

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN PUERTO RICO

I. What is Education?

Education is founded on the facts of human life. From these facts, let us select three outstanding ones.

1. The educability of the human mind. The children of each generation are not all born on the same day, every thirty years, but they are born "little savages", and with a mental disposition toward civilization by education. Just as the generations of mankind overlap, so the status of education of humanity, in any moment of its history, is not equal in every individual. This obliges educators to a continuous~~ly~~ and everlasting action in order to maintain a progressive level of civilization.

2. The progressive and cumulative character of culture. ~~At birth, culture were always to go back to the beginning, but at death of each great builder, would leave the world more advanced than what he found it. This effort of individuals, generations, and epochs is accumulated in history and transmitted through education to society.~~
the of a child, goes with him to its
at death of each great builder, he always leaves his

3. The rationalness~~ness~~ of human behavior. In spite of Rudolf Otto, Paul Sartre, Freud, and other apostles of ~~the~~ irrationalness, human beings continue to ~~follow the~~ rational animal. Of course, ~~not only~~ is this rationalness conditioned ~~by~~ *circumstances*, but also it ~~is~~ limited by education.

The vital ideas are those acquired very early in life. ~~They are based on the~~ *are integrated with* other ~~efforts~~ *forces* of human life and come to form the spiritual complex which we call ~~it~~ *Ego*, person, character, or conscience. To change or modify this character in a more desirable direction is the eternal and highest aim of education.

Christian education ~~is based on~~ *is based on* the same facts which have just

been pointed out. In the first years of life, preferably before passing through adolescence, the Church should place its youth in possession of the basic ideas of Christianity, and ought to have interested youth in the story of Jesus. Revelation of Christian truth is total and complete, but nevertheless human beings are and progressively *approaching its discovery & being transformed by its power.* slowly/~~discovering this.~~ This makes Christian education a constant and progressive need of the Church.

A contemporary philosophy ^{or} has classified knowledge in three categories: (a) ~~For self-control~~ ^{For domination mastery}, (b) For culture, and (c) For salvation. Knowledge for ^{mastery} ~~domination~~ refers to things and their utility. Knowledge ^{for} ~~of~~ culture refers to the progress of humanity in history. Knowledge ^{for} ~~of~~ salvation pertains to the ultimate destiny of ~~humanity~~ the human being, humanity, and creation. Knowledge ~~for~~ ^{for} salvation, once acquired, cannot not cease to affect and even determine the attitude of the individual toward ^{the other two} ~~other human beings.~~ *categories of knowledge.* This offers us a point of view through which we can ~~understand~~ appreciate the far-reaching effect of Christian education and its curriculum.

II. How are we educating now in Puerto Rico?

The evangelicals in Puerto Rico number now some 160,000. Fifty-percent of these belong to the Baptist, Disciples of Christ, Congregationalist, United Brethren, the Christian Church, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Christian Alliance denominations which at present form the Association of Evangelical Churches of Puerto Rico. The rest belong to the Lutheran, Episcopal, Adventist, Pentecostal, and other minor groups. The rest of the population is nominally Roman Catholic although in reality the vast majority are free-thinkers and spiritualists.

What are we, the Evangelicals, doing to educate our ^{our} constituency and our ^{our} youth?

1. We preach the Gospel

In pulpits
(out-door meetings)
In the openair *services*
In the Christian newspapers
On the radio.

2. We give Bible studies

In Sunday School
In the classes for candidates
In the Mid-Week Prayer Service
In the Evangelical press
Over the radio.

3. We are teaching ideals and attitudes

Through the united work of the Association, the Young People's organizations, organizations of women and men, and through interchange among denominations.
Through the cooperation with government agencies.
Through the Summer Camps of the Association and of the individual denominations.

4. We maintain a series of institutions for public service as

Seminaries, schools and colleges
Hospitals
Work and Service projects.
Rural centers.

Explain → What materials are we using?

Almost universally the International Sunday School lessons are used. Some church use graded lessons or the Spanish-American ones. There is a little of audio-visual aids, and this are becoming increasingly popular.

What personnel are we using?

There is sufficient personnel among the church volunteers for this work, but these people are very unequal in preparation and ability.

III. How can we improve in the future?

1. Improving our materials for teaching in content as well as in method.
2. Finishing and using the Spanish-American courses which were planned in the Conference of Buenos Aires in 1949.
3. Recruiting and preparing teachers.
4. Improving the teaching plants.
5. Improving Summer Camps, using the Work Projects more, strengthening Christian unity through the united organizations and their projects.
6. Developing further and extending the influence of the Evangelical Seminary of Río Piedras, private schools, Missionary Training Schools, colleges, especially the Politechnic Institute of San Germán.

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7. Strengthening the united effort through the Association of Evangelical Churches of its agencies. Taking advantage through the Association, of every help available from other organizations abroad.