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THE PROBLEM OF SECULARISM
IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

By

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TO MY MOTHER

whose vision and love for Christ
have made possible my education.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem

Even a cursory glance through the last twelve issues of "Christian Education", which covers the last three years, or the issues from the same period of time of "Religious Education" would awaken one to the fact that Christian educators are becoming increasingly aware of the influence that secular education has made upon their own schools or departments of religion. Although many schools and departments exist in the name of religion, few, if any, are doing a very thorough job of grounding their youth in a consistently Christian philosophy of life which permeates every realm of experience.

"If the 'higher education' ... has no more Christianity in it than the mere label, 'Christian', on an education which is just as secular without the label, we will be guilty of double talk when we seem to say that a mere label changes the substance of the thing to which it is externally attached." 1.

In a letter sent by an undergraduate of one of our great Eastern universities to the president of that institution, we have the recognition of this problem poignantly expressed. After a series of pertinent and searching questions, he makes the following charge:

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1. W.H. Greever: "Social Studies in Christian Higher Education", Christian Education, September 1945, p. 25.

"Personally, I fail to understand how you, or any other college president, can expect us to become ardent Christians and democrats when the vital postulates on which these faiths are supposed to rest are daily undermined in the classroom." 1.

The entire article is well worth reading, having been reprinted in "His" magazine and in special pamphlet form by Wheaton College.

The problem is, then, what has been and is being done by Christian educators to cope with the current of secularism found in philosophies and textbooks, so as to give their youth a secure, intellectual, Christian philosophy of life. The fact that this problem is being widely recognized was given added force when an article appearing in a small Ohio newspaper reported some of the statements of objectives of the newly inaugurated president of a local church related college.

"We will earnestly strive to instill within them the necessity for a Christian philosophy of life. . . . No conflict between sound scholarship and a healthy philosophy exists or need exist. Dr. Fox urged the faculty to be witnesses for Christ in the classroom, on the campus, in religious and student activities - in fact, in all associations." 2.

The town is middle-sized (25,000 population), the school comparatively small (450 enrollment), but here also this problem is being recognized and met.

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1. Anonymous (Introduction by Dorothy Thompson): Ladies' Home Journal, June, 1941.
2. Morning Republican, September 15, 1947, p.2.

B. Definition and Delimitation

Secularism will be used to mean the divorce of experience and knowledge from a theistic interpretation. The term secularism is being used rather than secularization, for it designates more than an event or process: it designates a faith, the faith that experience and truth are quite independent of God, that the acquiring of knowledge need not be related to theistic dogma.¹ However, not all who are under the influence of that faith are of that faith, even as not all who are under the influence of Christianity are Christians.

Christian education will be used to mean all attempts to Christianize education, to relate knowledge and experience to the Christian view.

"Education is growth in and through experience. Education becomes religious when it recognizes the controlling place of the Divine. Education becomes Christian when it recognizes the Divine as revealed in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."²

The common conception of religious or Christian education is training in religious matters. The broader meaning of the term will be employed throughout this thesis.

It is recognized that the scope will of necessity be large. Therefore the treatment will not be de-

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1. Cf. Frederick West: Christianity and Organized Education, p. 158.
2. The Religious Education Committee of the Old First Presbyterian Church.

tailed or minute, but will be more comprehensive, giving impressions and outlines. In presenting the attempts to meet the problem, there is no claim of being exhaustive, but the most dominant and representative Christian organizations have been chosen.

Various fields of learning will be referred to only as they give supporting evidence to the problem. Rather, attention will be drawn to the philosophy lying beneath the fields and forming the interpretative character of each.

This study could cover the years since Christ's birth. But our attention will be focused upon the problem chiefly as it has grown in the United States. Historical background will be examined in order to understand better the problem today, that is, by watching the problem as it germinated and came to fruition - even as we find it in education now.

C. Significance of the Problem

The very fact that so much is being written on the problem is one indication of its significance, not only in religious education, but in secular as well.

"Within secular education there is a growing note of fear that the liberal and humane arts are sliding downhill, fear that the purposelessness and uncertainty pervade its own ranks. There is suspicion about the validity of the secular program of education, with its denial of absolute spiritual

spiritual reality outside and beyond human wisdom." ¹

It is significant to the Christian educator because he alone stands to meet the problem. And according to the many voices we hear from Christian colleges and alumni, the attempts to meet the problem have not been adequate. It is significant to the human race of the Atomic age because the answer of how to control the newly acquired knowledge of atomic power has not come from its own ranks. It would seem that Materialism itself looks about for an answer to its own dilemma.² The Christian knows that only as man relates his knowledge to God does he maintain a true and balanced perspective to life.

"Only knowledge and understanding which is based on the Scriptures is true knowledge, and the only knowledge acceptable to the Christian."³

D. Procedure

The rise and growth of secularism in America will be treated from a historical point of view in the first chapter. The second chapter will be a statement of secularism as it exists in American educational institutions today. The third chapter will show its influence on Christian education and the various attempts that are being made to meet the problem.

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1. Sherman Barnes: "Can Secular Education Inspire the Veterans?" Christian Education, September, 1945.
2. Ibid.
3. Cornelius Jaarsma: Wheaton Alumni News, December, 1947.

CHAPTER I

EARLY AMERICAN LEARNING

CHAPTER I

EARLY AMERICAN LEARNING

A. Introduction

When our country was founded, it was by godly men who wanted their children to have a godly education.

"We err when we say that the pilgrims came to America seeking religious freedom. To a certain extent they enjoyed that liberty in Holland. It would be more accurate to say that they came to America seeking an opportunity to give to their children the kind of religious education that was impossible either in Holland or in England." 1.

Because of the meager financial status of the pilgrims and their early descendants, the first efforts at public education were small and labored. Subject matter consisted of only the essentials. Textbooks were few. Teachers were strict. But there was a wholesomeness and vigor of those early schools which cause us to look back upon them with great pride, if not certain wistfulness. Their graduates were the men of courage and vision who brought our nation into maturity and respect which have remained until these days. What then were the conditions which brought about the secularization of education which exists today?

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1. Clarence Benson: A History of Christian Education, p. 100.

B. The First Elementary Schools

The first schools in America were founded by the early colonists as soon as they had established themselves on the new continent, for they recognized the importance of education in the development of their children and resultantly of their country. But this education was backed by a strong Christian philosophy on the parts of parent and teacher alike.

"The colonists brought with them the conviction that religion was fundamental in education and that therefore education should be shaped and controlled by the church ... yet combined with a municipal responsibility. Also the great reformers themselves, especially Luther and Calvin, contended that, in order to make education universal, the state should at least establish, if not control the system." 1

1. Early Textbooks

The only books in America in those early years were those brought by the colonists from the homeland. Nearly all of these were religious in nature. In the majority of New England homes the Catechism, Psalter, Testament and Bible were the only books. In school the Hornbook was used for teaching the alphabet. In it were the Apostle's Creed and the Lord's Prayer. These were to be mastered to enable the student to read the Bible. Later the New England Primer superseded this. Herein lay the

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1. Charles C. Boyer: History of Education, p. 375.

the essentials: the alphabet, vowels and consonants, capitals and small letters, easy syllables for children, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, the Shorter Catechism, the account of the martyrdom of John Rogers and a dialogue between Christ, Youth and the Devil. Eighty-seven percent of this book was selected from the Bible.¹ Thus we see that the Bible itself was replaced with textbooks containing parts of and truths concerning the Bible. It is to be kept in mind that these were public, not private schools.

2. Educational Philosophy

The relationship between textbooks and philosophy is close in any instance, as close as the rain is to the flower.

"For decades the Bible, the Psalter, and the New England Primer were the only elementary school books in early New England. ...Regardless of archaic methods of instruction and Puritan propaganda, moral and religious values were fundamental both in intent and content of the educational program." ²

Philosophies were conceived not only through textbooks, but also through the home and the teacher, for in those days the home was the core of society. Early New England was intensely religious: the people believed that education was essential to religion and that religion (or God) was the end of man. Naturally, that

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1. Cf. Benson: op. cit., p. 107.

2. West: op. cit., p. 156.

education would be geared to Christian principles. A noteworthy example of this fact was the public school system of New York City.

"Up to 1775 the elementary schools of New York City were fostered by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel." 1

With the teaching of the Biblical concepts of the value of the individual, the responsibility of choice, the intrinsic worth of morals, and the aim and end of existence, there developed in each student a devotion to right, to justice, to freedom. It was in these days that security was found in spiritual rather than material things. It was upon these foundations that our nation was built and began to grow.

"The common schools of those days had a high religious and moral tone and turned out great men and women who made the nation great." 2

C. The First American Institutions of Higher Education

The following statement is pointed and implicatory:

"The oldest institutions of higher learning in America were founded primarily to train religious leaders." 3

As has already been noted, religion was considered the end

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1. Wm. B. Aspinwall: Outlines of the History of Education, p. 181.
2. W. S. Fleming: God in our Public Schools, p. 40.
3. West: op. cit., p. 157.

of man, and therefore was given the utmost respect. It was very natural that the colonists should want their most respected leaders to be well educated. And if these institutions of higher learning existed primarily for training Christians, it is only logical that the training be from a Christian point of view. But we need not depend upon logic. Just a look at two of our greatest universities at their birth will substantiate this conclusion. A New York paper ran this advertisement at the opening of King's College (now Columbia University):

"The chief thing that is arrived at in this college is to teach and to engage children to know God in Christ Jesus, to love and serve Him in all sobriety, godliness, and richness of life with a pure heart and willing mind, and to train them up in all virtuous habits and all such useful knowledge as may render them creditable to their families and friends, ornaments to their country, and useful to the public weal in our generation." ¹

A young minister, John Harvard, donated three hundred volumes from his own library to found the library of Harvard. ²

What was said of textbooks of the elementary school is true also of the college of these days: they were of Biblical content and intent, giving rise to a Christian philosophy which permeated their lives.

That American institutions of higher learning

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1. Benson: op. cit., p. 106.

2. Ibid.

began with theistic concepts is obvious. The way in which those concepts changed will later be studied.

D. Westward Development of Education

1. Elementary Education.

As America began to develop westward, the educational policy of the colonists was extended thither, still with just as strong conviction as it had started in the East, for the founders were new emigrants who likewise cherished and upheld their religious convictions.

"The middle colonies were settled by religious refugees from Holland, France, Scotland, Germany, etc. They brought with them strong denominational convictions... They held to the fundamental principles of the Reformation, namely, that the Bible should be the rule of faith and life, that it should therefore be read by everyone, and that it should be taught in elementary schools." ¹

a. Textbooks.

Even the textbooks were the same as those used in the earlier schools.

"The New England Primer was the book mainly used in those early schools... In 1770 Mr. Cameron said in the Illinois State Constitution Convention: 'Custom has generally established the Bible in our public schools.' Wherever the school went, the Bible went, essential in public education." ²

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1. Boyer: op. cit., p. 378.
2. Fleming: op. cit., p. 37.

b. Philosophy of education.

With the same textbooks and a new religious zeal, which was the normal reaction of the new emigrants, together with the policy adopted from New England of a combination state and church control of schools, the philosophy and general organization of the Middle West schools were a continuation of the policies of the East.

"Alike in Puritan New England, in orthodox Pennsylvania and Delaware, and in the churchly South, the provinces of religion and government, though not counted identical, continually overran each other." 1

2. Higher Education.

By the time higher education developed in the West, the concept of state schools had materialized, and there was a definite separation of church and state. However, religion still played a major role in the life of the college.

"Religion was also prominent in those days. The school of higher learning that shies at nothing but religion is a modern innovation... In the University of Virginia, the University of Michigan, and the University of Illinois, religion had prominent parts and attendance at daily chapel was compulsory." 2

Thus we see that in all phases of education in the formative period of our country, there was an undergirding of Christian principle and concept.

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1. Phillips Brooks: Essays and Addresses, p. 520.
2. Fleming: op. cit., p. 40.

E. Transitional Period

During the nineteenth century a great social change took place in America. Various factors in society had tremendous impact upon the educational policies of these schools. It is impossible to point to any one of these factors and say, "Here lies the root of the problem." Rather, all of them together affected the change which took place. This period of change has been called a new age: speaking economically, "The Age of Machinery", politically, "The Age of Democracy", or intellectually, "The Age of Free Thought".¹ Spiritually speaking, the title might be added, The Age of Faith in Reason. At least, there was a definite decline in interest in the historic faith.

1. Spiritual Aspect.

To be chronological in the presentation of these factors is impossible. It is like the age old problem of which comes first, the chicken or the egg. We start with religion because religion was nearly eclipsed in the later years of the period. The decline began before the opening of the nineteenth century. From the middle of the eighteenth century to 1830 there was "a

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1. Wm. Boyd: The History of Western Education, p. 349.

lessening of the religious interest, a decline of the influence of the clergy." 1

"These early systems of public or free schools were largely due to the religious devotion of the New England people and to the practical identity of the church and state. With the decline of religious fervor and of the unanimity of religious beliefs in the latter eighteenth century, interest in education also declined." 2

With the new emphasis on sectarianism 3 together with external factors, the school passed from the direct influence of the church to domination by the state.

"Between 1810 and 1830 a number of new forces - philanthropic, political, social, economic - combined to change the earlier attitude by producing conditions which made state, rather than church control and support of education both desirable and feasible." 4

The influx of new emigrants who came to this land of opportunity brought in new faiths and caused a shift in the religious emphasis of the school. A non-sectarian point of view must needs be adapted. 5

2. Economic Aspect.

The Industrial Revolution gathered our nation together into cities where many children were permitted to work long and strenuous hours to the neglect of their education. "The industrial Revolution temporarily

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1. W. W. Smith: Religious Education, p. 465.

2. Paul Monroe: A Brief Course in the History of Education, p. 591.

3. Cf. Boyer: op. cit., p. 375.

4. Ellwood P. Cubberley: History of Education, p. 658.

5. Cf. Benson: op. cit., p. 130.

crippled school interests." 1

Not only did this affect education temporarily, but a new emphasis in curriculum was foreshadowed. This did not happen immediately, but the result was inevitable.

"Until recently the training for citizenship that has always been assigned as a chief function of the state system of schools has been along political and social lines... now, because the wealth of the country depends upon industry, a new emphasis has been laid upon educating the individual to be an 'economically productive social unit.' " 2

We see then that the roots of vocationalism lay here. In Chapter Three the implications of vocationalism upon educational philosophy will be examined.

3. Political Aspect.

From the Biblical concept of the worth of the individual came the reaction against the massing of people which accompanied the Industrial Revolution. This took practical form in the application of democracy.

"The progress of industrialism has led to the broadening of the democratic ideal... Behind ...democracy is the consciousness of individual worth. The objection to the aristocratic method of government and to the capitalistic system of industry is that they tend to treat the great mass of men as mere means to social well-being. As against that, democracy insists that every person, besides being a means to the maintenance of society, is an end to himself." 3

The results were twofold: elementary schools for the

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1. Cubberley: op. cit., p. 730.
2. Paul Monroe: A Brief Course in the History of Education, p. 394.
3. Boyd: op. cit., p. 350.

whole community were established, and the age of general education was extended.

"The only condition on which a wide suffrage is conceivable is that the whole people must be sufficiently educated to vote intelligently." 1

This is recognized by Boyd to involve more than the three R's. Education in the realms of art, literature and religion is also essential.

"At this point the democratic movement in education receives reinforcement from the older educational tradition. With all its limitations that tradition has always been humanistic." 2

A more minor political aspect was the campaigning of party candidates, who pledged themselves against sectarian teaching in public schools (but compromised by recommending the use of the Bible in all schools).³ Such were the results, and this produced a conflict.

"We have then, for a century, been living under a government theoretically secular, and yet that government supported a public education in which religion was a recognized and enforced element." 4

4. Intellectual Aspect.

With the new emphasis upon industrial progress as a means of national prestige and growth, scientific study assumed a new importance.

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1. Ibid., p. 403.
2. Ibid., p. 403.
3. Benson: op. cit., p. 113.
4. Brooks: op. cit., p. 52.

"In the atmosphere of industrialism, the obvious utility of science and the apparent inutility of philosophy has helped to concentrate on practice rather than on theory in all spheres of life." 1

(Again there is a paving of the way to vocationalism.)

Science deals with facts, pure and objective. There was no room for mere speculation. This became more and more a part of thinking until science reigned as Queen of studies, philosophy and religion becoming incidental electives.

"Science had a small academic place when classical and Christian studies dominated American education. It became popular during the second quarter of the nineteenth century... During the next few decades many American students studied in Germany where natural sciences were advanced and the scientific method was used and abused in other specialized studies.

"... President Charles Eliot Harvard introduced the elective system at Harvard. This allowed full academic credit for the new social sciences... Overspecialization often gave students great scientific knowledge, but scanty religious and ethical information for other than a naturalistic view of life." 2

The new scientific era had some very grave effects upon religious studies, yes, upon the Bible itself. Darwin's theory was applied to the field of religion, stripping it of all supernatural causes, bringing it to the naturalistic level of all other knowledge.

"The full consequences of the Darwinian revolution for religious thought did not become evident in the first generation. Perhaps the severest of shocks

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1. Boyd: op. cit., p. 404.
2. West: op. cit., p. 159.

in the whole series of earthquakes which followed the volcanic upheaval of 1859 came when the genetic method began to be applied to the study of the Biblical documents and to the study of the general history of religion. Biblical criticism and comparative religion were not purely products of Darwinianism, ...but the triumph of the evolutionary idea gave these studies a new vogue and new significance. ...Religious thought is still grappling with the conflicts those studies initiated." 1

The most outstanding man in education at this time was Herbert Spencer who applied the scientific method to the field of education, giving a new impetus to all learning.

"The fundamental characteristic of the scientific tendency is revealed early in the treatise in his discussion of the importance of the selection of subjects of study as the vital theory in education." 2

There follows a discussion of the important subjects and those which should be optional. Thus this statement is in conclusion:

"Thus the natural sciences ...take precedence over the 'liberal' or 'cultural' subjects." 3

Here it is to be noted that the Bible was not being thrust out of education, but it was being crowded out and disqualified, being transplanted by the new naturalistic philosophy.

One must not get the impression, however, that

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1. Walter Marshall Horton: Theism and the Scientific Spirit, p. 131.
2. Monroe: op. cit., p. 355.
3. Monroe: op. cit., p. 357.

the new emphasis on the scientific process and the lessening influence of the Bible had yet revolutionized the schools in the sense of omitting moral quality as a chief aim. The influence of the German educator, Herbart, was beginning to be felt at the same time as Spencer's influence, and any conflict between the two were not yet realized.

"All that was most characteristic in Ziller was due to his intense conviction that - as Herbart himself had said - morality is the dominant end of education." 1

It was the impact of other factors which, taken together, overshadowed Herbart's aim and produced the educational system we have arrived at today.

The period of transition was a violent, rapidly changing complex time in which conflict claimed the keynote.

"Clashing of ideals, society and the individual, aristocracy and democracy, church and state, religion and science, nation and supernational, ... which made sect and party a normal feature of all phases of life in the nineteenth century, was nowhere more marked than in the sphere of education. [This is quite likely, for] the educational system of a country is always to some extent a microcosm of the larger social system, and conflicting views are quickly reproduced in it." 2

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1. Boyd: op. cit., p. 408.
2. Ibid.: p. 351.

E. Summary

American education was founded by Christians who desired that their leaders and children be given an education which was Christian. The Bible was the unifying core of the curriculum, giving a theistic interpretation to all learning. Just before and during the nineteenth century various social factors combined to shift the philosophy from a spiritual to a materialistic basis. Herein lie the roots of the present day prevailing philosophy of education.

CHAPTER II

MODERN AMERICAN LEARNING

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MODERN AMERICAN LEARNING

A. Introduction

It would be impossible in these few pages to follow through each step in the growth of the educational system of America, particularly as the social forces during the nineteenth century influenced educational principles. Therefore, the condition and role of education as it exists today will be examined, with the realization that all this came about gradually. Thus it shall be seen what the problem of secularism¹ is today, that the extent to which the church has been effective in meeting the problem may be measured.

B. Higher Education in America

In Chapter One elementary education was studied before higher education, because that was the way in which our educational institutions developed and the earlier

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1. Throughout this thesis the term "secular" is used in a wide rather than a narrow scope. Secular is usually placed in opposition to sacred. This is especially misleading when speaking of mathematics or other subject material which is objective. To repeat the definition in the Introduction: by secularism we mean the divorce of experience and knowledge from a theistic interpretation.

naturally affected the later. However, in looking at education today, higher education will be examined first, for it is here that the teachers of elementary education are trained, and it is here that the basic philosophy is propagated, namely, through these teachers and through textbooks written by those trained here.

In viewing education today Devan finds three basic factors in disagreement with early American education.

"Education has, I believe, committed three basic and tragic errors. First, it decreed the secularization of all knowledge, declaring Christianity irrelevant to scientific studies. Then it proceeded to separate these studies from one another."¹

Here he quotes Bishop Temple:

"A university is a place where a multitude of studies are conducted with no relationship between them except those of simultaneity and juxtaposition."²

Then Devan continues:

"Finally, after secularizing knowledge, and compartmentalizing studies, education has developed a tendency to assert that each of these compartments offers mankind the key to living."³

The first error has come about through the medium of textbooks, the second is realized through the study of the curriculum, and the third falls into the category of philosophy.

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1. C. Devan: Christian Education, June 1945, p. 234.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, p. 235.

1. Textbooks

R. W. Sellers, a teacher in the University of Chicago for many years, says in his book, *The Next Step in Religion*, that the motto of the humanists' religion is "What hath man not wrought?" ¹ This is the tone of the textbooks used in educational institutions today. America is so proud of what she has done (and she has a right to be) that she deems herself limitless (but she is not). Anyone living during the twentieth century can clearly see that more material progress has been made through science than in any other era.

"... the nineteenth century ideal of the importance of education has been replaced with the new American ideal of progress through material aggrandizement." ²

And material aggrandizement is in the hands of the human being; it is purely of human effort. Rarely can one find any positive mention of God in an American textbook. He is not needed for the task which confronts the student of today, the task being material progress. He (God) is spirit, and what can spirit do to that end? Thus our students learn to think in terms of human accomplishment and learn to think in relation to no God.

"One of the most serious signs during these last few years in our country in the matter of irreligion is that in almost all the literature which is now

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1. R. W. Sellers: *The Next Step in Religion*, p. 217.
2. Phillip Wylie: "What is your Education Worth?" *Readers' Digest*, June 1, 1947, p. 24.

being produced relating to the plan and programs of education in the postwar days, naturalism, which is the same as antisupernaturalism, is not only assumed, but insisted upon." 1

2. Curriculum

"The obvious and immediate cause of academic decay is the elastic, haphazard curriculum, and the haphazard curriculum is in turn the result of an absence of philosophical control due to confusion concerning the chief aim of education." 2

With the prevalence of the educational philosophy of John Dewey the aim of education has become quite secondary to the method. The teacher learns that he is to teach the child, not the material or content; yet to what end he is to teach the child he knows not. He teaches from the limited perspective of the immediate future, thus having aims, rather than an aim.

"The schools of education have long discussed the aims of education, and ... they generally speak of aims in the plural rather than of the aim of education." 3

This has resulted in teaching from life situations (that is, situations in which the student would find himself in normal society). The immediate life situation which will confront the student as a graduate is the task of finding his vocation, of earning a living. And also, the ideal of America, material progress, further emphasizes the importance of learning to equip oneself for a vocation. Thus the tendency today is toward vocationalism.

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1. Wilbur Smith: Therefore Stand, p. 92.
2. G. H. Clark: A Christian Philosophy of Education, p. 138.
3. Ibid.: p. 16.

What does vocationalism have to do with the type of education the student receives? Namely this; he is educated to perform a function without regard to the individual himself.

"In professional schools and institutions of higher learning... many teachers are chosen only because they are regarded as specialists by other specialists without respect for greatness of character, perspective, or a sense of mission in teaching." 1

It is precisely this lack of perspective which characterizes our student today. Again we turn to the scathing but uncomfortably true comments of Phillip Wylie.

"After 50 years of free, compulsory education, the common denominator of communication in America is the soap opera... The nineteenth century school at least aimed at implanting such qualities, in an age when their value was clear and their acquisition generally regarded as desirable... All we have left of that ideal is material progress. We are a nation of children who refuse to grow up." 2

The materialistic attitude toward the function of education has already been noted. The problem here is that a materialistic philosophy is inadequate to meet the needs of the whole individual. The student has no driving force other than the accumulation of wealth and the self centered enjoyment of all the temporary joys and prestige that wealth can bring. But underneath, possibly in the subconscious, often on the surface, is a sense of purposelessness.

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1. Frederick West: Christianity and Organized Education, Inter-Seminary Series, Vol. II, p. p. 174.
2. Wylie: op. cit., p.24.

For evidence that this view is widespread, observe the numerous schools which have sprung up purely for the purpose of training the individual's mechanistic capacities.

"Very recently [1910!] the political and economic phases of the Sociological tendency have been dominantly industrial... Now commercial and industrial schools of every kind have sprung into existence." ¹

That was in 1911, but in 1947 the contrast is even more striking. Blakeman points out

"... the distance we have traveled from the early Puritan Harvard or the Calvinistic Princeton to the vocational Carnegie Tech or from the classical college of New England to the State Agricultural college of the West." ²

The influence of industrialism on the curriculum has changed the emphasis of even the liberal arts colleges. For those schools which still claim to be liberal arts schools, it would be difficult to determine what their criterion is for the inclusion of specific courses. Clark gives a good argument for the inclusion of chess in the curriculum, as it now seems to be determined.

"When a college has no aim, chess has as good a claim to be included in the curriculum as some of the subjects now found there. Chess has a better claim. If difficulty is the criterion by which possible courses of instruction are appraised, chess has few equals. If the choice is made on the basis of exercising the intellect and powers

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1. Smith: op. cit., p. 467.
2. Blakeman: Religion at College Level, Religious Education, April 1947, p. 98.

of analysis, no college could omit it. If too one wished to develop the strategic ability of future army officers, chess has a claim centuries old. Or if civilian satisfaction in later life be the criterion, it has at least a plausible case. On what basis then are courses included?" 1

The illustration is possibly a bit extreme, but it does serve to point out the heterogenous nature of the curriculum.

3. Philosophy.

Both textbook and curriculum are the outgrowth of the basic philosophy which undergirds the school. One of the most indicative observations of the sense of purposelessness among students was made by a professor of education in an American university which claims to be the largest in the world. This professor

"... subdued to silence a meeting of students with the remark that the commonest occasions of death among students are suicide and motoring accidents at high speed. She then added that these two causes are more closely related than a would-be wit might point out; they have their common origin in a desire to escape life. In the one case it is by a deliberate effort to give up physical life. In the second it is born of an unconscious urge to flee from the boredom of an everyday existence made up of lectures, libraries, and laboratory work into the fascinating but unreal world of speed for its own sake." 2

From whence comes this sense of purposelessness?

In the study of the transitional period of

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1. Clark: op. cit., p. 133.
2. Arnold S. Nash: The University and the Modern World, p. 3.

the middle of the nineteenth century, one of the major factors was the impact that Darwin's theory of evolution had upon the world. That impact was great, but its ultimate logic was not realized in Darwin's time. It has not been until now that the dire consequences of the adoption of such a philosophy of existence has been realized in its fullest extent. The end results were clearly seen by the pessimistic realist, H. G. Wells, in 1920. He said, regarding the impact on the world of the Origin of the Species,

"This new controversy touched everybody... A real demoralization ensued... There was a real loss of faith after 1859... Prevalent peoples at the close of the nineteenth century believed they prevailed by virtue of the struggle for existence in which the strong and cunning get the better of the weak and confiding. And they believed further that they had to be strong, energetic, ruthless, 'practical', egotistical, because God was dead." 1

That this conception that God was dead prevailed in the thought life of Western civilization is testified to by an ardent Darwinian, E. W. Barnes of England.

"Until half a century ago the mass of men believed that the earth is the Lord's. They lived in the conviction that human affairs were ultimately controlled by Him. They knew Him to be both all-wise and all-loving. That belief has largely vanished. ... The decay is a result - in my opinion an unfortunate and unnecessary result - of Darwin's teaching... The actual, if not avowed attitude of probably a large majority of men and women throughout Europe is that Evolution has banished God." 2

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1. T. Christie Innes: Darwinism: Faith or Science, p. 15.
2. Ibid.: p. 17.

Barnes insists that this mass unbelief is an unnecessary result of Darwin's thesis, but look at the results it had upon Darwin himself.

"Every sincere student must be appalled at the horrible changes that slowly but completely overtook Darwin. This is surely one of the most momentous and tragic cases of devolution of character. Can anyone conscientiously believe that the theory which destroyed a religious faith that once 'charmed and convinced' and destroyed too 'the higher aesthetic tastes' of its very maker can be true, liberating, or uplifting?" 1

Is it any wonder then that the most common causes for death among college students is suicide and speeding? Natural Selection would approve of such means of ridding the world of its weak characters - weak because the very philosophy which Natural Selection breeds had made those faithless individuals weak.

And yet our world looks upon science as the answer to its multitudinous perplexities. In fact, it excludes all other answers.

"The scientific method and the rational control of applied science are regarded as the only instruments adequate to serve disinterestedly the common salvation of all." 2

Until quite recently this faith in science and the view of salvation as material prosperity and ease has been held blindly. But even those who had every material blessing were yet possessed by a sense of

1. Ibid.: p. 10.
2. West: op. cit.: p. 159.

purposelessness.

In the light of the above study, a statement by the Administrator of Religion in colleges and universities, E. W. Blakeman, appeared positively naive in its trust of the modern university.

"A steady stream of selected young minds has been flowing into these universities, and a vitalizing strength of informed purpose, dedicated to truth, has been going from them through the years. Here is academic religion at its apex of service to American life."¹

Can there be any religion with God "dead"? The wearing of rose colored spectacles is not peculiar to the non-Christian. If dedication to truth (not Truth) is the apex of any kind of religion, then that religion has indeed sunk to the same level as the philosophy of naturalism, which recognizes no Person as the motivator and end of life.

C. Elementary and Secondary Education.

It is from universities and colleges that the teachers of elementary and secondary schools are selected. Textbooks are written by those educated at the university, and curriculum is planned and evaluated in education classes in institutions of higher learning. Thus it can be deduced that the same general philosophy (or lack of philosophy) which pervades in higher education also

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1. Blakeman: op. cit., p. 62. (Underlining added)

pervades in our public schools.

This same lack of a positive mention of God is in our public schools.

"In the readers of our grandmothers' time, God and Jesus Christ were mentioned. Today no such references can be found in the books of the public schools. The public schools... are now completely secularized... In Illinois, ... it is illegal to read the Bible in public schools. Books attacking Christianity are not illegal." 1

This very attack upon Christianity seems to be one of the major unifying principles of the modern educational system, for one can point to no other one philosophy as typically belonging to the American university.

C. S. Lewis in *The Abolition of Man* selected a statement from an English textbook of an elementary school boy, and from the analysis of the implications of that statement pointed the means by which the child becomes unconsciously indoctrinated with anti-theistic philosophy.

"It is not a theory they put into his mind, but an assumption, which ten years hence, its origin forgotten and its presence unconscious, will condition him to take one side in a controversy which he never recognized as a controversy at all. The authors themselves, I suspect, hardly know what they are doing to the boy, and he cannot know what is being done to him.

"Another little portion of the human heritage has been quietly taken from them before they were old enough to understand." 2

The case which Lewis presents here is most indicative of the means in which philosophy is taught to children.

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1. Clark: op. cit., p. 75.
2. C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, p. 3.

There is comparatively little which actually tears down Christianity down openly, but the world view of writers of the books is subtly woven into the material presented, so the child himself doesn't realize what is being accomplished.

That the condition of our public schools today is important cannot be disputed, for "...three fourths of the students in public schools never enter institutions of advanced learning." ¹

D. Summary.

Higher education in America is characterized most cogently by expediency, resulting in vocationalism and lack of perspective due to the fact that there is no prevailing philosophy such as that of the schools of the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth centuries. Three processes have been at work in our educational system which have changed its basic character: these three are secularization, compartmentalization, and vocationalism.

The analysis of educational life today has been made always with the cognizance that there are exceptions. Broad statements concern the whole, not any one school.

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1. West: op. cit., p. 175.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH AND THE PROBLEM OF SECULARISM

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A. Introduction

The vast number of youth groups which we encounter today are a phenomenon of the twentieth century. Paul of Tarsus never wrote to the Christian Endeavor of Ephesus; Augustine never organized an evangelical youth movement; the Roman Catholic Church had no special literature or brotherhood for work with youth and children; nor did the Reformation produce any selected, spiritual groups of young adults. Yet today a church bulletin without the usual announcements of the various youth activities would seem strange to our eyes.

The reasons for the emphasis on youth are manifold, and no specific list of these reasons would be accurate. However, some of our social conditions today throw light on the situation. We live in an highly organized era when machines, minerals, and men are specialized and segregated. Our church pattern has had to follow suit, or set up new standards and methods which would hardly be practical.

But there is another reason why the church has had to organize its youth: the position and function of the home has changed, has diminished, until the task

formerly considered that of the parent has had to be shouldered by institutions outside the home.

"Even the home, which is regarded as the world's greatest university, has ceased to function. Before the days of automobiles, movies and other attractions, people spent more time in the family circle, and there was larger opportunity for character building. Important as is the instruction by parents, the home today has the child fewer hours than formerly. Industrial life, which occupies so much of the time and thought of the American people, also robs the children of much of the home association necessary for religious culture. The most lamentable of all is the fact that the best of parents, even if so inclined, are often not well fitted to give religious instruction." ¹

In the last chapter it was noted how religious instruction and even influence has been largely eliminated from the American school. If then the children and youth do not get and Christian impetus or instruction from the home or school, it must be supplied from the church, often from the church alone. This, then, is the answer as to the reason for organized Christian youth and children's groups. They arose to combat the problem of secularism.

It will be the purpose of this chapter to examine the existing organizations dedicated to the task of giving the coming generation a Christian training, some organizations functioning only in the field of religion, others in all fields of education, all in opposition to secularism.

1. Benson: op. cit., p. 262.

The organizations to be examined are divided into two groups, those which work with students in elementary and secondary schools, and those which work with students in higher education. These organizations are the Sunday School, Daily Vacation Bible School, young people's groups, student work on college and university campuses, departments and courses in religion, the church related colleges, and the independent, interdenominational Christian institutions. This group is not presented as being exhaustive of the forces which have resisted secularism, but is believed to be representative.

B. The Work of the Church with Elementary and Secondary
School Students

1. The Sunday School.

a. Origin and development in England.

No one knows just when or where the very first Sunday School came into being.

"Many claimants for the first Sunday School organization are to be found. Sunday Schools were organized in this country as early as the year 1659, in Europe, much earlier." ¹

However, Sunday School is usually traced back only as far as England, for it was here that it was first organized to any extent.

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1. Smith, W. W. op. cit., p. 470.

The reasons for the rise of the Sunday School movement, as we now understand it, were two-fold; first was the abolition of the educational institutions of the past (monasteries and other religious bodies), and second, the breaking up of the parochial system of Protestantism. These two collapses left the children neglected entirely, in respect to education - even the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic. This was the condition in England when a young minister, Robert Raikes of Gloucester, discovered the children of the families were factory workers roaming the streets aimlessly in the hours when others were at church. He did something about it. With four women teachers he brought these street children in to the church for a day of general and religious instruction. Three years later in 1783 he began to agitate for schools such as he had started to be founded by the church. These schools, in turn, gave birth to the modern English elementary school system.¹ The rest of the movement in England is not pertinent here, for the Sunday School in America took on a different character.

b. The Sunday School in America.

When the Pilgrims came to America, they brought with them the conception of public schools. When the Sunday School movement reached America, the Puritans

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1. Cf. Smith: op. cit., pp. 470, 471.

rejected the idea of having the whole of Sunday a day of instruction which included non-religious subjects, on the principle that it was breaking the fourth Commandment. Consequently, the Sunday School in America became two or three hours of religious instruction.¹

The first Sunday Schools in America were begun in the early part of the nineteenth century.

"Asa Eaton began a Sunday School, at Christ Church, Boston, in the summer of 1815, which was the first of the existing schools in New England." ²

In 1815 St. George's and Christ's Church of New York City started Sunday Schools, and history then moved rapidly. By 1824 the American Sunday School Union was organized and the work spread very rapidly, probably because the church had been so low spiritually. The United States needed the evangelistic emphasis which the Sunday School movement had.

"At the close of the first decade of the Union's existence there were fifty thousand pupils, five thousand teachers, twenty eight book stores of the Union situated in nineteen different dioceses, and yet prior to this had been the darkest era of the church. Still the system was nothing more than catechizing, and the chief power of the Sunday School lay in the personal relationship of the teacher to the pupils, and the enthusiasm which the school aroused." ³

During the Civil War the church and education were at a veritable standstill. But in 1870 there was a

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1. Cubberley; op. cit., p. 559.
2. Smith; op. cit., p. 475.
3. Ibid.: p. 479.

renewal of Sunday School interest. The American Sunday School Church Institute was founded, which gave birth to the Interdenominational Uniform Series. Yet the Sunday School was lagging behind the public school in methods.¹ (Pestolatzki's principles were being adapted in the United States.) Thus came a flood of teacher training schools and materials.

Much of this awakening and vitalizing of the Sunday School was the result of the new vision of the capacity of Christian education as proclaimed in Horace Bushnell's thesis, *Growth by Nurture*, published in 1846. The most complete fulfillment of his thesis is found today in the International Council of Religious Education. Two organizations merged in 1922 to form this interdenominational source and promotion council. The main emphasis of Bushnell and the I.C.R.E. is evangelization by education, rather than expecting immediate results in children as was true just previous to Bushnell.²

c. Results of the Sunday School.

1) Earlier results.

The evangelical nature of the Sunday School movement in its early years was due to the church being dormant at that time. It served a great purpose, not only

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1. Ibid.: p. 485.

2. Wm. Smith: op. cit., p. 488.

among children, but with adults also. The church of the next generation was far stronger because of it.

"A minister - well qualified to speak from his records, gave as his opinion that eight tenths of the Churches in the valley of the Mississippi, organized in the previous fifteen years, had grown out of the Sunday Schools.

"Even when a church was not founded as the result of a Sunday School, children were brought under Christian instruction and entire neighborhoods led to religious belief and practices." 1

Thus the Sunday School was missionary in character.

2) Later results.

As the church awoke to its missionary responsibility, the Sunday School shifted its emphasis to the nurture of the child. This was especially necessary when the Bible was eliminated from the school curriculum in the middle of the nineteenth century.² The trend to concentrate religious instruction in the Sunday School has increased even to the present time. This fact was sharply brought out by a student who came from Hungary to study in the Moody Bible Institute. She was amazed to find that we who foster so much educational work among children of other lands should neglect our own.

"In our schools in Hungary, religious instruction is a daily matter. It is taught as frequently as geography and arithmetic, and no pupil is released from classes in which it is taught." 3

The educators of this country would defend

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1. Benson: op. cit., p. 161.

2. Ibid.: p. 184.

3. Ibid.: p. 262

themselves by saying that they want to leave our children free from indoctrination and sectarian emphasis. But is it possible to give a child ability to judge by leaving one half of the picture blank?

"... in our fear of indoctrination, we have practiced a worse indoctrination: by our silence in secular education, we have indoctrinated children to believe that God does not exist and that Jesus Christ does not matter... The debacle has come so slowly that most people do not realize its iconoclastic import." ¹

Here we are beginning to arrive at the heart of the problem. In the six other days of the week a child learns to think and act entirely apart from any relationship to God. On Sunday in one hour or less, we expect to give him an inoculation of religion enough to outbalance his weekly habits. Buttrick continues:

"Sunday Schools confront a seemingly impossible task. They must offset in one hour the indoctrinating silence of thirty hours of weekday school. They must grapple with the more-than-thirty hours of practical ungodliness in the home.

"The Church must take its educational task with far greater urgency." ²

This acknowledgement was made in 1947. It is encouraging to note that the church is beginning to become aware of its failure to meet the problem of secularism through the Sunday School alone. In 1942 a book was published which met the problem in much the same vein that Buttrick did.

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1. Geo. A. Buttrick: "Our Pagan Public Schools", Christian Herald, 1947.
2. Ibid.
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That book is God in Our Public Schools. Says Fleming:

"... what psychological, what pedagogical folly to feed the poison of secularism, practical atheism, in the schools and expect the antidote to be applied in home and church!" 1

The conclusions reached by Benson (in 1943) point to the next organization, which shall be briefly treated, the Daily Vacation Bible School.

"In most Sunday Schools the session covers a single hour out of 168 hours of the week. When 'opening exercises' instead of worship services occupy the first part of the hour, the actual class study constitutes the effective period of instruction. The time consumed in getting ready to teach, in attention to records of attendance, and other fussy occupations, further reduces the actual period of instruction." 2

Benson then quotes Donald R. Gorham.

"To call the teaching content of the modicum of minutes that remain a sufficient supply of Christian education for the ordinary normal boy or girl is a ludicrous miscarriage of common sense." 3

It was the recognition of this lack of time for Christian instruction that gave rise to vacation Church Schools.

2. Daily Vacation Bible School

There is record of a vacation Church School in 1894 in Hopedale, Michigan, but not until a New York minister took advantage of summer days, empty churches, and college students on vacation did the idea become widespread.

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1. W.S. Fleming: God in Our Public Schools, p. 77.

2. Benson: op. cit., p. 263.

3. Ibid.

That minister was Br. Boville, minister at the Baptist City Mission Society on the East side of New York. In 1905 Dr. Boville started his school of worship, work, and play under the leadership of trained teachers.¹ By 1923 this work had become world wide, recognized through an auxiliary of the International Council of Religious Education.

The advantages of the Vacation Church School are many: a concentrated period of time, teachers better than the average Sunday School teacher, children reached who have not been in any Sunday School (it is estimated that one fourth of the pupils are not reached otherwise),² and a more varied program, permitting Christian principles to be put into action.

"Two weeks of intensive work in Vacation Church School is accomplishing as much as the entire year in the Sunday School."³

However, the same problem confronts one here as in viewing the effectiveness of the Sunday School. How can there be enough taught in two weeks to offset the nine months of secular school work? Further, does this not separate in the mind of the child that which is "sacred" and that which is "secular"? The aim of the Christian educator is to make all of life "sacred" or Christian.

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1. Paul Vieth: The Church and Christian Education, p. 37.
2. Benson: op. cit., 264.
3. Ibid.: p. 268.

"Valuable as is the Daily Vacation Church School, it cannot measure up to the larger possibilities of the Week Day Church School." ¹

3. Week Day Church School

The Week Day Church School is more closely akin to the Sunday School than the Daily Vacation Bible School, for it provides year round instruction.

Starting in Gary, Indiana, in 1914, in three decades there were 38 states in which such schools existed. The schools consist of one or two hours a week of additional religious instruction during school hours, that time being released (Released Time is the term used in some localities) for the student to go to his own church for instruction.² This provides for differences in faiths and denominations, and also keeps within the law of the country to have state and church separate.

Two opposing views on the part of religious educators are current. Fleming, who is concerned in getting the Bible back into the class room, insists that Released Time will help keep the Bible out of the class room, confined to the church. He says that this means reaches only those who are already reached, and that is not enough.

"The position of the Released-timers is less defensible than that of parochial school promoters. Both say the public school is 'godless'. The latter

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1. Ibid.: p. 279.

2. Fleming: op. cit., p. 80.

try to get their children out of the poisonous atmosphere. The former are willing for the poison to work on all the children twenty-nine hours a week if they can apply the antidote to a few of them one hour a week." 1

On the other hand, Paul Vieth sees some definite possibilities in the Released Time plan.

"Through the years there has been a gradual, but sure elimination of the religious element... In our day there is a marked desire on the part of many, both schoolmen and churchmen, to re-examine this trend toward secularization and its evident results." 2

Here he points out the fact which we have already recognized, that neutrality is impossible, for if God is not mentioned, then one takes it for granted that there is no God, or if there is one, He does not matter much. Vieth proposes that we teach religious history and morals as a part of public education, merely bringing the existence and influence of religion to the attention of the pupils. It will be an objective study within other subjects. Then the purpose of Released Time would be to bring about decision for the faith, according to the church which the child attends, 3

The plan sounds quite workable and sound. However, the action of the Supreme Court within the last two days might easily lead to the death of the mention of God and to the canceling of Released Time.

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1. Benson: op. cit., p. 85.
2. Vieth: op. cit., p. 249.
3. Ibid.: p. 250.

"An 8-to-1 decision upheld the complaint of a mother in Champaign, Ill., an avowed atheist, who said that her son had been "embarrassed" by being the only child in his room not attending religious classes under a local plan." 1

This plan involved the use of school buildings, but with the statement from the Supreme Court as to the complete separation of church and state, it could be interpreted to include the use of school time. At least the vice president of the Public Education Association expressed his views in that manner. "The released-time program as now carried on is definitely affected by this decision." 2

How appropriate here is the comment by Clarence Benson:

"The Bible is recognized in the courtroom, but not in the classroom! ... is provided for the insane and criminals, but not for the ignorant and children." 3

It is recognized as corrective, but not as preventative.

4. Parochial and Nondenominational Christian Schools.

In light of the increasing secularizing of the public school, there is a growing concern and interest of Christian educators and parents in parochial and independent Christian schools. In a recent issue of Christian Life and Times the many schools which have developed in the twentieth century were featured. It is important to note that the emphasis was not on Christian fellowship alone, but

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1. New York Times: March 9, 1948, p. 1.
2. Ibid: March 10, 1948, p. 1.
3. Benson: op. cit., p. 271.

also on Christian scholarship.¹ If these schools exist for the purpose of atmosphere, there is little reason for mentioning them as to their role in combating secularism, for atmosphere is a nebulous thing and will not serve the purpose of preparing the student to take his place in a secular society after school days. But if these schools are really grounding the student intellectually to meet the problems of the world from a thoroughly Christian point of view, then there is every reason to be actively interested in them.

Dr. Cornelius Jaarsma, author of one of the few textbooks in education written from the Christian point of view, left his position on the faculty of a Christian college in order to devote his full time to promoting and making solid the foundations of Christian elementary and secondary schools, so important does he deem the role of the school in the early years of a child's life.

"... religion, according to Bavinck, is potentially present in every individual. It is not a product of ignorance or poverty. Early education determines the direction these tendencies are going to take." ²

The advantage of the parochial school is that all subjects can be taught from a Biblical point of view;

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1. Cf. Christian Life and Times. August, 1947.
2. Cornelius Jaarsma: The Educational Philosophy of Herman Bavinck, p. 158.

that is, history can be taught from a theistic perspective, in light of God's eternal purpose for mankind and this world, and mathematics can be understood as a discovery of God's perfect order. When religious instruction and education are thus made one, the result is a true Christian education.

"The weekday school does not offer a complete answer to this problem, because... it can make no provision for the utilization of the spiritual and religious values in all the school subjects, which, as we shall see, are the chief vehicles for an understanding of religion as it may be taught in the public schools." ¹

The disadvantages are three fold. One, there are no textbooks for Christian instruction. The existing textbooks would have to be reinterpreted by the teacher. Two, few teachers have been trained to teach from the Christian point of view, because few fields have been rethought in the theistic framework. Three, if an individual is trained from early years to think in the framework of Christianity, unless he has been educated as to how the world is currently interpreting the same facts he has, he might find the impact of this other view overwhelming, and be at a loss in knowing how to cope with it.

"The tragedy in our education today is that in too many Christian schools the pupils are preserved from the shattering impact of what non-Christians are thinking and are, therefore, frequently unable to meet the problems of thought of which they have

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1. Vieth: op. cit., p. 252.

never heard until they are back in the world and their education is over." 1

The fact that these disadvantages are being recognized is encouraging, for with the recognition will come the attempt to meet the problems.

5. Young People's Societies.

In 1882 the need for an expressional meeting for young people was met by Francis E. Clark in his launching of the Christian Endeavor Society in Portland, Maine. This was for the purpose of providing the age group which had grown "too old" for Sunday School with a program of their own of worship, instruction, and above all, expression. The idea grew by leaps and bounds and soon denominations were organizing other similar youth groups, such as the Westminster Fellowship of the Presbyterian Church.

That expressional youth groups have been effective is proved by the fact that "many Christians today can trace their interest in the Church back to the time when they first became active in the youth movement."2 The major difficulty of this group not being related to the rest of the church program has been recognized and is still being dealt with in many of the churches. The youth

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1. D.G. Barnhouse: "Education", Revelation, Jan., 1948, p. 2.
2. Vieth: op. cit., p. 32.

group is being included in the planning for the total Church-school program. ¹

As to the extent to which this group meets the problem of secularism, we know very little, for it does not have a national character. Further, since it is an expressional means, there is little positive teaching which would meet the intellectual difficulties of the group. It is emphasized that a keen minded director is absolutely essential for any progress in thought to be made. ² Therefore, the effectiveness of the youth group as a stabilizer in the midst of a secular world is comparable to that of the Sunday School; it reaches a few to a certain point, but that is not enough.

C. The Work of the Church with Students in Higher Education

1. Student Work on Non-Christian Campuses.

"The intellectual atmosphere of our time, however, has created a tremendous presupposition against Christianity, considered now as a body of belief, being true. We have witnessed the birth of a new infallibility, the infallibility of human judgment - if, indeed, it is 'new'." ³

Since the birth of this new infallibility, there has been the birth also of organizations which have tried to counteract the "atmosphere" on the college campus. The most

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1. Benson: op. cit., p. 285.

2. H. Stock: Church Work with Young People, p. 52.

3. Edwin Lewis: A Philosophy of the Christian Revelation, p. 131.

outstanding of these are the Young Men's Christian Association (and its sister organization for women), the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, and various denominational centers, such as the Westminster Foundation.

a. The Young Men's Christian Fellowship.

The history of the Y. M. C. A. goes back to the middle of the nineteenth century in England. It was one of a flood of great social and philanthropic movements which came in the wake of the eighteenth century revival.¹ The main emphasis of the Y. M. C. A. was at first evangelism of young men and boys on campuses. In this connection the printed lectures of C. G. Finney contributed greatly to the early evangelical zeal and methods of the organization.²

However, it was soon recognized that the work would be greatly improved if it met the spiritual, intellectual and social needs alike. D. L. Moody, holding the Secretaryship in the Chicago area, did extensive work in raising funds to build centers for this three fold work to be carried on, for in this manner the unchurched men and boys were reached.³

The general character of the work remained the same through the first world war, enabling two university men to write:

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1. Two University Men: Modern Evangelistic Movements, p. 120.
2. Ibid.: p. 123.
3. Ibid.: p. 136.

"In 1924 as in 1844 it regards the winning of young men and boys for the Lord Jesus Christ as its primary work." 1

To the observer today, there is a striking contrast in that statement and the condition of the organizational work in 1944 - or 1948. If the former primary aim was "to relate religion to the everyday life of men and boys and to the problems of the day," that aim has been relegated to a lesser place. With that aim the organization no doubt made a great contribution to meeting the problem of secularism on the campus, but the situation today is different. The organization has succumbed to its opponent.

"The way in which we have sold our birthright is by secularizing, in order to achieve 'success' or win members. The steady secularization of the Y.M.C.A. is a case in point, long noted by all observers, though we are now fortunate in that we have a group of national leaders in the movement who are seeking to reverse the process." 2

In recent years, therefore, the Y.M.C.A. has been of little help in meeting the philosophical and spiritual needs of students.

b. The Student Christian Movement.

The Student Christian Movement is the over all organization which includes denominational student groups, the Y.M. and Y.W.C.A. and other religious bodies.

In the early years of this organization, like those of the Y.M.C.A., the evangelistic motive was

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1. Ibid.: p. 126.
2. Elton Trueblood: Alternative to Futility, p. 85

central in emphasis. ¹ In this emphasis the individual was dealt with primarily. In 1904 the approach was changed to appeal more to a group, for "an individualistic gospel is not likely to touch students widely." ² Hence, the student was dealt with first in respect to the needs of the world, then with his own incapacities. This was the fruit of the Social Gospel which was so popular between the first and second World Wars. Thus, the S. C. M. as a whole followed the same trend of secularization that the Y. M. C. A. did.

In these post-war days the initial emphasis seems to be returning. The Oslo Conference held in the summer of 1947 was the product of the S. C. M. and other groups. The theme and purposes reflect the changing attitudes toward the liberal generalities and shallowness.

"The theme of the Conference is found in the proclamation, 'Jesus Christ is Lord,' and five great purposes in holding it have been stated: To rediscover together that Jesus Christ is Lord; to rebuild our fellowship in Christ; to face the situation in the world and make good our claim that Jesus is Lord in concrete ways; to find the job young Christians have to do individually and collectively by prayer and Bible study; and to plan the strategy of a world wide campaign to demonstrate in living the reality of the Lordship of Christ." ³

The words "rediscover" and "rebuild" are indicative of the

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1. Two University Men: op. cit., p. 137.

2. Ibid.: p. 149.

3. A Christian Year Book, 1947 edition, p. 116.

recognition that for a period Christ the Lord was not their common ground. The individual and collective work of the group is combined now with the individual's response to the gospel first, and the Bible is once more restored to its rightful position. These very recent trends are quite promising. Although little has been done to meet the problem of secularism on the campus, the movement is awakening to the need, as evidenced in one of the subjects which was discussed at the Oslo Conference last summer: "Christian Responsibility in a Secular Environment." ¹

c. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship.

This evangelical movement initiated in England in the early twentieth century, moved to Canada and started chapters in the United States in the fourth decade. The central emphasis of this group has been Bible study and prayer, the two needs which the Y. M. C. A. and the S.C.M. did not supply.

Although Bible study and prayer are the bases of this group, its activities are not limited to these alone. As a means of evangelism, the groups sponsor social activities, special speakers, discussion, and any other project a local chapter might choose. From the educational point of view the most constructive means of

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1. A Christian Year Book: 1947 edition, p. 117.

meeting secularism has been provided through a monthly publication, *His*. Articles are selected with the student in mind. Problems of faith, difficulties in scientific matters, means of meeting the humanistic philosophy, all are dealt with in this scholarly magazine.

Although numerically the I. V. C. F. is small, its impact has been felt, even by the liberal Christian groups.

"In our colleges and universities the liberal forces often count for very little, because they are so lacking in either courage or vigor, while some other groups, with not a tenth as many members, make their influence felt in a remarkable way. A well informed and highly intelligent counselor, writing from a campus occupied by more than ten thousand students, presents this contrast in the following trenchant words: 'Speaking bluntly, almost the only Protestant student group on the campus that takes its calling seriously enough to have a defined membership, articulate position and pay the price in practical discipline, is the local Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. The kindly way of well bred people who welcome all in their company who have a sense of humor and don't raise their voices when they talk - seems an inadequate basis of maintaining membership in a movement which claims to be revolutionary in its impact.'" ¹

Thus the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship has in a measure met the problem of secularism on the campus.

2. Departments of Religion in Non-Christian Schools.

"Educated people have a knowledge of fine arts, science, government, economics, and other realms of universal social experience, but are uneducated on the same academic level in religion." ²

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1. Trueblood: op. cit., p. 83.
2. West: op. cit., p. 175.

Leaving the word "educated" out, that statement could well be used by the Selective Service of our nation, for in this last war we have been appalled at the lack of religious training or knowledge which was shown through inductive examinations. Perhaps this is one of the reasons our secular colleges and universities have developed a new interest in departments of religion.

"The most encouraging factor in the college religious scene is the growing sense of responsibility on the part of college administrators for integrating religion with the whole work of higher education... This new concern is leading the state universities to give more encouragement to the teaching of religion in the curriculum." 1

Upon first impression, this would seem quite encouraging. However, when one considers the rest of the curriculum, its basic philosophy, its ungodly professors, and the small number who would enroll in such classes, the department of religion is comparable to the work of the Sunday School.

"Dr. William Lyon Phelps tells us, in his fascinating Autobiography, that he 'was invited to teach in a certain college, and was asked if I could keep my religion out of the class room; on my telling this to President Dwight he laughed and said, 'My own observation shows that college teachers who are religious never mention it, whereas those who are antireligious impress their views on the students and talk about it constantly.' " 2

As is the case in Released Time, compartment-

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1. Clarence P. Shedd: The Church Follows Its Students, p. 47.
2. Wilbur Smith: op. cit., p. 485.

realizing serves to make in the pupil's mind a dividing line between that which is "sacred" and that which is "secular".

"Some adjust their religion to science; others adjust their science to religion... Still others keep the two in separate compartments, or give them distinctive places in some large synthesis... Ideally, of course, one should hope for more than this. One should hope to achieve some higher synthesis in which science and religion would not only co-exist, but reinforce one another." 1

The college student would not find, as supposed, that in his class in religion his religious nature was being educated. Rather, he would finally begin to see a sharp line of distinction between what he was to believe in his class in religion and what he was to believe in his biology class, for both claim a person's faith.

"Science is an accumulated knowledge, systematized and derived by experimental methods in reference to conceive general laws or probabilities... Scientism, as all other isms, is a faith. It is a faith in the universal adequacy of scientific procedures." 2

A striking illustration of the faith Americans have in science is an editorial repercussion in the Saturday Review of Literature, entitled, "Let the Eagle Scream."

"It is even trite to say that we are incomparably the richest and most powerful nation on earth. Our democratic institutions have emerged from the war unimpaired. Our inventive capacity is still phenomenal... our scientists lead the world. We

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1. Horton: op. cit., p. xvi.
2. West: op. cit., p. 158.

could supply the world with natural conveniences and all the other devices which minister to man's health and comfort and ease." 1

The writer then makes a long list of material blessings with which we

"look to the future with confidence and courage, so that we may have the power to regenerate and come to the aid of all mankind." 2

Faith here certainly lies in the realm of the natural. But the Christian educator says that "enduring social transformation is impossible of realization without changed human hearts." 3 The student cannot hold both these views at once; he must make a choice. And if the rest of his college life and thought is humanistic and naturalistic, the main weight of the decision will rest there.

A few educators are becoming conscious of this problem and see the need for Christian emphasis in all realms of life.

"Religion is always a more redemptive force in those universities where the administration seeks for religious quality in its faculty, and give intelligent and unambiguous support to any movement that may have religious significance for any part or for all of the university constituency. The difficulties of the past two decades have been enormous, coming as they have out of the secularization of life in general." 4

Again, it was said in the Annual Report of the General Secretary to the Council of Church Boards of Education:

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1. Harrison Smith: "Let the Eagle Scream," Saturday Review of Literature, March 15, 1945, p. 208.
2. Ibid.
3. H. Gross: "The Christian College in the Post War World," Christian Education, March, 1945.
4. Shedd: op. cit., p. 48.

"It is a joy to report that the colleges are becoming more conscious that their responsibility in character development and religious training is a total and not only a departmental responsibility." ¹

3. The Church Related College.

During the twentieth century there has been a decline of the Christian character of the church related college, due to the philosophical foundations being adjusted to the secular trend.

"Educational movements in America tend to diminish the differences between church institutions and non-Christian schools. Some American educators hold that all American education is Christian. This sort of thinking has inhibited critical analysis of basic educational philosophies. In America it is possible for an institution to have a controlling educational philosophy that is not Christian. And, furthermore, it is possible for a non-Christian philosophy to underlie the educational work of a church related school. The whole of education in America will be strengthened if outstanding Christian educators critically examine modern educational theories and effectively expose their non-Christian implications." ²

Herein is one of the most poignant and urgent pleas of our day. Robert Hutchins of Chicago University struck this keynote when he addressed the regional meeting of Catholic colleges and universities of the Middle West.

"The trouble with you Catholic colleges is that you are not Catholic enough. You have taken what is worst in secular colleges and discarded what was best in your own." ³

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1. Annual Report of the General Secretary to the Council of Church Boards of Education: Christian Education, March 1945, p. 219.
2. Gross: op. cit., p. 206.
3. M. J. Martin, "Not Christian Enough", Christian Education, June 1945, p. 261.

Martin, President of Loras College, Iowa, continues with the accusation:

"Now I wonder if that reminder could not be made more comprehensive so that we might say, 'Christian colleges are not Christian enough...?' " 1

Increasingly religious activities have been left to outside organizations in the church related college. One now sees little difference in them from the non-professing secular campus.

"Activities are left to extra-curricular organizations like the Y. M. C. A. Certainly religious activities should not be compulsory; neither should they be left to an outside organization. The religious life of a Christian institution should belong to the institution itself in cooperation with the church." 2

It is not so much Christian activities which the student needs, it is Christian thought patterns. Activities are expressive, and if there is no real Christian thought within, then activities are purposeless.

"What students need is discipline in the synthetic method. They need to learn how to relate things to one another and how to achieve for themselves, with the aid of those who are more experienced and informed, a larger perspective and a more inclusive vision." 3

The unique contribution of the Christian college is that there is a center to which all theses "things" can be related, namely, Christ and His will for

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1. Ibid.
2. S. A. Devan: "Religion Looks at Liberal Education", Christian Education, June 1945, p. 282.
3. David W. Soper: "The Christian College and Liberal Education", Christian Education, Sept. 1945, p. 41.

mankind. Many of the secular colleges are trying to find a center for their curriculum, and recently there has been a return to the humanities for this purpose.

"American education now faces a revival of humanitarian and classical humanism. These resurgent humanisms are combining to challenge the orthodox domination of pragmatic humanism in organized education... Their common concern is for commitment and integration of American education in terms of the democratic faith and tradition of Western civilization." 1

However, the "democratic faith and tradition of Western civilization" are rooted in Christianity, and a return to the humanities is only a partial return. It therefore still remains the task of the Christian colleges to relate all of life to orthodox Christianity. In this task, the Christian educator plays the leading role.

"Professors who are Christian" is the most vital part of the religious program of any college... Our sciences, our arts, our conceptions of society must come back, or rather, they must move forward, to an integration with one another in the knowledge of God and find their *raison d'être* in the accomplishing of His will for mankind." 2

As with student groups, so also the denominational colleges are returning to their original aim and Christian vitality. One of the main reasons for this return is the fact that secular education itself is now recognizing its failure to give this generation any motivating philosophy of life. The second World War in one

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1. West: op. cit., p. 170.
2. Deven: op. cit., p. 283.

generation served to shatter the faith of many in the ability of man and man's inventions and reasoning to solve the problems of our day, which are more complex and manifold than in any generation before. Up to this time we have been eating of the fruits of the faith of our fathers. Now that that faith is gone and our own mixed faith in materialism is gone also, we have been left desolate. The world holds little promise. Thus we face now a great turning back to faith in a Power beyond ourselves.

"The first Christian colleges were unquestioned allies of the Christian Church. In truth, they were the Church in action in education... They... diligently cultivated the spiritual life of their students. The curricula included courses in theology and philosophy, and conscious efforts were made to relate students intelligently to religion. Their teachers accepted the Christian view of life." ¹

It would be rather naive to say that there is in progress a mass returning to religious thought - we have not reached that point yet. However, in contrast to the plans of secular education in these post-war days, ² the plans of heretofore nominally Christian educators are definitely of a deeper Christian character. The issues of the publications, "Religious Education" and "Christian Education" during the past three years are full of articles indicating this step forward.

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1. Gross: op. cit., p. 202.
2. Ante: p. 24.

4. Independent Christian Institutions

The failure of the denominational church colleges to keep their educational philosophy free from the secular trend of education in the twentieth century caused an unusual growth and interest in independent Christian colleges and institutes among conservative Christians. The tremendous growth of colleges such as Asbury, Bob Jones' University, Houghton, Taylor, Westmont, and Wheaton is testimony to the need of such schools. Within the last decade many of these schools have more than doubled their enrollment.

It is the first postulate of these schools that a secular education with religious "side interests" is insufficient to produce real Christian conviction.

"God cannot be made either real or controlling to people whose education has been based upon a secular, mechanistic and material point of view." 1

It is not impossible to go to a secular school and maintain one's Christian faith, but it takes a very independent and strong thinker to rethink all of one's education in Christian terms. Often a Christian interpretation is superimposed upon an anti-Christian viewpoint: sooner or later the two will clash and doubts and disbelief will arise.

1. Gross: op. cit., p. 206. *Christianity Today*, 1961.

This is the reason that the plea for Christian educators to rethink their fields in the framework of Christian belief has been reiterated in these past few years.

The independent Christian school has two main advantages over the denominational school. One is that with a faculty and board of trustees agreed upon the pre-eminence of the Christian view above all else, they are free to insist upon a definite religious conviction of each of its faculty members.

"Sometimes teachers, while pursuing a specialized educational program, do not develop an understanding of their social or religious obligations. Furthermore, the tendency to consider that a person's religious life is a private matter precludes administrators from enquiring about prospective teachers' religious views, church relationship, or personal philosophy of life... In some instances, narrow interpretations of the meaning of academic freedom protected teachers who were unsympathetic with the mission of the Christian college while they undermined its basic philosophies." ¹

The second advantage is that in this post-war world denominational differences are diminishing and there is great interest in ecumenicity. The independent Christian school has no sectarian emphasis, but rather testifies practically to the unity of the Spirit in Christians of every denomination.

There is one outstanding disadvantage which has already been cited in relation to parochial schools.²

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1. Gross: op. cit., p. 203.

2. Ante: p. 48.

In receiving a thoroughly Christian education, a student who has been sheltered from current secular thinking and living often finds in taking his place in society after his formal education is finished that he does not know how to cope with the minds of those whose educational premises have been so different. The fact that this problem is recognized is the first step toward solving it.

D. Summary

In the United States there exists a number of Christian youth groups which are endeavoring in some measure to combat the problem of secularism. In this chapter we have examined, first, those which worked with students in elementary education, and secondly, those which worked with students in higher education.

In both groups it was found that some of the organizations are extra-curricular, some curricular, and some controlling the entire curriculum.

In all these groups there is a new and vital interest in increasing their effectiveness, a desire to make Christianity central and motivating to all of life, this being the only answer of Christianity in a secular world.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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A. Summary.

The beginnings of education in America were from a Christian motivation and were linked closely with the church. As the nation grew westward, the philosophy and textbooks of the Eastern educational system were continued in the new schools. However, during the nineteenth century, spiritual, economic and political changes were molding a new philosophy into American life, which was reflected in the educational institutions of the country. American learning came to be based on a materialistic, naturalistic philosophy.

The twentieth century found nearly all of education completely secularized, and consequently various student organizations arose in an attempt to meet the problem. In Chapter Two present day education was examined to discover the nature and extent of secularism in our schools and universities. It was found that curriculum, textbooks, extra-curricular activities and the basic philosophy were all affected by the spirit of secularism, and that students are seeking for an integrating factor of life, some consciously, others subconsciously.

A brief history and study of the existing student organizations which have been formed to meet the problems of youth comprised the Third Chapter. Some of these organizations were connected with the church, some were independent of the church, but still in cooperation with it. It was noted that many groups were ineffective because they had succumbed to the influence of secularism themselves. But these groups are now experiencing a return to the basic postulates of Christianity and offer much promise in the battle of Christianity with secularism.

B. Conclusions

The problem of secularism is much more urgent than the organized church realizes. The church is comprised mainly of adults. Their generation was raised in an age when spiritual belief and Christian concepts were still generally accepted. They are still living on the fruits of their early training. But the generation which comprises our student population today has had Biblical training extracted from their public school education and belief in the supernatural has been ruled out through "Scientism". Youth today is susceptible to strange loyalties, which are contrary to democracy and Christianity. Unless Christianity is put on an appealing intellectual basis, as well as emotional, secularism will continue to

wield great influence upon the prospective leaders of tomorrow.

When one studies the founding and growth of Christian organizations for youth in America, there is a thrill in realizing the devotion and zeal which have been in them. However, studying them as isolated from other contemporary influences gives only one side of the picture. When they are studied in their relation to the tremendous surge of anti-Christian influences, the effectiveness of the Sunday School, the Young Men's Christian Association, and like groups dwindles to little more than that of one course in a wide curriculum; for a few, that one course might mold the entire schedule, but for the great majority, it is but a part of the whole. Organized Christian efforts must pervade the entire thinking process of the individuals whom they reach, must, in short, be the integrating factor of life, for Christ claimed that "whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." ¹

Because the world is looking for an answer for winning the peace, and because Christianity has failed to meet secularism on a sound intellectual basis, the main task which confronts the church today is to train Christian youth in the various fields of learning, but with a consistent, thorough, theistic interpretation. It remains the

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1. Luke 9: 24.

problem of our Christian educators to rethink their fields so as to make their courses and their colleges an effective training place for Christian youth.

Probably the most encouraging conclusion to be drawn is the fact that the organizations which were liberal or modernistic during the period between the two world wars have been awakening to the influence that secularism has had upon them, and are returning now, at least through the heads of these organizations, to a more spiritual and evangelical emphasis. The practice of reducing Christianity to the same naturalistic level as secular education marred the testimony of the church and cancelled its effectiveness in reaching youth. Often these groups did not reach youth for Jesus Christ, but for an abstract ideal. That was found to be insufficient and not satisfying. With the return now to faith in Christ as Lord and Savior the work of Christian leaders will be furthered greatly.

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