Now who is this superior intelligent agent? It is neither God nor the angels. It would be against God's majesty and dignity and against the dignity of angels to submit to the frivolous, trivial and often unbecoming methods used to obtain this knowledge. It would be against the dignity of God and of the angels to satisfy man's curiosity and his desire for temporal advantages and gain. Hence the only hypothesis remaining is that this superior intelligent agent is an evil spirit.

The evil spirit is a fallen angel and consequently possesses the superior and more perfect knowledge of an angelic intelligence. Spirits, says St. Thomas⁽²⁾, can know better than men the effects

(2) First Part of the "Summa Theologica," Question 57, Article 3.

which are derived from the second group of causes mentioned above, because their knowledge is deeper and more universal. They can penetrate more profoundly into the multiplicity, complexity and interrelation of causes. They have a more precise knowledge of the nature of things and of the hidden forces of nature. Again, the evil spirits have had a long experience with human nature and with men. They can divine men's thoughts and secrets of the heart from a mere word, gesture or facial expression. Hence demons can not only predict certain events but they can foretell them with considerable precision and accuracy. Strictly speaking, however, men's future actions and the secrets of men's hearts cannot be known to them unless God reveals them.

Any invocation of or pact with the devil to obtain knowledge of future events is gravely sinful for the following reasons: 1) It is rendering honor and tribute to him who is God's greatest enemy, who hates God, who is bent upon lessening God's glory and destroying the work of the good angels. 2) It is consorting with him who, though he may occasionally transform himself into an "angel of light," is a deceiver and the father of lies and who is bent on man's physical, moral, religious and eternal perdition. 3) It is a rebellion against God Who has hidden from us many future things; it is attributing to the demons the divine perfection of omniscience.

Special Principles

1) *Astrology*. This pseudo-science is being promoted by newspapers, the radio and the cinema, and its principles are being applied by private persons and professionals who often charge a handsome fee for the information imparted. In a sense astrology contains a kernel of truth. The sun revivi-

fies the earth's vegetation, influences man's psychological outlook, and frequently infuses new strength into an ailing body. But to extend the influence of the sun to other effects, and to predicate the same influence of the moon and stars, is wholly unwarranted. According to St. Thomas, astrology as practiced by its votaries, is open to three serious objections: 1) The heavenly planets are irrational, inanimate creatures; they move in an invariable, uniform and necessary manner, being governed by unchanging natural laws impressed upon them by the hand of the Creator. Man is a rational and free being; his conduct is not predetermined to one necessary line of action. Now between necessity and liberty there can be nothing in common. If one's career were fatally controlled by the planets, his liberty and freedom of choice would be destroyed. 2) Free will is a faculty of the soul and like it is absolutely spiritual. The sidereal bodies, on the other hand, are corporeal. Hence the heavenly bodies cannot make a direct impression on the mind and will. 3) Do the heavenly bodies affect the mind and will indirectly—by acting first upon the senses and imagination? This is possible, but since the lower faculties are subject to the higher, man is able by his reason and will to go counter to the influence of the heavenly bodies.

There are other serious objections to astrology. In the first place, astrology is disproved by experience. Men born in the same part of the world and at the same time have not the same career; twins born at the same time were found to have a different character and a different future. Secondly, astrology has been disproved by scientific tests: when in 1932 several men submitted themselves to several

expert astrologists, who were unacquainted with the life and history of these individuals, the horoscope cast was entirely wrong. In fact, astrology seems to have no scientific basic principles but rests on a certain number of traditions and on a few fortuitous coincidences. To conclude with St. Thomas: "If anyone applies himself to the observation of the stars in order to know casual and fortuitous events, or to know with certitude future human actions, his conduct is based on a false and vain opinion; and so the operation of the demon enters therein, wherefore it will be a superstitious and unlawful divination"⁽³⁾.

2) *The Ouija Board*. No method of communicating with the spirits has been so disastrous in its effects upon the body and mind of the operator as that of the Ouija board. Some people use the board at first as a toy; they are amused and intrigued by its unusual answers, quite unaware of the dangerous possibility of such practices—the possibility of the demon himself insinuating these responses of the board. The practice demands an excessive passivity of mind which leaves the door wide open to the suggestions and activities of external and non-human agencies. At the same time the operator is led on by a great curiosity and hushed expectancy. The information, which in the beginning is sufficiently accurate to gain the confidence of the operator, becomes trivial and gradually hostile to the Divinity of Christ, to Christianity, in fact to all religion and morality. The operator is gradually losing his faith, and for the worship of the One and Triune God is substituting the cult of spirits. In the meas-

⁽³⁾ Second of the Second Part of 'Summa Theologica'; q. 95, a. 5.

ure in which he becomes enslaved to the practice, his nervous energies are sapped, his interest in daily tasks lost, and insanity and suicide are often the ultimate results.

3) *Dreams*. That dreams cannot reveal future events to us becomes apparent when we study the causes of dreams. Some dreams have a mental origin: the thoughts, ideas, and emotions which occupied the mind during the waking state recur to the imagination in sleep. Other dreams have a bodily origin; the peculiar or unfamiliar position or posture of the body in sleep, distress or over-activity of the gastric organs, accelerated heart beat and circulation of the blood, an over-stimulated sensitive nervous system, may give rise to various phantasms in the imagination during sleep. Finally, dreams may be due to the external stimuli such as sounds, lights, heat, cold, odors or to the pressure of the bed clothes. Now it is clear that none of these causes is of itself capable of yielding information about future events.

Dreams may also be caused by external spiritual agents. God Himself frequently made use of the dream as a medium of communicating divine revelations to men: "God speaketh once—By a dream in a vision by night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, and they are sleeping in their beds; then he openeth the ears of men, and teaching instructeth them in what they are to learn"⁽⁴⁾. And again: "If there be among you a prophet of the Lord, I will appear to him in a vision, or I will speak to him in a dream"⁽⁵⁾. When God is the cause of a dream He endows it with qualities which enable the recipi-

(4) Job XXXIII, 14 sqq.

(5) Num. XII, 6.

ent to discern its supernatural origin and character. Sometimes, however, as St. Thomas says⁽⁶⁾, "It is due to the action of the demons that certain images appear to persons in their sleep, and by this means, they, at times, reveal certain future things to those who have entered into an unlawful compact with them."

⁽⁶⁾ o. c. q. 95, a. 6.

Discussion Aids

1. Define astrology; horoscope; Ouija board; onomancy; palmistry; crystal-gazing; cup-reading; augury.
2. Explain the three kinds of future events. Which can be known by man? Which by God alone?
3. Why cannot man predict anyone's future?
4. To whom are we to attribute the palmist's or fortune-teller's knowledge of future and distant events? to God? to the angels?
5. How explain the superior knowledge of the demon?
6. Why is invocation of the devil gravely sinful? Give three reasons.
7. What arguments can be urged from reason against astrology? from experience? from scientific experimentation? Has astrology a scientific foundation?
8. Show the effects of the use of the Ouija board on the mind; on the body; on one's religious faith.
9. Show how the supposedly prophetic character of dreams is disproved by a study of the causes of their origin.

10. Did God make use of dreams in revelation?
11. Can the demon make use of dreams for his purposes?

Religious Practices

1. "I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me; thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing to adore it."
2. I will rely on constant prayer and frequent reception of the sacraments in my struggle against the temptations of the devil.
3. I will not speculate idly about the future and about the next life but I will so live that I need not fear the judgment-seat of God.

Chapter III

THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC AND DRUNKENNESS

The mind of the American bishops in regard to the liquor traffic in the United States was clearly expressed at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore in the following decree:

“We admonish those Catholics who are engaged in the sale of intoxicating liquors, that they seriously consider how many and how great are the dangers and the occasions of sin which surround their avocation, however licit in itself this avocation may be. Let them adopt, if they can, a more decent method of gaining a livelihood. Let them, at least, labor with all their ability to remove occasions of sin from themselves and from others. They should sell no drinks to minors, or to persons who are likely to take it to excess. They should close their saloons on Sundays; at no time should they allow within their saloons blasphemy, cursing, or obscene language. If by their fault or cooperation, religion is dishonored, or men are led to ruin, they must know that there is in heaven an Avenger, who will surely exact from them most severe penalties”⁽¹⁾.

In commenting on this stand by the American prelates Pope Leo XIII in 1887 wrote: “It is well known how ruinous, how deplorable, is the injury, both to faith and to morals, that is to be feared from intemperance in drink. Nor can we sufficiently praise the prelates of the United States, who recently, in the Plenary Council of Baltimore, with weightiest words condemned this abuse declaring

(1) “De Societatibus ad Temperantiam Promovendam.”

it to be a perpetual incentive to sin, and a fruitful source of all evils, plunging the families of the intemperate into direct ruin, and drawing numberless souls down to everlasting perdition; declaring moreover, that the faithful, who yield to this vice of intemperance, become thereby a scandal to non-Catholics, and a great hindrance to the propagation of the true religion. Hence we esteem worthy of commendation the noble resolve of those pious associations, by which they pledge themselves to abstain totally from every kind of intoxicating drink. Nor can it at all be doubted that this determination is a proper and truly efficacious remedy for this very great evil; and that so much the more strongly will all be induced to put this bridle upon appetite by how much the greater are the dignity and influence of those who give the example. But greatest of all in this matter should be the zeal of the priests, who, as they are called to instruct the people in the word of life, and to mold them to Christian morality, should also, and above all, walk before them in the practice of virtue. Let pastors, therefore, do their best to drive the plague of intemperance from the fold of Christ by assiduous preaching and exhortation, and to shine before all as models of abstinence; and, thus, earnestly strive to avert the many calamities with which this vice threatens both Church and state”(2).

In 1894 Monsignor Francis Satolli, Papal delegate to the United States, ratified the following regulations made by Bishop John A. Watterson for his diocese of Columbus: no liquor dealer or saloon keeper shall be president or an officer in an existing Catholic organization, or branch, or division there-

(2) S. D. N. Leonis Papae XIII Allocutiones, etc. Vol. II.

of; no new Catholic society, or new branch of an old organization, shall admit even to membership any person engaged in the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors; saloon keepers who persist in selling liquor on Sunday or who otherwise conduct their business in an unlawful manner, shall be excluded from the Sacraments.

The Catholic Church does not teach as did the Manicheans of old, that liquor is intrinsically evil. She does not, like the Encratites, forbid liquors when the use of them is necessary to safeguard a man's health, etc. She does not teach that the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors are of themselves sinful actions, or that saloon keeping is of itself a moral evil, or that a moderate use of drinks is wrong. She is mindful of the action of our Lord who partook of wine at banquets and at the Paschal suppers, Who changed water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana, and Who made wine one of the essential elements in the Holy Eucharist. She remembers, too, the saying of Our Lord that "not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man"⁽³⁾ and the admonition of St. Paul to "use a little wine for thy stomach's sake"⁽⁴⁾. She recalls finally, the words of the Old Testament sage who says that "Wine was created from the beginning to make men joyful, and not to make them drunk. Wine drunken with moderation is the joy of the soul and the heart. Sober drinking is health to soul and body"⁽⁵⁾.

But while she acknowledges that all things created by God are good and are intended to serve a useful purpose, the Catholic Church also realizes that hers is a religion of moderation and of tem-

(3) Mtt. XV, 11.

(4) I Tim. V. 23.

(5) Ecclesiasticus XXXI, 35-37.

perance, a religion of the evangelical counsels, a religion of the Crucified One. The essence of Christian perfection, it is true, is love; but love of God and of neighbor, the observance of the Commandments of God and of the Church, demand constant sacrifice, mortification and self denial. We live only in the measure in which we die to ourselves and to our inordinate tendencies. Our Lord constantly warns us that "unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish"⁽⁶⁾, and St. Paul makes mortification an essential element of his gospel: "If by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live"⁽⁷⁾; "I chastise my body, and bring it unto subjection, lest, perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway"⁽⁸⁾. The triumph of the Spirit over matter through self-denial, the complete mastery over the senses and the lower faculties were the outstanding qualities of the Church's saints and heroes.

Hence while the Church admits that the production and sale of intoxicating liquors may in themselves be legitimate, yet if the beer parlors are the source of the intemperance and of the moral and physical evils which desolate the land, she must wage a relentless war against them. For the Church to compromise with saloons, taverns, and beer parlors, would be to renounce her principles, nay, her very life.

Those who appeal to the Scriptures—and not incorrectly so—to prove that the use of intoxicating liquor is not evil, should also keep in mind the following Biblical texts, terrific in their warning and import, which condemn the immoderate use of the

(6) Lk. XIII, 3.

(7) Rom. VIII, 13.

(8) I Cor. IX, 27.

gifts of God: a) "Wine drunken with excess raiseth quarrels, and wrath, and many ruins. Wine drunken with excess is bitterness of the soul. The heat of drunkenness is the stumbling block of the fool, lessening strength and causing wounds"⁽⁹⁾. b) "Woe to you that rise up early in the morning to follow drunkenness, and to drink till the evening, to be inflamed with wine"⁽¹⁰⁾. c) "Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly"⁽¹¹⁾. d) "Nor the effeminate, nor liers with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners shall possess the kingdom of God"⁽¹²⁾. e) "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury"⁽¹³⁾.

Complete drunkenness, when brought about voluntarily, without necessity, and out of mere pleasure, is always a mortal or serious sin. It implies a complete privation temporarily of reason, and is characterized by the following qualities: inability to distinguish between right and wrong; perpetration of strange and unusual acts which one would abhor in the sober state; inability to remember on sobering the things said and done in the drunken state. Complete drunkenness is a mutilation whereby one deprives himself of his greatest natural good, the power to act reasonably, and places himself in a state where he can neither use nor recover his reason. It is a mutilation of the moral judgment and by it one exposes himself to the dan-

(9) Ecclesiasticus XXXI, 38-40.

(10) Isaias V, 11.

(11) Lk. XXI, 34.

(12) I Cor. VI, 10; Gal. V, 21.

(13) Eph. V, 18.

ger of perpetrating all kinds of sinful excesses. It is a mutilation of the dignity of man and by it one reduces himself to the level of a brute.

Incomplete drunkenness, which is characterized by a confused mind, befuddled brain, unsteadiness of body, incoherence of speech and uncertainty of sight, though in itself not a mortal sin, may become a serious sin by reason of the circumstances: for example, if a man by reason of his office gives great scandal, or does serious harm to his health, or spends in drink money necessary for the support of the family or the payment of debts, or excites himself by drinking to lust, or neglects his family, professional or religious duties.

Drunkenness has disastrous and ruinous effects upon the mind and the body, upon the family and society, upon religion and morals. A brief consideration of the effects of alcoholism in these respects will bring out the truth of this contention.

1) *The mind.* The mental faculties of a drunkard are befuddled, the sharpness of his mind dulled, and his power of retention diminished. The finer degrees of judgment and reflection, acquired through education and constituting man's prudence and restraint, are gradually lost. The power to control moods is likewise lost—there is causeless merriment or sadness, friendliness or hostility. In complete drunkenness the power to use or recover reason is temporarily blotted out completely. The same is true of moral judgment. Man sinks to the level of a brute, destroys in himself the likeness of God, lets loose his animal passions, throws aside the restraints of decency and self-respect and indulges in all kinds of buffoonery, violence, offensive conversations and filthy actions. In his article on "Alcohol-

lism" in the "Catholic Encyclopedia" ⁽¹⁴⁾ Dr. Charles Edward Nammack, Professor of Clinical Medicine at Cornell University, writes: "Alcohol has a special affinity for nervous tissue, and as a result chiefly of its direct contact, but partly from its effects on the blood current, the working cells of the brain shrink, the supporting structure hardens, the cerebrospinal fluid which should act as a protective water jacket, increases in quantity and exerts injurious pressure, giving the familiar picture of "wet brain" so common in the autopsy room of hospitals caring for large numbers of habitual drunkards. Existing in a less degree, these brain changes are objectively shown in the impaired mental power, the muscular trembling, the shambling gait and the lack of moral sense of the chronic drinker.—It is probable that if alcohol could be stamped out for a century insanity would shrink in prevalence seventy five per cent."

During the last fifteen years almost 329,000 people were killed in automobile accidents caused by drunken drivers. This is 84,000 above the number of soldiers who were killed or who died from wounds in all the six wars of our country's history. According to Dr. Edward Spencer Cowles, as many people in the United States died from alcoholism as from cancer. During the first eight months of 1939 the Minnesota Highway Department revoked 758 drivers' licenses; all of these, except 45, were for drunken driving. The "Philadelphia Inquirer" stated on September 27, 1936, that more than 1,500,000 girls and women were employed as barmaids, "hostesses," "come-on girls", etc.—a condition which has no parallel in American history.

(14) I, 275.

2) *The body.* Drunkenness not only prostrates the nervous system but injures—sometimes permanently—the vital organs, predisposes the body to contracting all kinds of diseases and often brings about an early death. “Nearly all the organs of the body,” says Dr. Karl M. Vogel, Professor of Clinical Pathology at Columbia University, speaking of continued immoderate indulgences in his article “Alcoholism” in the “Encyclopedia Americana”⁽¹⁵⁾, “are affected and exhibit a new growth of connective tissue, the blood vessels show the lesions of arteriosclerosis, the heart is affected in a variety of ways, commonly becoming fatty and weak, the kidneys develop nephritis, the liver cirrhosis, and the stomach is the seat of a chronic catarrhal condition giving rise to nausea, vomiting and distaste for food. There are congestive and catarrhal changes in the respiratory apparatus; the bodily strength is decreased and there is a tendency to obesity. There is also marked involvement of the nervous system leading to complete mental and moral deterioration with loss of will power, loss of memory and incapacity for the responsibilities of life. Chronic alcoholics have lessened power of resistance to infectious diseases and readily break down under the stress of any mental or physical strain.”

3) *The family.* Drunkenness is one of the most frequent causes of the dissolution of family life. The husband stays away from the home and squanders the money necessary for the sustenance of the family. The children are poorly educated, lead a miserable life, and finally indulge in the same vice. The result is dissensions, divorce, and the disintegration of the family. “Drunkenness has wrecked more

(15) I, 349.

homes, once happy," the Irish Bishops tell us in a pastoral letter of 1883, "than ever fell beneath the crowbar brigade in the worst days of eviction; it has filled more graves and made more widows and orphans than did the famine; it has broken more hearts, blighted more hopes, and rent asunder family ties more recklessly than the enforced exile to which their misery has condemned emigrants."

4) *Society*. For the solution of its economic problems, for the promotion of its industries, commerce and agriculture, for the preservation of its peace and security and for the maintenance of its defenses, the country needs men with a keen mind, clear vision and a strong body. But all this becomes impossible if children inherit a constitutional weakness from intemperate parents. "Greater calamities," said William E. Gladstone in the House of Commons on March 5, 1880, "have been inflicted on mankind by drink than by the three great historic scourges of war, famine, and pestilence combined." In 1937 the Americans spent about \$2,000,000,000 for education while at the same time they spent \$3,602,000,000 for liquor. In 1937 and again in 1938 the people of Minnesota spent \$64,000,000-- or \$123 a minute—for alcoholic beverages. Had this money been spent on the poor and unemployed, the economic problems of the State would have been solved.

The contention that the repeal of prohibition has contributed to the return of national prosperity can hardly be sustained in the light of facts. The brewers claim, for example, that they use yearly the products from three million farm land acres. But suppose they do? Does this mean that the

breweries brought prosperity to the American farmer? Not at all. Since according to the United States Statistical Report there were in the United States in 1935 1,054,515,000 acres of farm land, the breweries benefited about 1-3 of 1% of farm land. The 1939 World's Almanac shows that in 1938 the farmers received 54.6 cents per bushel for barley, while in 1928, during prohibition, they received 73.6 cents per bushel. According to the U. S. Bureau Report, the alcoholic beverage industry employes 95 workers for each \$1,000,000 of manufacturing prices, while fourteen of the larger industries average 231 employees for each \$1,000,000 of manufacturing prices.

We shall bring our considerations to a close by a few remarks about the necessity and means of combating this dreadful plague of drunkenness. Priests, educators and parents must point out the manifold evil of alcoholism and stress the necessity of temperance. They must at all times confirm by example what they inculcate by word of mouth. Men must be taught to cultivate harmless methods of recreation and to avoid dangerous companions and the occasions of sin. They must be taught to practice self-control by avoiding occasionally what is pleasant to the taste, by discontinuing to eat and drink before full satisfaction of the appetite, by realizing that man eats to live and that he does not live to eat. They should be encouraged to join temperance societies and to take the pledge when they understand its nature and its obligation. They should contemplate the marvellous moderation and the rigorous fasts of the great saints and heroes of God. Finally, they must seek in prayer and in a frequent reception of the sacraments the graces neces-

sary to strengthen the will in the exercise of its mastery over the lower impulses of man.

At times the state has interfered and has limited the number of saloons by proportioning them to the population. It has imposed a high restrictive license-fee and determined the time, place, and persons to whom liquor may be sold. Against all such regulations a protest is frequently raised; a protest in the name of personal rights and personal liberty. But as an American prelate has so well said in one of his discourses: "Liberty means not a license for one portion of the community to prey as hungry beasts upon the other, but the rights of all men to enjoy without disturbance life and property. Liberty—to what base service the liquor dealer would chain thee! In thy name he demands license to rob of soul and life the minor and the habitual drunkard, to break in with riot and shame upon the quietness of our Sunday, to track the poor laborer to his home and workshop lest he bring bread to his starving wife and children. The liquor dealer demands license to trample underfoot the laws of the land, to level death-dealing blows against the Republic. Not more audacious would be the clamoring of the spirit of the furious waters of our great rivers, demanding license to sweep away whole cities, and to engulf in its mad torrent hecatombs of human lives."

Tobacco smoking: According to the testimony of physicians the evil effects of tobacco are due principally to the nicotine which it contains. If the person becomes accustomed to smoking and uses it in a moderate degree, nicotine does not exercise its usual harmful effects. This immunity is ordinarily acquired in a short time, although much depends

upon the physical condition of the individual and upon the manner in which he smokes—if he inhales, expectorates, etc. Smoking neither aids nor hinders psychic processes, but seems to give a sense of relaxation and repose. It seems to increase the enjoyment of a pleasure and to decrease the force of an irritant.

If the measure of moderation is not observed, the following symptoms will gradually appear: irritation of the mucous membrane of the mouth, throat and pharynx, leading to catarrh and hoarseness; palpitation of the heart, accompanied by distress in breathing and a growing arterio-sclerosis; loss of appetite, indigestion, alternating constipation and diarrhea, anemia, and emaciation; fatigue, lack of initiative, headaches, insomnia, and neuralgia. Occasionally these same effects will appear in moderate users but only after many years of smoking. To the Christian man and woman smoking should furnish opportunities of self control, mortification and self-denial, of that fine sense of moderation and proportion which should distinguish a true Christian.

Discussion Aids

1. Summarize briefly the pronouncements of Church authorities on the liquor traffic.
2. Is liquor intrinsically evil? Explain.
3. Why does the Christian religion necessarily imply mortification and self-denial?
4. Quote Biblical passages which condemn drunkenness and intemperance in drink.
5. What is the difference between complete and

incomplete drunkenness? Is sin absent from either?

6. How does drunkenness affect the mind? What evils are to be attributed to drunkenness and to the liquor traffic?
7. How does drunkenness affect the body?
8. How does drunkenness contribute to the disintegration of the family?
9. How does alcoholism undermine the foundations of society?
10. Has repeal of prohibition brought prosperity?
11. Is the regulation by law of the liquor traffic and of the consumption of liquor an infringement of human liberty?
12. How would you combat the evils of intemperance?

Religious Practices

1. I will try to understand that man eats and drinks in order to be able to carry out his duties towards God and neighbor: "Whether you eat or drink, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. X, 31).
2. I will steel myself in self-mastery by denying myself occasionally things which are licit.
3. I will try to imitate in a small measure at least the wonderful moderation and the rigorous self-denial of the saints and heroes of God.

Chapter IV

SALACIOUS LITERATURE

We read in the history of St. Albert the Great that the Saint once made a statue which was carved so skillfully that it could move and utter sounds. St. Thomas of Aquin, who was then Albert's pupil and who knew nothing of the statue, one day entered his master's workshop; seeing the statue, and thinking that it was the evil spirit who had appeared to him in human form, he raised his hand and struck the statue with such force that it fell to the floor in a hundred pieces. When Albert entered the room, and saw what had happened, he exclaimed: "Thomas, what have you done? In one moment you destroyed the work of thirty-three years!"

The salvation of our soul was also the work of three and thirty years. On account of our soul God descended from heaven and became man, was born in poverty, earned His bread in the sweat of His brow in a carpenter's shop, wandered over mountain and valley, suffered hunger and thirst, was scourged and nailed to the cross. On account of our salvation Christ founded the Church and established the seven sacraments, the seven channels conveying divine life to our souls.

When the soul becomes the abode of the Holy Trinity and is adorned and beautified by God's own life, sanctifying grace, it becomes a partaker in the Redemption, in Christ's work of three and thirty years. Yet the soul is not a sealed citadel, but through the doors of the five senses communicates with the outside world. Through these five portals

various forces may gain entrance into the sanctuary of the soul and seriously threaten and finally expel the Divine Guest from it.

Some of these hostile forces may enter the soul through the sense of hearing in the form of dirty and smutty conversations. Yes, let a person with a foul mouth join a group of persons whose souls are beautiful with the splendor of divine grace, let him start spewing forth the filth that is in his own mind and heart, and in a few minutes he may destroy Christ's work in the soul of every one of his hearers. He might have talked about theft, robbery or murder, and his conversation might not have become an occasion of sin to others. But such is the nature of acts forbidden by the sixth commandment that we cannot think or talk about them without immediately being placed in the danger of committing a sin of thought. Besides, what a misuse of the faculty of speech sinful conversations are—a misuse of the tongue, which is one of God's great gifts to us, which was the first member of the body to be blessed in baptism, and which is so often consecrated by the Body and Blood of the Immaculate Lamb of God? When a man goes hunting he takes with him dogs who seek out the prey and drive it within shooting distance of the hunter. What Satan would not accomplish himself on account of his repellant and hideous nature, he accomplishes through the scandalizer, especially through the foul-mouth.

Is it not strange that man should use the most sacred things in life as a means of degrading the human race, and especially womanhood? For the author of both sexes is God: "Male and female he created them"⁽¹⁾. God, too, is the author of the

⁽¹⁾ Gen. I, 27.

married life: "God blessed them, saying: Increase and multiply, and fill the earth"⁽²⁾. The human body itself has been fashioned by God and is consequently something good. If it were in itself evil, if it were, as it is sometimes represented, the *fons et origo* of all sin, the Eternal Word would not have assumed it and operated through it the Redemption of mankind. Again, how can anyone who believes in the mystery of the Incarnation, who believes in a God born of a woman, look at or treat disrespectfully her who was so exalted in the person of Mary, the Mother of God? At any rate, those who are using the female sex as a means of degrading themselves and others, should pause and remember that they would wish no one to adopt the same objectionable attitude toward their own mother and sisters as they assume towards other women. Or is the imagination of some so morbid that they must needs see filth everywhere? Are they like the gentleman who begged that the bare legs of the dining-room table be covered because they were suggesting bad thoughts? Under pretext of inculcating habits of purity, we sometimes adduce the example of St. Aloysius who is said never to have looked into the face of any woman—not even of his own mother. But if Aloysius was the normal strong and healthy boy that he was, he certainly not only looked into the eyes of his mother but found the purest happiness and delight therein.

The second sense through which influences destructive of Christ's work enter the soul is the sense of sight. And this brings us to the question of salacious literature. Before describing the extensive diffusion of this kind of literature and the means of

(2) Gen. I, 28.

combating it, we shall try to explain what we mean by salacious literature. The National Organization for Decent Literature, established by the American Bishops a few years ago, lays down the following five marks of salacious literature, any one of which is sufficient to place a magazine on the banned list:

1) *Glorifies crime or the criminal.* A publication comes under this classification when it contains characteristics such as the following: Ridicules human laws and creates sympathy for their violation; represents the police and guardians of the law as stupid, inefficient, and tyrannical; throws the sympathy of the reader (or audience) on the side of crime; presents methods of the criminals in such vivid detail as to excite imitation—for example, methods of theft, robbery, safecracking, breaking windowpanes noiselessly, dynamiting of trains and bridges, use of firearms and machine guns, use of gloves in burglary, picking pockets, gambling with drunken persons, use of a master key, removing doors from hinges, smuggling, and illegal drug traffic. A publication also comes under this heading if it creates in the young a desire to be “big shots,” “big guys,” to “act tough,” to wish to “punch” and beat up some one, to rob newsboys and break into stores, to earn money easily, to own “swell machines,” to rise quickly to “high society,” and if it makes of the crook and gangster a popular and attractive hero.

2) Is *predominantly “sexy,”* that is, which carries stories that detail immoral conduct, or show pictures selected for their sex appeal; justifies methods of satisfying the sex urge outside of legitimate marriage.

3) *Features Illicit Love:* that is, which con-

tains stories calculated to arouse passion; introduces scenes of passion, lustful kissing, and embracing, indecent dancing; portrays impure love without condemnation, or as material for laughter; condones and justifies sex experience of young people before legitimate marriage; connives at marital infidelity, adultery; justifies the sacrifice of purity and virginity to obtain easy money, position, etc., represents lust and infatuation as love.

4) *Carries illustrations or cartoons indecent or suggestive*: For example, introduces scenes of semi or complete nudity (in fact or in silhouette or in translucent devices), brothel scenes, undressing and bedroom scenes; suggestive gags under otherwise unobjectionable cartoons.

5) *Carries disreputable advertising*, that is, advertises openly or in a veiled manner lewd and immoral periodicals, magazines, books, articles, cards, etc.

It is almost impossible to estimate the extent of the circulation of these objectionable periodicals and indecent objects. Bishop John F. Noll, to whose excellent pamphlet on "Lewd Literature" we are indebted for much valuable information, estimates that new crime and erotic magazines appear at the rate of eight each month. He tells us that the monthly circulation of these magazines is 15,000,000, and that, since the magazines are often passed around to others, about 60,000,000 read them every month. Almost 90% of these salacious magazines are published in the City of New York, and are sold at about 150,000 newstands throughout the country. The publishers and sellers of these magazines frequently exchange names and addresses: write to one of them and in a few days you will hear

from ten others. A large number of these lewd magazines have been barred from Canada.

The channels through which these magazines reach the public are very numerous. In each larger city there are usually several distributing agencies which supply the magazine racks throughout the city. These magazine racks are found in drug stores, cigar stores, hotels, and on street corners of downtown sections. Magazine racks are often operated in postoffices by ex-service men. Travelling libraries and lending libraries, maintained in drug stores and department stores, frequently make available to a large number books which because of their salacious character are barred from the shelves of public libraries. Newsboys are now being engaged in increasingly large numbers to carry these magazines from house to house. Obscene pictures are often found inside of match pads. Certain drinking glasses, when filled with water, manifest pictures of nudes. Certain cards, when slightly dampened, show lewd figures. Operators of filling stations, pool rooms, root beer parlors often sell objectionable literature and contraceptives; to escape the force of the law, the latter are often advertised as "sanitary articles," articles of "feminine hygiene," etc.

Salacious literature is frequently shipped by freight and express. Trucks and buses convey it during the night to druggists and newsdealers in country towns. In one instance, a truck delivered a ton of salacious literature to a Minnesota town where it was distributed to the children as they left the public high school. Since in so many instances obscene magazines, pictures, cards and objects are distributed freely, the question naturally arises:

Who, or what organization, is behind this immoral propaganda? Who is so intent on destroying the morals of American youth? Perhaps the time does not seem right to some to attack the religious faith of the American people directly. On the supposition that deeds will eventually make creeds, is the religion of our young people being destroyed in a round about way—by first destroying their morals⁽³⁾?

What methods are we to use in stemming and finally eliminating this flood of obscene literature? In the first place, we may approach the distributors and vendors of this literature in a friendly way and ask them to cooperate with us in our effort to preserve the morals of the youth of the land. Again, letters from indignant readers to advertisers will soon convince large businesses that it does not pay to advertise in filthy magazines and will eventually change the policy of the magazine itself. Protests from people against the presence of such magazines where clients wait and read will soon eliminate such literature from beauty parlors and from dentists' and doctors' offices. Since the American bishops are now combating this evil in a systematic manner through the National Organization for Decent Literature any one desirous of performing a genuine piece of Catholic Action should become an active member of the parochial unit of this organization.

Occasionally, recourse will have to be had to the law. Where there is question of a simple misdemeanor or where the city has an ordinance prohibiting the circulation, sale and distribution of im-

(3) Arnold Lunn, in his work "The Science of World Revolution" (N. Y. 1938), pp. 52-53 tells us that pornographic literature and pictures were the weapons with which Spanish Communists sought to destroy the Christian morals of the Spaniards.

moral literature, prosecution may be initiated by the city police or by the city attorney⁽⁴⁾. Where there is question of a gross misdemeanor or where there is no local ordinance prosecution is initiated under the state statutes by the county attorney⁽⁵⁾.

(4) Ordinance 922 of the City of St. Paul reads as follows: "Nudity — Indecent dress — Indecent exposure — Immoral conduct — Indecent books, pictures, plays.

"Any person or persons who shall appear in any street or public place in said city in a state of nudity, or in a dress not belonging to his or her sex, or in any indecent or lewd dress, or shall make any indecent exposure of his or her person, or be guilty of any obscene or filthy act, or of any lewd, indecent, immoral or insulting conduct, language or behavior, or shall exhibit, sell or offer to sell any indecent or lewd book, picture or other thing, or shall exhibit or perform any indecent, immoral or lewd play or other representation, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor."

(5) Statute 10187 of the State of Minnesota reads as follows: "Obscene literature—Every person who—

"1. Shall sell, lend, give away, or offer to give away, show, have in his possession with intent to sell, give away, show, advertise, or otherwise offer for loan, gift, sale or distribution, any obscene or indecent book, magazine, pamphlet, newspaper, story paper, writing, picture, drawing, photograph, or any article or instrument of indecent or immoral character; or who shall design, copy, draw, photograph, print, utter, publish or otherwise prepare such a book, picture, drawing, paper, or other article; or write or print, or cause to be written or printed a circular, advertisement or notice of any kind, or give oral information stating when, where, how, or to whom or by what means such an indecent or obscene article or thing can be purchased or obtained; or

"2. Shall exhibit upon any public road, street, or other place within view of any minor any of the books, papers, or other things hereinbefore enumerated; or

"3. Shall hire, use, or employ any minor to sell or give away, or in any manner distribute, or shall permit any minor in his custody or control to sell, give away, or in any manner distribute, any of the articles hereinbefore mentioned—

Shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor, and be punished by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year nor less than ninety days, or by a fine not less than one hundred dollars nor more than five hundred dollars, or by both."

Because of their stand against salacious literature, Catholics are frequently accused of being prudish and Puritanical, of confusing morality with what is purely a matter of art. We readily grant that the human form has frequently been the topic of poetry, painting and sculpture. In Greece and Italy, for example, one may see the human form in the nude painted or sculptured in such a chaste and idealistic manner as to be a matter of esthetic inspiration and pleasure. But we seriously doubt that the vendors and distributors of magazines are bent upon satisfying the artistic and esthetic instincts of man. The tastes to which they pander are definitely of a different and low type. We must always remember that man is a fallen creature, that his lower faculties are no longer subject to the higher. The only place and time when sight of the nude body excited no lusts of the flesh was in the Garden of Paradise before the Fall.

The publisher, seller, distributor and promoter of salacious literature is a murderer of souls and the greatest enemy of all supernatural life. His retribution is foretold in the words of Our Lord: "He that shall scandalize one of these little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of scandals. For it must needs be that scandals come; but nevertheless woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh"⁽⁶⁾. If God threatens such severe penalties to the scandalizer—to him who becomes a stumbling block in the path of others—what great reward will He have in store for those who, far from scandalizing others, have done

(6) Mtt. XVIII, 6, 7.

all in their power to remove occasions of sin from the path of their neighbor?

Discussion Aids

1. What religious truth is brought out by the story of the incident in the lives of St. Albert and St. Thomas?
2. Why are impure conversations such a threat to the supernatural life of the soul?
3. Prove that the difference in sex, the married life, and the human body itself are God's creations.
4. What are the five marks of salacious literature? Explain each briefly.
5. When does a magazine misrepresent facts? Offend against religion and morality? Undermine patriotism?
6. What is the extent of the circulation of salacious periodicals?
7. Through what channels do they reach the reading public?
8. How are they transmitted from the publishers to the readers?
9. What means may be adopted to counteract this spread of salacious literature?
10. Are Catholics confusing obscenity with art?

Religious Practices

1. Sight and hearing are great gifts from God: I will never use them to read vicious periodicals or listen wilfully to objectionable stories.
2. My tongue has been consecrated by the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion. I will never use it to tell or repeat sinful stories.

3. Out of love for my neighbor I will strive to remove scandals and occasion of sin from his path.

Chapter V

THE MOVIES

“It is one of the supreme necessities of our time to watch and to labor to the end that the motion picture be no longer a school of corruption but that it be transformed into an effectual instrument for the education and elevation of mankind”⁽¹⁾.

The motion pictures constitute one of the most influential educational agencies which have sprung up alongside of our schools during the past half century. Pius XI calls the movies “a universal and potent form of entertainment and instruction”⁽²⁾. Motion picture theatres are being opened in ever increasing numbers in both civilized and semi-civilized countries, and millions of people go to the movies every day. Almost eighty million Americans—of whom thirty-eight per cent are young people under the age of twenty-one—attend the movies weekly. Just as the newspapers have in the past gradually supplemented books, so now the new and superior technique of the movies is gradually replacing both the books and the newspapers. Producers, must, therefore, realize the tremendous importance of their work and make of the movie an instrument for propagating truth and a correct philosophy of life, “a light and a positive guide to what is good”⁽³⁾. This duty is especially incumbent upon American producers since four-fifths of the pictures shown throughout the whole world are of American origin.

(1) Pius XI, Encyclical “Vigilanti Cura” (N. C. W. C. press) p. 11.

(2) *ibid*, p. 11.

(3) *ibid*, p. 14.

The Encyclical "Vigilanti Cura" enumerates the following reasons for the great popularity of the movies⁽⁴⁾.

1) The movies are a pleasing form of recreation for people who labor under the trying and fatiguing conditions of modern life.

2) Motion pictures captivate man through all the avenues of sensibility, they influence the whole man without exacting any special mental effort. The audience is not obliged to concentrate as in reading; it is absolved from the necessity of abstract and deductive reasoning. In the talkies the interpretation becomes even easier, while the music adds charm to the action and drama.

3) The atmosphere and the comforts of the theatre add to its attractiveness: "A motion picture is viewed by people who are seated in a dark theatre, and whose faculties, mental, physical and often spiritual, are relaxed."

4) The universality of the theatre is another reason for its popularity: "One does not need to go far in search of these theatres; they are close to home, to church, to school, and they thus bring the cinema to the very center of popular life."

5) The capable execution of the theme and plot constitutes another attraction: "The acting out of the plot is done by men and women selected for their art, for all those natural gifts, the employment of those expedients, which can become, for youth particularly, the instrument of seduction."

6) Finally, the audience, especially the young, are fascinated by the luxurious appointments, pleasing music, and vigorous realism of the movies.

(4) *ibid.* pp. 7-10.

Apart from these considerations, there are other reasons why the movies exercise such a profound and lasting influence on the mind and hearts of the young. In the first place, all knowledge comes to us through the senses, and the sense of sight is said to be the channel of sixty-five per cent of our knowledge. The concrete and attractive pictures of the movies appeal to the sense of sight and supply ideas to the mind ready made. Secondly, movies are said to be levelled down to a twelve year old intelligence, a fact which makes it easy for children to absorb the images and form their ideas about life from the movies. Thirdly, children's minds are "virgin unmarked slates," which receive writing with remarkable ease. Their mental field is not crowded with a host of acquired images which frequently exclude or render difficult the entrance of new ideas. Just as a new unused blackboard records writing with unusual brightness, so also children's minds register new impressions with unusual clearness and intensity; they receive impressions from the movies with the pliability of clay and retain them with the durability of marble. In fact, the knowledge obtained from the movies seems to have a peculiar expansive power; the child's reflecting and pondering on what has been seen on the screen gradually yields a fuller and more detailed knowledge. Fourthly, the child's emotional reaction to the picture is ten times greater than that of adults. It leaves, as has been shown by scientific experiments, an impression on the child's brain and nerves which lasts for several hours, increases his restlessness in sleep for several successive nights, and in this way imprints the picture indelibly on the child's memory. Lastly, the child is by instinct an imitator and tends

by natural impulse to imitate the examples set before him. The movies because of their concreteness and vividness are one of the great sources for patterns of a child's conduct. When the boys in the backyard or on the playgrounds are playing robbers, cops, gangsters, cowboys, etc., they are merely exteriorizing the ideas derived from the movies.

In the light of these principles we can easily understand the statement of Pius XI that "at the very age when moral sense is being formed, when notions and sentiments of justice and rectitude, of duty, obligations and ideals of life are being developed, the motion picture, with its direct propaganda, assumes a position of commanding influence"⁽⁵⁾. The Pope goes on to indicate the immense blessings which good movies could produce: "Good motion pictures are capable of exercising a profoundly moral influence upon those who see them. In addition to affording recreation, they are able to arouse noble ideals of life, to communicate valuable conceptions, to impart better knowledge of the history and beauties of the fatherland and other countries, to present truth and virtue under attractive forms, to create at least the flavor of understanding among nations, social classes and races, to champion the cause of justice, to give new life to the claims of virtue, to contribute positively to the genesis of a just social order in the world"⁽⁶⁾.

Movies, then, can be of immense service for wholesome pleasure, entertainment, education and enlightenment. They can stir an audience to compassion, love and repentance, to noble resolves and to a change of life. Unfortunately, however, movies

(5) *ibid.* p. 10.

(6) *ibid.* p. 9.

have often been exploited in the wrong direction and have been productive of much harm. "Everyone knows," says Pius XI, "what damage is done to the soul by bad motion pictures. They are occasions of sin; they seduce young people along the ways of evil by glorifying the passions; they show life under a false light; they cloud ideals; they destroy pure love, respect for marriage and affection for the family. They are capable also of creating prejudices among individuals, misunderstandings among nations, among social classes, and among entire races"⁽⁷⁾. In the preceding chapter we indicated the various marks of salacious literature, namely, 1) it glorifies crime or the criminal; 2) is predominantly "sexy"; 3) features illicit love; 4) carries illustrations or descriptions indecent or suggestive; 5) carries disreputable advertising; 6) misrepresents facts; 7) offends against religion and morality; 8) undermines patriotism. The criteria enumerated under these headings are also applicable to the movies, and for a fuller description of them the reader is referred to the chapter on "Salacious Literature."

The American Legion of Decency was born of the desire to obtain and maintain fundamental religious and moral standards on the screen. Its great objective is the following: "A screen conforming to the accepted and God-given morality upon which our homes and civilization are builded. We would stamp out films which present false and immoral standards. We would revitalize on the screen the ideals of natural and Christian rectitude. We have taken the field against the motion picture which is immoral in theme or indecent in treatment. By time-

(7) *ibid.* p. 9.

tested standards of morality, adultery is wrong; murder is wrong; stealing is wrong; lying is wrong; honor is due to father and mother. These norms of human conduct spring from a code of right and wrong written by God Himself upon the tablets of men's hearts. The Legion of Decency is not a censorship body. It urges the producers to exercise a self-control responsive to public opinion aroused and insistent upon decency"⁽⁸⁾.

The American Legion of Decency as well as all similar organizations in Europe⁽⁹⁾ lay down the following rules in regard to the presentation of evil on the screen.

1) Evil must not be presented in too great detail nor too extensively. The film, of course, must be true to reality and must represent life as it is. It is not required that all reference to evil be excluded. But it is necessary to observe a just proportion. The film should not devote the greater part of the time to an exposition, for example, of the morals of a night club and consecrate only the closing moments to a condemnation of the evil. The picture should show the conversion of a criminal rather than a criminal converted.

2) Evil must be represented as evil, crime must be depicted as crime and not as a mere social blunder, as a mistake in our evolution from the animal, or as an unavoidable consequence of our make-up.

3) Evil must be condemned for adequate rea-

⁽⁸⁾ From a radio broadcast (CBS, 9-26-37) by the Rev. John J. McClafferty, Executive Secretary of the National Office of the Legion of Decency, 485 Madison Avenue, New York City.

⁽⁹⁾ e. g. Office Catholique International du Cinema, 6, rue Traversière, Bruxelles, 3, Belgium.

sons—not merely for temporal and pragmatic reasons but for religious and supernatural reasons.

4) Even when properly and quantitatively reduced and clearly condemned evil must not be presented in such an attractive way as to excite imitation.

5) Evil placed in the past diminishes in force. The more distant it is in time and space, the more removed it is from contact with our own world, the less suggestive and the less influential it is, and the more difficult it is for the spectator to make the application to his own life. But historical and exotic settings must not be made means of presenting what in itself is condemnable.

6) Certain habits and customs, proper to savage countries, may become offensive and occasions of sin if presented—outside of their natural setting and environment—before civilized audiences.

The same Catholic organizations lay down certain principles concerning the relativity of movies. They point out the fact that the influence exercised by a picture on a particular individual is determined not only by the contents of the picture but also by the degree of education of the spectator. More specifically, they consider a motion picture in reference to each of the following three groups:

1. *Children:* The child's intelligence is not sufficiently developed to enable him to distinguish between error and truth, between fiction and reality. He believes all that he sees and hears. If a child, as experience shows, can commune with irrational creatures as flowers and animals, how much more will he identify himself with the living and speaking human beings on the screen? He cannot "discount" as adults do, or dismiss the movie with the

thought that "real life is not like that." With the seeming approval of the adults sitting about him, he can only assent and accept. Again, being by nature and instinct an imitator, the child reproduces the acts of those whom he admires, even before he reflects. Stealing, lying, disobedience in the home, etc., have often been traced to the suggestive power of the movies.

Again there are certain questions, as the sex problem, which should be imparted to young people only gradually.

2. *Men with an average education:* The average spectator lacks the necessary critical sense to examine dispassionately the ideas presented to him on the screen. He cannot discern the carefully camouflaged error. He lacks the necessary education to examine the value of a theory, thesis, or teaching. This is especially true in regard to social doctrines. The movies frequently depict an unreal world, and present a deceiving image of the individual and of social life. They often minimize patient effort and perseverance, represent the home as a jail, ridicule honest and hard working people, and picture the heroes as leading a lazy and luxurious life. In this way they accentuate the rancours in the popular mind and aggravate the hatred between classes. In the minds of those who are unacquainted with Communistic sophistries they create a disdain for authority and a desire for revolution.

3) *The well-educated spectators.* Members of this class are aware of the unreal character of many features of the film. They are acquainted with the various artifices used to produce a desired effect. They view the screen in a critical manner. They know that the moving picture is one thing, reality

another. They like to be entertained for two hours in an imaginary and fairy land. But once they leave the theatre they come down to earth. They labor under no misconception as to the ideas, tendencies and suggestions of the screen.

In conformity with these principles of Christian morality the National Office of the Legion of Decency issues regularly classified lists of films. It divides the pictures into the following classes.

Class A—Section I—Unobjectionable for General Patronage: Pictures in this category are suitable for all ages and for all types of theatre-goers.

Class A—Section II—Unobjectionable for Adults: The subject matter of these pictures is often too mature for youth, and as a result does not interest or appeal to youth. Again, the subject matter may be of such a nature as to demand greater maturity of thought and judgment than youth possesses and hence disconcerts and disquiets him and even harms him.

Class B—Objectionable in Part: This classification is not based on the technical value of the picture but on its ethical implications. Pictures of this group glorify divorce and approve remarriage; or treat lightly the married state, family life and parental authority; or solve the main plot by suicide; or imply that fundamental moral standards are changeable. To this class also belong pictures which contain offensive vulgarities or immodest suggestiveness in dialogue, dance, situation and action, or double meaning lines and remarks. In classifying an otherwise good picture the Legion must condemn these transgressions of ethical principles, propriety and good taste, and hence says that it is objectionable in part, and places it in class "B".

Class C—Condemned: To this category belong all pictures which are harmful or positively bad; for example, films attacking or ridiculing Catholic religion or morality; films featuring or condoning or justifying illicit sex experiences, voluntary prostitution, Lesbianism, sex-perversion, white slavery. To this category belong almost all of the Russian films which are full of atheistic and Communistic propaganda.

Some contend that the publishing of the lists gives an advantageous publicity to the objectionable pictures and brings them to the attention of the public. But this claim has little to support it in fact. We might as well say that the Holy See should not issue the Index of forbidden books, or that theologians should not publish moral treatises, or that parents and educators should remain silent about forbidden things, lest evil be brought to the attention of others. Our appeal is to men of good will, to those who have the proper dispositions. Besides, forbidden and objectionable movies receive such wide publicity in newspapers, posters and radio broadcasts, that those whose mind is intent upon evil will experience no difficulty in finding it.

Others accuse us of confusing amorality and immorality with art. The essential purpose of art, however, as Pius XI writes, "is to assist in the perfecting of the moral personality, which is man. For this reason it must itself be moral" ⁽¹⁰⁾. A good movie, like truly great literature, is a portrayal of life, a record of human experience, an expression of human emotion, and must needs take into account the unceasing striving of the soul after God. Hence

⁽¹⁰⁾ o. c. p. 3.

an artistic movie cannot be amoral, much less immoral.

In conclusion we shall outline, in conformity with the directions contained in the Encyclical "Vigilanti Cura," a program of Catholic Action in regard to the motion pictures:

1. Catholics must strive to imbue the producers of motion pictures with the principles of Christian morality. Members of Catholic Action especially should strive to diffuse the Christian viewpoint on movies and plays. They should urge upon producers the following three considerations: first, light, sound, color, motion are God's handiwork and hence the motion-picture together with all created gifts must be ordained to the glory of God; second, the law of charity should prevent producers from placing obstacles in the way of Christian living and salvation; third, motion pictures which attack basic moral laws, married and family life, human dignity and rights, undermine the foundations of our democratic government.

2. We must strive to make Catholics, who hold important positions in the movie industry, conscious of their duty to promote the observance of Christian principles in the production of movies.

3. Pastors should obtain from their people a pledge in which they promise to stay away from motion pictures and plays offensive to truth and Christian morality.

4. Classified lists of motion pictures should be published frequently and regularly, making the people aware of which films are permitted at all, which are permitted with reservations, and which are harmful or positively bad.

5. Each country should set up a central per-

manent reviewing office to classify the motion pictures. Where the character of the region demands it, the respective bishop may add severer criterions to the national list.

6. An exchange of views among offices of the various countries will conduce to greater efficiency and unity.

7. Catholics should organize their own motion-picture theatres which would demand that the industry produce pictures conforming to Christian principles.

8. All high-minded citizens should strive to procure legislation which will protect youth against evil and pernicious movies.

Discussion Aids

1. Why is the motion picture a factor which modern education must take into account?
2. How account for the great popularity of the movies?
3. Why do the movies exercise such a powerful influence on children?
4. What good results could be brought about by the movies?
5. What are the criteria for judging a movie?
6. What is the objective of the Legion of Decency?
7. What are the rules for the presentation of evil on the screen?
8. What is meant by the relativity of movies? How do movies affect children? Men with an average education? Well-educated men?
9. What pictures are assigned to Class A? Class B? Class C?

10. Are Catholics confusing immorality with art?
11. What can Catholics do to improve the movies?

Religious Practices

1. I will live up conscientiously to the Legion of Decency pledge.
2. I will consult the classified list of motion pictures before attending a movie, and patronize only those theatres which present pictures which are in no way objectionable.
3. I will consider no motion picture as a work of art unless it gives a Christian solution of all problems.

Chapter VI

DANCING

1. Dancing has been variously defined as a series of graceful and measured steps executed in accord with music, or, as a series of varied and regulated movements, postures, and paces; or, as a vivid representation by measured movements of the sentiments and passions of others (operatic and theatrical performances). At times it may be a combination of graceful and rhythmic movements, arranged in decorative and harmonious figures, in order to give expression to physical charm and beauty and to afford pleasure for both the participant and the spectator. Perhaps the most comprehensive definition of dancing is the one given by Webster's Dictionary: "Dancing is a series of movements executed by the body or limbs or both, in rhythm; a measured leaping, tripping or stepping, commonly in unison with music, hand-clapping, or other rhythmic sounds as an expression of personal or group emotion, a religious rite, a theatrical entertainment, a means of physical education, a social amusement, or especially in modern times, as a form of art" ⁽¹⁾.

Dancing, like poetry and music, is a consequence of man's psychophysical nature, an exemplification of the principle of psychophysical interaction. It is a well established fact that there is no internal idea or emotion which is not accompanied by a physical reaction—no psychosis without a corresponding neurosis. Conversely, certain bod-

⁽¹⁾ Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language, 2nd. Ed. (Springfield, 1935).

ily postures and attitudes evoke definite mental states. This intimate relation between the mind and bodily movements is due to the substantial union of soul and body. If a man's sentiments reach a certain intensity he will not only manifest them by facial attitudes but will give expression to them in words. And if they reach a further degree of intensity he will not be satisfied with ordinary language but will seek poetic expression. And if they reach a still higher degree, ordinary intonation will not be sufficient, but he will sing exultantly. And if they still increase in intensity bodily movements will be instinctively and spontaneously added; man will leap with joy, move back and forth, stop abruptly, clap and clasp his hands—he will dance. What rhythm and measure and short and long syllables are to poetic language, what pauses and breathings and the varied combination of sounds of the scale are to music, what the various colors of the artist's palette are to painting, bodily attitudes, gestures and movements are to dancing.

Dancing, as an instinctive and spontaneous manifestation of internal sentiments is of frequent occurrence among children and among all primitive peoples. Especially was it used in antiquity for externalizing one's inward religion, and eventually it came to form an integral part of religious worship. Dancing around the altar to the harmonious sound of musical instruments formed an important part of the Greek religion ceremonial. In Egypt it formed an integral part of the training for liturgical services in the temple. Sometimes the dances represented the deeds of the gods who were being honored.

Among the Hebrews dancing was an express-

ion of pleasure, joy, religious exultation and piety. A rapid glance at the passages listed under the term "dance" in a Biblical Concordance will acquaint us with the texts which refer to dancing among the Hebrews. Mary, the sister of Moses and Aaron—together with other Israelite women—danced after the miraculous passage of the Red Sea, while singing the Canticle composed by Moses in honor of God⁽²⁾. The daughter of Jephthe met her father "with timbrels and with dances" after his victory over the Ammonites⁽³⁾. When David returned from his slaughter of the Philistine "the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with timbrels of joy, and cornets"⁽⁴⁾. David himself "danced with all his might" before the ark of the Lord⁽⁵⁾. It is very probable, too, that dancing formed an important part of the liturgical services in the temple of Jerusalem. In fact, during the early Christian ages dancing accompanied the celebration of certain Christian feasts—at least in some localities—and was only gradually forbidden and eliminated by the authority of the Church.

Dancing was also fostered as a mere art to express the beautiful and to develop physical grace, charm and dexterity. The Greeks were of the opinion that grace and elegance of bodily movements soften and refine manners, develop rectitude and adaptability of the mind, and produce urbanity in action and conduct. Among the same Greeks dancing was also used as a military exercise to develop

(2) Exod. XV, 20-21.

(3) Judges XI, 34.

(4) I Kings, XVIII, 6.

(5) II Kings, VI, 14.

physical strength and agility with a view to future combats.

The ancients also knew the value of the principle that certain physical movements evoke corresponding mental states. They resorted to martial dances in order to develop a warlike spirit among the natives. They knew, too, that indecent dances were the quickest way of developing lustful thoughts and desires. Paintings at Herculaneum and Pompeii still depict today the lascivious dances which prevailed in these ancient pagan cities. The fathers of the Church inveighed repeatedly against these obscene and revolting dances bequeathed to society by a rotten paganism. No wonder that the converts, not wishing to have anything in common with paganism and its practices, refrained from all dancing.

Today dancing is principally a means of recreation and entertainment. Homer in his Iliad frequently spoke of dancing in this sense, and many of the Biblical passages use the term with this meaning. St. Mark's Gospel tells us that the daughter of Herodias "danced and pleased Herod, and them that were at table with him"⁽⁶⁾. St. Mark does not tell us explicitly whether the damsel executed one of those indecent dances, which took place after Oriental feasts and orgies—dances which the degenerate pagans had introduced among the Jews and which probably prevailed at the court of Herod.

In the face of the rising tide of paganism the Church is anxiously vigilant lest any one of the many new species of dances harken back to its ancient degenerate predecessors. She determines the conditions under which dancing may be permissible.

⁽⁶⁾ Mk. VI, 22.

She is mindful of the warning of the Book of Ecclesiasticus against dangerous and promiscuous dancing: "Look not upon a woman that hath a mind for many, lest thou fall into her snares. Use not much the company of her that is a dancer, and hearken not to her, lest thou perish by the force of her charms" (7).

II In judging the morality of dancing we may consider dancing 1) in itself; 2) in regard to the person dancing; and 3) in connection with the circumstances in which dancing takes place.

1) *Dancing considered in itself.* Eminent theologians, such as St. Thomas, St. Alphonsus, and others do not consider dancing as evil in itself. If the canons of prudence and decency are observed, dancing cannot be considered as a lustful act, but rather as an expression of joy and as an innocent recreation. Says St. Thomas: "In itself dancing is not evil; but according as it ordained to such or such an end, and accompanied by such or such circumstances, it can become a virtuous act or it can become a vicious act" (8). St. Alphonsus gives expression to the same judgment: "Dances in themselves are not evil, since in themselves they do not strive to procure sensual pleasures but joy. However, they become evil, if we engage in them with an evil intention, or in a manner to rouse our own passions or those of another, or because of some other blameworthy circumstance" (9).

The dance then must not give rise to any unbecoming gestures, positions and attitudes nor contain any indiscrete touching, claspings and embraces

(7) IX, 3, 4.

(8) Commentary on Isaias, Ch.III.

(9) Moral Theology, Book IV, 4, 482.

ing. Characteristics such as these do not seem to be wholly absent from our modern dance. When one considers the leaping, jumping, side-sliding, swinging and whirling which form an integral part of so many of the dances, he is inclined to brand them all as indecent and suggestive. But we must not be too rash in our judgment. Theologians point out that modern dances are so complicated, imply so many minute movements, and demands such ease, elegance and precision that the inward attention which they require of the dancer may crowd out all sinful or lustful elements. Incidentally, however, the danger may be greater for the unoccupied and quiet spectator than for the participant.

Modern "swing" music was condemned in the following severe terms by the Most Rev. Francis J. L. Beckman, Archbishop of Dubuque, at the Convention of the National Council of Catholic Women at Biloxi: "Under the captions of 'sur-realism' 'neo-paganism,' etc., we find whole groups and organizations fostering within our very border a type of art embodying evil and malicious propaganda as its central core. A degenerated and demoralizing 'musical' system is given a disgusting christening as 'swing' and turned loose to gnaw away the moral fibre of our young people. We permit, if not freely indorse by our criminal indifference, 'jam sessions,' 'jitterbugs,' and cannibalistic rhythmic orgies to occupy a place in our social scheme of things, wooing our youth along the primrose path to hell. We gaze idiotically at an impressionistic mass proudly defined by its sponsors as the painting of the future, marvelling at its drabness, commending its motives. In such a setting art has been robbed, as was the man of Jericho, of its most beautiful essence and

meaning, and left to die along the highroad of Communistic endeavor"⁽¹⁰⁾.

2) *The dance considered in relation to the participant.* So much depends on the particular education, temperament and impressionability of the individual, that it is almost impossible to lay down a general rule. Each particular case must be judged by itself. Of course, dances formally obscene and lascivious are forbidden; to attend them would be a mortal sin against prudence by putting oneself in the proximate occasion of sin or inducing others to do so. Again, if there is a probable or almost certain connection between a sin and a dance, the latter is a proximate occasion of sin and must be avoided under pain of serious sin. But as some theologians point out, what is a proximate danger for one is only a remote occasion for another. Some people because of their particular disposition may fall where others will experience no serious temptation. Again certain features of a danger may be a stumbling block for some while they leave others unaffected. Again, some people are so blase and such slaves to social custom that they dance out of mere habit without paying much attention to the nature of the dance itself. The fact that some experience isolated impure thoughts or desires at a dance, is not sufficient reason to condemn the dance itself, since these inward movements of concupiscence may arise even in solitude.

3) *The circumstances of the dance:* (1) The place⁽¹¹⁾. Home and community dancing is less

⁽¹⁰⁾ "Catholic Bulletin" Nov. 5, 1938, p. 5, col. 4.

⁽¹¹⁾ The Sacred Consistorial Congregation issued a decree on March 31, 1916, forbidding dances at any gatherings that were held under the auspices of the Church, for the benefit of the Church or in presence of the clergy.

objectionable than dancing in public ball-rooms, hotels, taverns, beer-parlors, night clubs, etc. A supervised and duly chaperoned dance is better than a public dance. The latter is frequently attended by people of questionable reputation; girls and women come and go unaccompanied; there is dancing without introduction or acquaintance; the dance hall is often connected with a bar room; drinking is going on at the dance itself and some of the participants are intoxicated; the hall is overheated; with bodily fatigue comes a corresponding relaxation of will-control, etc. And if virtue has not suffered shipwreck at the dance itself, it is in great danger of doing so after the dance.

2) *Attire.* It would be a grave sin to attend or promote dances and theatrical performances where the participants are dressed immodestly or appear in various stages of nudity, or are dressed in a thin gauzy material, of the color of the skin so as to make the participants appear as nude. The climate and customs of dress in a country, however, must always be taken into account. Men gradually become accustomed to styles which at first seemed shocking, objectionable and provocative to sin. So too the décolletage prescribed for formal functions in official circles may, according to some theologians, excuse from sin. But all theologians agree that a woman would be guilty of serious sin if she appeared at a dance in an unusual décolletage or strove to introduce such a custom; for what is extraordinary attracts attention and may provoke to sin. Public masquerade dances, where the person conceals her or his identity, are likewise objectionable. Masked persons may take liberties which they would not take openly. A mask frequently conceals an evil

intention, an insidious danger. Masquerades carried on in the home and among friends are usually only a source of entertainment.

3) *Time.* Frequent dances hardly remain mere amusement. They develop a certain familiarity and undesirable intimacy, especially if one dances with the same person the entire evening. Again dances which are held during the first part of the evening are preferable to those which last until the early hours of the morning. In the latter case the will is affected by physical exhaustion and sometimes by intoxicating liquor—and no longer exercises that firm control which is necessary under the circumstances.

Discussion Aids

1. Give a definition of dancing.
2. Describe dancing as
 - a) an expression of internal emotion
 - b) a manifestation of religious joy
 - c) a mere art
 - d) a means of evoking mental states.
3. In order that dancing be ethical, what is required on the part of
 - a) the dance itself
 - b) the participant
 - c) place
 - d) attire
 - e) time.

Religious Practices

1. The body with its strength and faculties and powers is a gift from God. I will not dishonor it by unbecoming recreation.

2. In dancing I will never assume a bodily attitude or posture which might be an occasion of sin to myself or to my companion.
3. I will never assume postures which may be harmless to me but a stumbling block to the onlookers.

Chapter VII

GAMBLING

DEFINITIONS

Before stating the ethical principles governing gambling we shall define the terms which shall occur throughout this chapter :

Gambling is the risking of considerable sums of money or of things of value between two or more persons on a contest of chance of any kind.

A *bet* or a *wager* is a bilateral contract whereby two or several persons, in disagreement upon the truth of an unascertained proposition, or on the realization of an uncontrollable and uncertain event, agree to cede the stake or sum of money to him who upon verification of the facts is found to be correct.

A *game* is a tacit contract between two or more persons by which the players, engaged in a pastime game, agree to cede the stake to him who through skill turns out to be the winner.

A *lottery* is the distribution of prizes to persons who by means of a ticket purchased in advance procured the right to be included among those from whom the winner or winners are chosen by chance or by lot in the manner determined by the manager of the scheme.

Speculation is the foreseeing and taking advantage of the variations of prices of merchandise, according to the difference of time and place, and by means of buying and selling the realizing of a positive gain or avoiding a loss.

A *future* is a contract whereby a buyer and seller fix at once the price of the commodity but defer to a more or less distant future the delivery of the object.

When the contract leaves to the seller the choice either to deliver the stipulated commodity at the price agreed upon or to pay the difference between the contract price and the actual market price at the time that the contract expires, the contract is called an *option*.

Sometimes an option is taken in a more general sense to denote a contract by which for a consideration paid one acquires the privilege of buying or selling to another person certain goods at a fixed price and within a certain time. A "Call Option" gives the privilege of buying or not. A "Put Option" gives the privilege of selling or not. A "Straddle" gives the right to buy or sell or either.

Difference transactions and *margins* are transactions in which no real transfer of goods is executed or intended. It is a speculative contract concerning the price of a commodity at a future date. For example: Mr. Jones agrees to buy from Mr. Smith on June 1, 1000 bushels of wheat at \$1 per bushel. If when the day arrives wheat sells at \$1.10 Mr. Smith pays Mr. Jones the difference; if it sell at 90c Mr. Jones pays Mr. Smith the difference or margin. (1). A margin occasionally denotes a sum of money or its equivalent, placed in the hands of a broker or dealer, as security to the broker against losses which may result from the purchase for the principals' account, of stocks and commodities.

"Bulls" and "bears" are dealers who attempt respectively to stimulate or depress the prices.

Principles

I. *Gaming*. In order that gaming be ethical certain conditions must be verified in regard to the stakes, liberty of the players, methods of playing, and relative skill of the players.

a) The *stakes* must belong to the player and must be at his free disposal. A guardian may not stake the property of his protegee, the treasurer may not stake the money which belongs to his organization, etc. Again, a man may not alienate what is necessary for the support of his wife and family, or what is necessary to meet his debts and personal obligations of justice.

b) The player must be in full possession of his intellectual and *volitional* powers. It would be unjust to play with an idiot, feeble-minded or intoxicated person or one who is coerced by kidnapping or otherwise.

c) The players must not resort to *fraud* and *cheating*; to adopt certain attitudes and strategy of skill, is permissible.

d) There must be a certain relative equivalence of skill among the players. However, it is difficult in practice to determine the skill and value of an adversary. The problem becomes very actual when the stake is considerable and when the loser had no way of ascertaining the ability of his opponent before the play began. At any rate, it is wrong for an expert to play with amateurs and novices.

The fact that theologians lay down certain conditions for the morality of gaming does not mean that the Church recommends or approves gaming. In fact, from the so-called canons of the Apostles, down through local councils and the Council of Trent, and up to the First and Second Plenary Coun-

cils of Baltimore she has looked with disfavor upon all gaming and gambling. And why? Because she sees in gambling the following dangers: setting up stakes which should be reserved for the necessities of life and of the family, or which put the player in a position of being unable to fulfill the obligations of his state; giving scandal or entering into the occasion of sin because of the time and place of game or because of the persons or bad company played with; playing in unwholesome conditions where intemperance, improper language, quarreling and fighting accompany the game; developing a passion for gaining money easily and the habit of leading an idle, lazy, useless life. These dangers have at times become so great that the civil law itself was forced to step in and make stringent regulations in regard to these practices⁽¹⁾.

(1) The following are the statutes in the State of Minnesota concerning Gaming:

10209. **LOTTERIES.** Defined—A nuisance—Drawing—How punished.

A lottery is a scheme for the distribution of property by chance, among persons who have paid or agreed to pay a valuable consideration for the chance, whether it shall be called a lottery, raffle, gift, enterprise, or by any other name and is hereby declared unlawful and a public nuisance.

Every person who shall contrive, propose, or draw a lottery, or shall assist in contriving, proposing, or drawing a lottery, shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for not more than two years, or by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars, or by both.

10210. Selling tickets, advertising—

Every person who shall sell, give, or in any way whatever furnish or transfer to or for another a ticket, chance, share, or interest, or any paper, certificate, or instrument purporting to be or to represent a ticket, chance, share or interest, in or dependent upon the event of a lottery, to be drawn within or without the state; or who, by writing, printing, circular, or letter, or in any other way, shall advertise or publish an account of a lottery in or out of the state, stating how, when, or where are the prizes therein, or any of them, or the

price of a ticket, or any share or interest therein, or where or how it may be obtained—shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.

10214. GAMBLING.

Gambling with cards, dice, gaming tables, or any other gambling device whatever is hereby prohibited. Every person who deals cards at the game called "faro," "pharo," or "forty-eight," whether the same is dealt with fifty-two or any other number of cards, and every person who shall keep any gambling device whatsoever designed to be used in gambling, shall be punished by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six months, or by a fine of not more than two hundred dollars, or by both; and every person who shall bet any money or other property at or upon a gaming table, game, or device shall be punished by a fine of not less than five dollars nor more than twenty dollars.

10215. Gambling devices on premises—

Every person who shall suffer any gaming table, faro bank, or gambling device to be set up or used for the purpose of gambling in any house, building, steamboat, raft, keelboat or boom, lot yard, or garden, owned, occupied, or controlled by him, shall be punished by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than six months, or by a fine of not more than two hundred dollars or by both.

Ordinance of the City of St. Paul concerning gaming:

450. Gaming prohibited—

That all descriptions of gaming and fraudulent devices and practices in gaming, and all playing cards, dice, or other games of chance are hereby prohibited.

451. Gambling devices, gambling houses, card, etc. prohibited—

All E. O. or roulette tables, faro or pharo banks, and all gaming with cards, gaming tables, or gambling devices, and all description of gaming, and all houses and places for the purpose of gambling and fraudulent devices and practices, and all playing of cards, dice, or other games of chance, are hereby prohibited from being set up or used, or kept for gaming or gambling purposes, in the City of St. Paul.

452. Faro and gambling devices prohibited—

No person within the City of St. Paul shall deal cards at the game called faro, pharo, or forty-eight (48), whether the same shall be dealt with fifty-two (52), or any other number of cards, and no person shall keep, to be used in gaming, any gambling device whatever.

453. Betting prohibited—

No person shall bet any money or other property at or upon any gaming table, game or device prohibited by this ordinance.

II *Betting*. In itself betting is not wrong if it observes the following conditions: the better may not stake money which does not belong to him or which is necessary for the fulfilment of his other obligations or for the support of his family; if a better risks and loses what is already due to a third party the other party to the bet has no right lawfully to retain it; apart from this, the better must make good the stake, if he loses; the object of the bet must not be something immoral, as for example, that a certain city official will rob the city treasury, or something forbidden by the positive law of the Church, as, for example, the use of simony in obtaining the appointment of an ecclesiastic to office; the bet must be free from violence, deceit and fraud, and the uncertainty of the event must not be created by false rumors; the thing must be something equally doubtful to both, and both must have a fairly equal chance to win; if a person professes to be in possession of absolute certitude, and if another nevertheless insists on betting with him, the first may accept the bet, but the bet in that case becomes a gift; the participants must have a clear understanding of the bet and the conditions of a bet. An equivocation or a misunderstanding fully nullifies a bet.

Although a bet which fulfils these conditions is not a sinful transaction, yet betting like gaming contains many temptations and may easily become a dangerous occupation and the sure road to ruin. A small winning may spur a man to take risks which will end in the loss of all his possessions. The habit of gambling is easily acquired, the betting fever gets into the blood, and large sums of money may be squandered in a very short time.

III The conditions for the morality of *lotteries*

are much the same as those for gaming and betting. All must have an equal chance to win, there must be no manipulation, fraud or deceit in the drawing of the numbers, and there must be some reasonable proportion between the cost of the ticket and the chances of winning the prize. The lottery presents the same dangers as gaming or betting: buying tickets beyond one's means, the vain hope of getting rich quickly and without any effort, developing habits of greed, cupidity and gradually of dishonesty.

IV *Speculation, Futures, Difference Transactions, Margins.*

Speculation in the sense of foreseeing the variations in prices and the realizing of gain or the avoiding of losses by timely buying and selling, contains nothing illicit or immoral. It constitutes a laudable act of economic prudence, and examples of it are to be found in the fifty-first and fifty-seventh chapters of Genesis.

Real speculation, which deals with existent, negotiable and deliverable objects, cannot be condemned by any principle of moral theology as long as the contractants do not fraudulently influence the markets and as long as they fulfil their obligations on the day specified. A seller who has contracted for the future delivery of a certain commodity knows that he can obtain the goods—probably at a cheaper rate than he charges—before the contract expires. All this is lawful trade, and renders immense services to the public. It assures a supply of provisions and brings about, by the natural interplay of supply and demand, an equilibrium of prices. It spares the producer the embarrassment of storing his goods while awaiting a sale.

But what about fictitious speculation or pure-

ly speculative purchases (about ninety per cent of the speculation on the exchange is of this nature), where there is no transfer of goods? In substance, they are wagers on the course and variations of prices and are governed by the same principles as betting and gaming. Considered in its essential elements as an aleatory contract, fictitious speculation on future differences and margins is not illicit.

Many arguments are adduced in favor of this kind of speculation. These transactions are said to increase the volume of business for commission houses, brokers and agents. They stabilize prices and protect them against the fluctuations occasioned by the law of real supply and demand. The speculators are well informed about the world's marketable supply and the world's consumption of any particular commodity. By means of elaborate statistics they can determine the price of the commodity at a particular future time and this estimated price will play an important role in determining the actual price.

Nevertheless, moralists, economists, producers and manufacturers are of the opinion that these gambling operations on the exchange lead to disastrous effects. The following are some of the objections to these practices:

a) Gambling is apt to become a passion. The gambler gradually abandons industry, thrift and honest work and begins to rely solely on chance. He directs money into unproductive channels. He squanders his talents and becomes a sort of parasite preying on the community instead of benefiting it, and eventually brings misfortune upon himself and upon society.

b) This world-wide market for futures, this

universal market of exchange dealers multiplies competitors to such an extent as to cause grave harm to trade. Producers of a commodity in one country, who labor under unfavorable conditions, suffer serious losses because they are obliged to compete with others who produce the same commodity under very favorable circumstances.

c) Gamblers do not take into consideration the cost of production, transportation, taxes, customs, and tariffs but are concerned solely with margins and differences. They overlook natural and vital factors which effect profoundly the determination of prices.

d) Only professional gamblers can successfully play the markets; the rest are fleeced. The losses, which become the gain of the great operators, are borne by those who can least afford to lose.

e) Then there is the constant temptation of the powerful "bears" and "bulls," who have great resources at their disposal, to manipulate the market to their advantage and profit. In fact, it has been conservatively estimated, that fifty per cent of the prices on the exchange are manipulated. This manipulation may take place in various ways:

1) By circulating false reports about the market value of a certain property. For example, a rumor goes about that a certain railroad is about to declare dividends on its stocks. Immediately the stocks of the railroad go up. The director and his friends, taking advantage of the situation, sell their stocks. Then as the favorable reports subside, the stocks begin to fall, and the small stockholders sell out in fear to the big ones.

2) False reports are circulated for the sole purpose of depressing the value of stocks, creating

a panic and confusion among the small stockholders and forcing them to sell out.

3) An exaggerated account about the value of some stock, which in reality is worthless, is circulated by the owners, and at the same time the sale of this stock is artificially stimulated on the market. When the stocks reach a high point, the speculators sell out to a gullible public and the stocks rapidly fall to their former level.

4) By means of a conspiracy among speculators who buy from and sell to one another, and who in reality effect no turnover, an impression is given that the investment is experiencing an enormous demand. The purpose of this ruse is to inflate the stocks and invite the public to buy investments which soon drop in price.

5) An artificial fall or rise in prices may bring untold misery to countless people. A fall in prices may destroy the fruits of the farmer's labor and the just wage of his work and reduce him to bankruptcy and ruin. On the other hand, a sudden rise in prices may bring sufferings to the poor in the cities who are unable to meet their expenses and procure the bare necessities of life.

From all that we have said above it is clear that any one who engages in gambling on the exchange runs a great risk of participating in transactions which in one way or another are colored by immoral practices.

Discussion Aids

1. Define the following terms: gambling; a bet or wager; game; lottery; speculation; a "future"; margin; difference transactions; "bulls"; "bears".

2. What are the conditions for ethical gaming?
3. Does the Church approve of gambling? Why?
4. What are the conditions of ethical betting?
5. What are the dangers of betting?
6. What are the conditions for an ethical lottery?
7. Is real speculation ethical? Why?
8. What about fictitious speculation? What arguments are adduced in its favor?
9. What arguments are justly urged against speculation on the exchange?
10. In what ways do speculators manipulate the prices on the exchange? What are the effects of such practices on the farmers and on the poor in the large cities?

Religious Practices

1. I will pray that I may be a careful and prudent administrator of those earthly goods which God has entrusted to my care.
2. I will not squander by gambling goods which should be used for the support of a household, for paying my debts, or for relieving the poor.
3. In providing for the necessities of life I will rely on industry and labor rather than on chance.

Chapter VIII

ACTIVITIES OF CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS ⁽¹⁾

In 1930, on the occasion of the Catholic Jubilee Congress, Pius XI addressed the youth assembled in Rome in the following affectionate terms: "Young people, you are Our co-workers, We demand of you, the Vicar of Christ demands of you, your collaboration." And what was to be the purpose of this participation in the apostolate of the Pope and of the bishops? To re-Christianize a de-Christianized world.

The first requisite for this lay apostolate is personal holiness. In his letter to Cardinal Bertram in 1928 Pius XI stated that while personal Christian perfection is not the sole pursuit of Catholic Action, it "is, however, before all others its first and greatest end." And since the practice of virtue presupposes an enlightenment of the mind, the first step in personal sanctification must be a careful and thorough study of one's religion. This can be done in various ways; in study clubs where a small group of young people under the guidance of a leader devotes itself to a systematic study of religion; in open forums where larger groups under the direction of a trained leader investigate a religious prob-

(1) Cf. "Youth Leaders' Handbook" (N. C. W. C.); "Official Manual, Catholic Youth Organization of the Milwaukee Archdiocese" (With supplements), 225 E. Michigan St., Milwaukee, \$1.00; Daniel Lord, "The Guidance of Youth," Queen's Work, 3742 West Pine Blvd., St. Louis, \$1.50; Pamphlets on "Youth" by the Committee on Youth Problems, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C.; Youth Section of **Our Sunday Visitor**, Huntington, Ind. a weekly magazine, \$1.50 per year.

lem; or in classes and round table discussions, and by means of question boxes conducted by priests. Since in the words of Pius X a renewal of Christian life is to come specially through an intelligent participation in the Liturgy, young people should devote themselves to a study of the Mass, of the Liturgical year, of the Sunday Epistles and Gospels, and of the externals of the Liturgy. Since the world wars have brought the Church face to face with unprecedented problems, a study of Church History will show how Divine Providence guides the Church in every crisis. Since the young people of today are the leaders of tomorrow, they should be acquainted with the great questions of the day and with the Catholic solutions of these problems.

Young people who know, appreciate and love their religion, will spontaneously mould their conduct according to its doctrines and precepts. They will attend Mass not merely on Sundays and holidays but whenever circumstances permit, and receive Holy Communion whenever they can. They will attend all parochial devotions such as the Holy Hour, Forty Hours Devotion, October and May devotions, the Way of the Cross, and missions. They will cultivate a special devotion to Mary, reciting frequently her favorite prayers and devoutly celebrating her feasts. Young people who aspire to collaborate in the regeneration of society should observe an annual day of recollection and take part in an annual closed retreat together with the customary retreat exercises.

After having prayerfully applied their minds to a study of the Church's doctrines, young people should then project the mind of the Church into the mind of the world. "Catholic Action," says Pius

XI, "must have as preliminary the individual sanctification of each one of its members: so that the supernatural life abounds and superabounds within them. But after this first and formative element comes the second—the distribution of this life, the action of apostolate, which means putting into practice, in all its extensions and in all its possibilities, the first apostolate of all, that of the Twelve Apostles" (2). The apostolate which young people are called upon to exercise may be conveniently divided into the Apostolate of Catholic Truth and the Apostolate of Christian Charity.

Young people may share in the apostolate of Truth in the following ways:

1) By enrolling in the *Confraternity of Christian Doctrine* (3): Here they may serve as lay teachers of religion instructing Catholic children attending public schools, the inmates of orphanages, poor houses, reform schools, etc., or they may form a Motor Corps, furnishing transportation for Sisters and children to and from the classes; or they may visit homes in order to enroll children for the catechism classes and to check on absentees; or they may establish and conduct religious discussion clubs for others.

2) By promoting the work of the *Propagation of the Faith*: Members of the Propagation of the Faith support by prayer and financial aid not only the foreign but also the domestic missions, especially the Negro and Indian Missions.

(2) Pius XI, To the Directors of Catholic Action of Rome, April 19, 1931.

(3) For information on Confraternity activities consult your diocesan director or write to the National Confraternity Center, 1312 Massachusetts Ave., N. W., Washington, D. C.

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3) By assisting the pastor with *Convert Work*⁽⁴⁾: By means of news items in the press, posters, mailed invitations, and personal telephone calls, young people can advertise the Inquiry Classes, Round Table Discussions, Convert Classes, Question Box, and missions for non-Catholics held in the parish. With the pastor's permission they can form a group whose task it will be to bring prospective converts to these classes. They can also establish the so-called Benson Clubs for converts received into the Church.

4) By encouraging the public to "listen in" on *Catholic radio programs*, and by exercising vigilance over radio programs with a view to correct anything that might be opposed to religion and morality.

5) By distributing *Catholic Literature*: Young people should strive to introduce Catholic papers, magazines, and books into the home, into the public library, and into public institutions. They should maintain a pamphlet rack in the church vestibule or in the assembly hall. They should leave Catholic literature in such places where it will likely be read, as for example: doctors' and dentists' offices, lounge rooms of hotels, bus stations, depots, street cars, busses, trains.

The apostolate of mercy and charity should, after the example of Our Lord, be combined whenever possible with the apostolate of truth. The Diocesan Office of Catholic Charities will gladly offer suggestions to the young people in this regard. There are always children who are in need of First Communion outfits, prayer books, rosaries, pencils,

⁽⁴⁾ Cf. John A. O'Brien, "The White Harvest" (a symposium), Longmans, Green & Co., New York City, \$2.25.

tooth brushes, hair cuts, etc. Clothing for the poor and the destitute will be accepted at all times. During the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons baskets for the poor and needy will always be welcomed by the Charities' office. Young people should also arrange entertainments for the shut-ins at home, for the inmates of hospitals, orphanages, old folks homes, etc. They should transport the sick and poor to Mass, devotions, lectures, shows and socials. They should visit the sick and send flowers to them. When there is a death in the family, they should send condolences, visit the bereaved family and lead the prayers for the departed soul, attend the funeral and have a Mass said for the deceased person. During all this time they should be Crusaders for Christ in society at large, bringing Christian principles and the social teachings of the Encyclicals to the attention of others.

"The true Christian," says Pius XI, "does not renounce the activities of this life, he does not stunt his natural faculties; but he develops and perfects them, by co-ordinating them with the supernatural. He thus ennobles what is merely natural in life and secures for it new strength in the material and temporal order, no less than in the spiritual and eternal"⁽⁵⁾. Among the activities which belong to this "full" life of man and which should develop simultaneously and harmoniously with the supernatural, are the following: A study of *philosophy*—an investigation of reality from the viewpoint of its ultimate causes; *parliamentary law*—a training in effective membership, fair and speedy conduct of business, and cooperation in group activities; *ora-*

⁽⁵⁾ "The Five Great Encyclicals" (Paulist edition, 1939), p. 66.

tory—the training in the power over the spoken word, in thoroughness of research, logical thinking and leadership; *debate*—training in the investigations of public questions, in public speaking, in cooperative thinking; *dramatics*—a means of entertainment and of developing the powers of speech; *elocution*—the interpretation of artistic selections; and finally training in *music appreciation* not only by an acquaintance with theoretical principles but by active membership in choral groups, orchestras and bands. This cultural development is further intensified by visits to places and entertainments of interest such as art centers, museums, libraries, symphonies, debates, operas, concerts, etc.

“Christian education,” says Pius XI, “takes in the whole aggregate of human life, physical and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic and social, not with a view of reducing it in any way, but in order to elevate, regulate and perfect it, in accordance with the example and teaching of Christ”⁽⁶⁾. And again: “It is no less necessary to direct and watch the education of the adolescent, ‘soft as wax to be molded into vice,’ in whatever other environment he may happen to be, removing occasions of evil and providing occasions for good in his recreations and social intercourse; for ‘evil communications corrupt good manner.’ More than ever nowadays an extended and careful vigilance is necessary, inasmuch as the dangers of moral and religious shipwreck are greater for inexperienced youth”⁽⁷⁾. Some of the social and recreational activities, which a Catholic Youth Organization may undertake and which will provide a wholesome en-

(6) o. c. p. 65.

(7) *ibid.* pp. 63-64.

vironment and furnish desirable contacts for the members, are the following: parties (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year); amateur nights; movie theatre party; roller skating and ice-skating parties; sleigh rides; dancing (where the bishop permits it); national folk dances; hikes, bicycling; camping; picnics; nature study. Games such as checkers, chess, cards, and dominoes, not only furnish a pleasant pastime but sharpen mental efforts and develop strategy and wit⁽⁸⁾.

An excellent method of filling time not occupied by organized activities are hobbies or hobby clubs⁽⁹⁾. A hobby is an object or activity which persistently absorbs one's attention and interest. A hobby develops skill, affords pastime, pleasure and sometimes even profit. We are all well acquainted with hobby collection—Madonna collections, stamp collections, old coin collections, autograph collections, zoological and botanical collections, etc. Interesting hobbies for boys are model airplanes, model boats, bird houses, carving, scroll saw work, etc. Girls, on the other hand, are fond of such hobbies as cooking, sewing, needlework, lace-making, beadwork and interior decorating.

The educational environment of the Church, according to Pius XI, includes recreation and physical culture: "The educational environment of the Church embraces the Sacraments, divinely efficacious means of grace, the sacred ritual, so wonderfully instructive, and the material fabric of her churches, whose liturgy and art have an immense

(8) Cf. "Handbook for Recreation Leaders" published by the Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.

(9) Cf. "Hobbies—A Bibliography" published by the United States Department of Education, Washington, D. C.

educational value; but it also includes the great number and variety of schools, associations and institutions of all kinds, established for the training of youth in Christian piety, together with literature and the sciences, not omitting recreation and physical culture"⁽¹⁰⁾. The inclusion of recreation and physical culture in a well-rounded program of Christian education is based on the conviction that the mind can develop its capabilities to the highest degree only in a healthy body. "A sound mind in a sound body" is a proverb well known to all of us. An athletic program also develops such natural virtues as altruism, loyalty, courage, self-control, co-operation and fair play. The most popular athletic sports are the following: golf, football, horse-shoe pitching, archery, tennis, table tennis, bowling, track, basketball, badminton, softball and baseball, volley ball, wrestling, dartball, swimming, roller skating and ice-skating parties.

Since the state was designed by Nature's Author to do for man what he cannot effectively do for himself, and since the authority wielded by the state comes from God, a well-grounded training in civics forms a necessary part of the young person's complete education. Young people should accustom themselves from the very beginning to vote intelligently on political candidates and political measures, and to pay the various taxes. They should be well acquainted with their city, state and national governments. They should read, study, and evaluate editorials in the newspapers and public addresses dealing with government. They should participate in the observance of Independence Day, Memorial Day, Washington's and Lincoln's birthdays, and

⁽¹⁰⁾ o. c. p. 59.

other civic holidays. They should visit museums and places of historic interest. They should invite army chaplains, representatives of the American Legion, legislators and other public officials to address their groups. Since they are not isolated individuals but social beings and members of Christ's mystic body, they should take an interest in the beautification of their city, in public recreational facilities, in local welfare organizations, and in low cost housing facilities.

4-H Clubs

The activities which we have just outlined may be roughly divided into two groups: the purely spiritual and supernatural, and the recreational and cultural activities which, however, can be harmoniously correlated with the former. The religious activities are adapted to both urban and rural youth. Those of the second group probably fit urban youth better than rural groups. However, an apposite and appropriate adaptation of these activities to boys and girls on the farms is being accomplished through the 4-H Clubs.

The 4-H Club is an organization of farm boys and girls fostered by the Extension Division of the United States Department of Agriculture. The Extension system aims at "extending" to boys and girls on farms the various findings and aids of the National Department of Agriculture and of the State Colleges of Agriculture. The national director of Extension works in close cooperation with the Secretary of Agriculture, while the state director of Extension is responsible to the dean or president of the Agricultural College. Both have at their disposal a staff of experts and specialists. Directly under the state director are a number of district

supervisors, each having under his charge 15 or 20 counties. The local Extension worker is the County Agent who assists with the formation of 4-H Clubs, formulates the program for the year, supplies the Federal and State bulletins, and has general supervision of club work in the county. Ranking in importance with the County Agent is the Home Demonstration Agent whose principal task is to give instruction to farm women and girls concerning home activities.

The purpose of a 4-H Club is to train farm boys and girls in the best methods of agriculture and home-making and to fashion them into types of worthy manhood and womanhood. The emblem of the 4-H Club is a four-leaf clover, with the letter H on each leaf, against a white background. White is a symbol of purity; green of youth, life and growth. The 4 H's stand for Head, Hands, Heart and Health. The 4-H club member pledges to train his head by learning new methods, his hands, by acquiring new skills, his heart, by learning to cooperate with others, his health, by learning to resist disease, work efficiently, and enjoy health.

The objectives of the 4-H Club, which are principally educational in nature, are the following⁽¹¹⁾:

1. To help rural boys and girls to develop desirable ideals and standards for farming, home-making, community life, and citizenship, and a sense of responsibility for their attainment.

2. To afford rural boys and girls technical instruction in farming and homemaking, that they may acquire skill and understanding in these fields

⁽¹¹⁾ Gertrude L. Warren, "Organization of 4-H Club Work, A Guide for Local Leaders", U. S. Department of Agriculture, October 1938, publ. No. 320, p. 2-3.

and a clearer vision of agriculture as a basic industry, and of homemaking as a worthy occupation.

3. To provide rural boys and girls an opportunity to "learn by doing" through conducting certain farm and home enterprises, and demonstrating to others what they have learned.

4. To teach rural boys and girls the value of research, and to develop in them a scientific attitude toward the problems of the farm and the home.

5. To train rural boys and girls in cooperative action to the end that they may increase their accomplishments and, through associated efforts, better assist in solving rural problems.

6. To develop in rural boys and girls habits of healthful living, to provide them with information and direction in the intelligent use of leisure, and to arouse in them worthy ambitions and a desire to continue to learn, in order that they may live fuller and richer lives.

7. To teach and to demonstrate to rural boys and girls methods designed to improve practices in agriculture and homemaking, to the end that farm incomes may be increased, standards of living improved, and the satisfaction of farm life enhanced⁽¹²⁾.

⁽¹²⁾ The above information has been derived principally from the 4-H Club bulletins released by the Extension Department of the Agriculture College, University of Minnesota. Cf. also Edgar Schmiedeler, "A Better Rural Life" (Wagner, \$2.75) p. 116 ff. "Some Suggestions for Catholic Leaders of 4-H Clubs" published by the Queen's Work, 3742 West Pine Blvd., St. Louis, Mo.; "4-H Club Leaders' Manual" published by the Agricultural Extension Division, University of Minnesota; Gertrude L. Warren, "Organization of 4-H Club Work, A Guide for Local Leaders" published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, publ. no. 320; "The National 4-H Club News" published bimonthly at 56 E. Congress St., Chicago, Ill.

The Pax Romana

The Pax Romana is the Secretariat of National Catholic University Students' Federations. Only national federations are admitted to full membership. The Pax Romana aims to unite among themselves all the University men and women of the Catholic world. It is not a super-federation, exercising a control over its affiliates, but a Secretariat employed by the different National federations to carry on their own work when it rises above local and national conditions. By employing a common secretariat the federations can maintain international contacts and in this way promote Catholic world solidarity. So far the Pax Romana has brought together approximately forty federations. The Pax Romana serves as a clearing house for the problems and methods of University Catholic Action all over the world. At the same time it strives to develop a spirit of mutual understanding, sympathy, brotherhood and peace among all the university federations of the Catholic world—in fact, among all nations⁽¹³⁾.

⁽¹³⁾ For further information write the "Pax Romana," Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.

Discussion Aids

1. What is the ultimate aim of Catholic Action?
2. Why is personal sanctification an essential prerequisite for Catholic Action?
3. In what ways may Catholic young people participate in the Apostolate of Catholic Truth?
4. In what ways may they exemplify the Apostolate of Christian Charity?
5. What is meant by the "cultural" activities? What is their value?

6. What is the purpose of the "social" activities?
7. What is a hobby? What is its value? Mention some well known hobbies.
8. What is the purpose of athletic activities?
9. Why should civic training be a part of one's education?
10. What are 4-H Clubs? What do the 4-H's symbolize?
11. What are the objectives of 4-H clubs?
12. What is the Pax Romana?

Religious Practices

1. I will sanctify myself before I attempt to sanctify others.
2. I will apply my mind to a study of the Church's teachings in order that I might be qualified to introduce the mind of the Church into the mind of the world.
3. I will practice the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

