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The Educational Work and Theory of Frans De Hovre

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**THE EDUCATIONAL WORK AND THEORY
OF FRANS DE HOVRE**

By

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**A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts**

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VITA

The present writer was born in Waregem, Belgium, April 10, 1925.

He studied the humanities in the same town at H. Hart College, Waregem.

In 1943, he entered the Society of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Foreign Mission Society, often referred to as Scheut Fathers). After the novitiate, he studied philosophy at the seminary of the Society in Scheut, Brussels and theology at the seminary in Louvain.

On July 31, 1949, he was ordained a priest and in 1950 he went to Japan as a missionary.

He came to the United States in 1953 where he studied at Loyola University, Chicago in preparation for the degree of Master of Arts.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

NEED FOR THE STUDY

This study is a presentation of the educational work and theory of Frans De Hovre. It is not intended as a deep analytical study of this theory but rather as a presentation of the background of De Hovre and the spirit in which he has worked and is still working for the teachers in Belgium. Perhaps this study can be seen as a basis for a later, more penetrating study of the work and the theory of this eminent pedagogue.

De Hovre was born in 1894 in the northern part of Belgium, usually called Flanders.¹ In this part of Belgium, the people are referred to as Flemish and their language also is called Flemish. This is, to state it very simply, a more or less deviate form of Dutch. Only after World War I, did Flemish receive some recognition as a language in the official circles. Till about 1930, all education from the high school level on was in French. De Hovre, as a priest and through his influence upon the teachers, has certainly had an influence in the emancipation

1 Frank Baur, Feestrede, St. Lucasschool, Gent, 1938, 4.

of the Flemish. As will be pointed out, his great ideal and motive for all his work was the uplift of the Flemish teachers.

It was mainly through his writings and his teachings that he has had a very great influence in the formation of the teachers in Belgium. In addition, two main books have been translated into French, English, Polish and Spanish and as such are likely to spread his influence further and further in Catholic educational circles.² In the United States, his books, Catholicism in Education³ and Philosophy and Education⁴ have been used as textbooks and reference books in Catholic Colleges.

The present study, then, seems to fill a need, since, upon reviewing the literature, no longer studies about De Hovre have been published, not even in Belgium. Only a few short articles have given a review of his work.⁵

PROCEDURE

To present then his work and theory, the following procedure has been used. In the second chapter, an attempt is

2 V. D'Espallier, "Hovre, Frans De," Katholieke Encyclopedie voor Opvoeding en Onderwys, Pax, Den Haag, 1952, II.

3 Frans De Hovre, Catholicism in Education, New York, 1934.

4 Frans De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, New York, 1931.

5 D'Espallier, "Hovre, Frans De," Kath. Encycl. voor Opvoeding en Onderwys, II.

made to see what influences have worked upon him during his formation. The best method here was to go back to his first articles and essays which are most typical of his formation. By tracing these articles, one can see who gave him his basic views and how his theory has taken shape. In the third chapter, a summary of his theory is attempted together with a short survey of his main activities, e.g., Vlaams Opvoedkundig Tydschrift and the Higher Institutes of Pedagogy. In the fourth chapter, an evaluation is attempted. First, his influence upon the formation of the teachers in Belgium is noted and then in a second part, an attempt is made to show how the main ideas of his theory and especially his approach to the Catholic philosophy of life and the social pedagogy can also be of help for American education.

CHAPTER II

BUILDING UP A CATHOLIC PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

De Hovre is not a man in search of a glimpse of truth because from his childhood on, he had been surrounded by the practical pedagogy of the Flemish Catholic home based on the solid foundation of a realistic concept of the human being. He has, as Baur states, elevated this educational practice into a theory of education.¹ That is why one can hardly find big differences between the ideas of his first articles and his later book Philosophy and Education,² e.g., that each system of education goes back to a philosophy of life and, vice versa, that each philosophy of life will have an educational system. This can already be found, not in a definite form, but in embryo in the articles and books of his formation period.

So rather than looking for new, revolutionary ideas, we observe the evolution of these educational practices of the Flemish Catholic home into the clear Catholic educational principles based on the philosophia perennis in the form of Neo-Scho-

1 Frank Baur, Feestrede, St. Lucasschool, Gent, 1938, 4.

2 Frans De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, New York, 1931.

lasticism.

This is his method: he thoroughly studies the new educational prophecies appearing in Germany, France, England and America. He then evaluates them in the light of his own conviction of the truth and the principles of the Neo-Scholastic philosophy.

It is in order then to see in more detail what influences have worked on De Hovre so that he became the greatest Flemish philosopher of education and even was able to have influence and acknowledgement far beyond the narrow limits of Belgium.

a. Student Days

He was born, April 3, 1884, in a small village called Oudegem.³ Here he grew up in a very simple environment with not too many needs. During the day, he went to a very small school whose teacher probably had not had much formal preparation for the job and after school he helped his father or mother in the work around the home. It meant that there was not much time for playing or loafing, but this way of living instilled in him an industriousness, characteristic of his later life.

At the age of about fourteen, he went to Dendermonde, a nearby town where he began the humanities.⁴ It meant hard

3 Baur, Feestrede, 4.

4 Ibid., 4.

study, with everything taught in French, the hard discipline and spirit of a minor seminary, not much contact with the family (probably he went home early at mid-quarter and vacations) but in this environment of the college⁵ the student-spirit of the Flemish Student Movement developed. The students became more and more aware of the injustice done to the Flemish students who had to study everything in French. This made them dream of ideals. They went back into the past of Flanders and dug up figures from the Middle Ages. These figures and heroes (real or fictitious) became their ideals and they dreamed of bringing back Flanders to what it was centuries ago. This whole movement gave the students an ideal and it made them more socially conscious. Maybe there was some sophistication in the whole thing but it made the students widen their horizons. They could dream of something grand and they were willing to fight for it. And though their social thinking was rather more idealistic, it gave them the feeling of the worth of the person and of their own culture. They stood for something and with the idealistic enthusiasm of young people, they would change the situation and speak for the rights of the Flemish people.

De Hovre was one of them. We may trace back to this ideal of his student life that zeal that will urge him during his

⁵ College: not exactly the same as in the United States. They are the Catholic secondary schools where the humanities are stressed.

whole life to elevate the Flemish teachers through his writings and his teaching. It is still the same ideal of elevating the Flemish people but as he became older, he gave his ideal more and more concrete form in the training of good competent teachers. It is next in order to see the influences that shaped De Hovre's mind.

b. Cardinal Mercier and Neo-Scholastic Philosophy

Here is the beginning of his formal preparation in the educational field. As was pointed out, he started with the whole equipment of a sound Catholic home and student life. He still had to broaden his intellectual perspectives; look at the kinds of new equipment which were offered along the road; pick up the good elements in order to build up a solid foundation for a modern Catholic educational theory.

De Hovre came to Louvain just when Neo-Scholasticism had broken its way through the darkness and the confusion of the nineteenth century. Already about 1850, some authors and philosophers had looked back to the Medieval philosophy where they hoped to find a solid basis for their further thinking. More and more Catholic philosophers saw:

that philosophy does not vary with each passing phase of history; they claimed that the truth of seven-eight hundred years ago is still true today and that if the great Medieval thinkers - Aquinas - Bonaventure and Duns Scotus succeeded in constructing a sound philosophical system on

the data supplied by the Greeks, especially by Aristotle, it must be possible in our own day to gather from the speculation of the Middle Ages the soul of truth which it contains.⁶

In 1879, Pope Leo XIII gave the whole movement a mighty impulse by his encyclical Aeterni Patris. This encyclical gave it its definite character and quickened its development. In 1891, Leo XIII established at Louvain, the Institut de Philosophie for the special purpose of teaching the doctrine of St. Thomas, together with history and the natural sciences. This institute was placed in charge of Monsignor Mercier (later Cardinal). This institute had been in existence for about twelve years when De Hovre came under its influence and the personal influence of the Cardinal. Monsignor Mercier was well aware of the difficulty that philosophy might have in maintaining its control over the ever widening fields of the various sciences when he wrote:

As a matter of fact, the difficulty is a serious one, and one may say in general terms, that it is not going to be solved by any one man. As the domain of fact and observation grows larger and larger, individual effort becomes less competent to survey and master it all: hence, the necessity of co-operative effort to supply what is lacking in the work of isolated investigators; hence too, the need of union between the synthetic mind and the analytic, in order to secure, by daily contact and joint action, the harmonious development of philosophy and science.⁷

⁶ M. De Wulf, "Neo-Scholasticism," Catholic Encyclopedia, New York, 1911, X, 746.

⁷ D. Mercier, "La Philosophie Néo-Scholastique," Revue Néo-Scholastique, Louvain, I, 1894, 17.

That was Monsignor Mercier's insight, and according to that he formed his plan. He tried to interest each of his students in a special field, so he directed De Hovre to the field of education. He sent him into the field with this conviction:

Adapt the medieval principles and doctrines to our present intellectual needs. Complete immobility is no less incompatible with progress than out-and-out relativism. Vita in motu. To make Scholasticism rigid and stationary would be fatal to it. The doctrines revived by the new movement are like an inherited fortune; to refuse it would be folly, but to manage it without regard to actual conditions would be worse.⁸

Furthermore, his other views on the process of adaptation may be summarized:

Not all Scholastic ideas that have been retained are of equal importance; criticism and personal conviction may retrench or modify them considerably without injury to fundamental principles.

Study of the history of the field: when sharing in the work of historical reconstruction by employing critical methods, do not attempt to condemn the opinions of others in a syllogism and refute them with a phrase, nor do not commend the practice of putting whole systems into a paragraph or two in order to annihilate them with epithet or invective. Much interest should be given to present day systems. It is only by keeping in touch

⁸ De Wulf, "Neo-Scholasticism," Cath. Enceyel., X, 747.

with actual living thought that one will be able to claim a place in the twentieth century that will command the attention of the opponents.

Cultivate the sciences: Each avenue of investigation must be followed up to provide a synthetic explanation of phenomena by referring them to their ultimate causes and determining their place in the universal order of things; and this undertaking, if the synthesis is to be deep and comprehensive, presupposes a knowledge of the details furnished by each science.⁹

Thus, through Cardinal Mercier, De Hovre got from the Neo-Scholastic philosophy the formation of his philosophical mind which brought him to the study of the other systems of education. He studied them profoundly, analyzed them, looked at the foundations and the constructive elements and evaluated them in the light of the old Scholastic principles and the always growing new experience in Europe and America.

De Hovre always had before his mind the figure of the Cardinal as the ideal of an educator and he expressed his love for his old professor when in his book, Catholicism in Education¹⁰ he pictured the Cardinal as the representative of Belgian Catholic Education not only for his writings but also for the inspiration he gave to so many of his students. He knew well enough what an

⁹ De Wulf, "Neo-Scholasticism," Cath. Encycl., X, 747.

¹⁰ Frans De Hovre, Catholicism in Education, New York, 1934.

inspiration he had been to him. It was also Cardinal Mercier who helped him and directed him in the first steps of his studies.¹¹ He brought him in contact with the second big influence in his journey through the educational field, e.g., Dr. Otto Willmann.

c. Otto Willmann and German Social Pedagogy.

During a couple of centuries, individualism had invaded all the domains of culture. In the domain of art, individualism appeared at the time of the Renaissance; in the domain of religion at the time of the reformation. In social life, it was introduced by the French Revolution; in ethics, Kant had been its champion; in the economic world it appeared as liberal political economy. Almost parallel to these various movements was the development of individualism in the field of education. Among its foremost champions were Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Herbart, Nietzsche and others. The individual was the creator and the builder of society. But after Napoleon, the national idea, growing more and more, paved the way for the reaction and socialism must be seen as a reaction. It is the offspring of necessity; it is the protest of society against the abuses and disorders of the individualistic regime and coming at the turn of the twentieth century, socialism gained the sympathy of many philosophers and educators. From then

¹¹ Jacques Maritain, Preface to Philosophy and Education.

on, it found more and more application in the different fields.¹²

Socialism as a reaction had its radicals. De Hovre did not fall into their hands. Cardinal Mercier directed him to Willmann and it was about him that he wrote his doctorate thesis La Didastique D'Otto Willmann. Willmann was born in Poland; though from 1872 he was professor of philosophy and pedagogy at the German University of Prague.¹³ Later on, De Hovre came in personal contact with this "idol of his student-time," as Baur says.¹⁴ Indeed by reading his studies about Willmann, one can feel how he has liked him. It is the man in whom he found expressed his own social feelings and thoughts.

He must have been glad to read the following from Willmann:

If education had remained in contact with the simple educational philosophy of the people and especially of the rural people, it would never have gone off on the wrong path of individualism . . . the peasant conceives of education socially; he knows what the older generation expects of the young; that youth will be like its elders. As the most reasonable means to the attainment of this end, he wants his son to take hold of his farm and his daughter to marry a farmer. But he knows also that this legal inheritance should be complemented by a spiritual inheritance; the young generation must also take hold of experience and tradition, which alone will assure happiness and blessing. The peasant

12 De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, 148-149.

13 Ibid., 215-216.

14 Baur, Fceestrede, 7.

knows that his mother tongue and the customs of his people are ideal goods that are to be passed on and that they are not to be lost to future generations. And youth must also be incorporated in the social bonds that sustain the life of the rural populace. The youth will guard intact the name that his father and his grandfather bore; he will belong to the Church that baptized and instructed him, that married his parents and buried his forefathers.¹⁵

This was the educational philosophy which De Hovre had seen working in his own little village; it was the foundation of the Flemish Student Movement. It was also the same educational philosophy that he saw working in the Catholic Church. Again he saw this philosophy expressed and scientifiquement systématisée in the work of Willmann.

De Hovre writes in La Pédagogie Sociale en Allemagne:

On peut trouver en germe les principes pédagogiques de Willmann dans une conception catholique de la vie. Pour le catholicisme la tâche suprême de l'éducation religieuse c'est l'incorporation de la postérité à l'organisme de l'Eglise et la transmission des biens spirituels. La conception catholique n'a jamais perdu de vue le facteur social de l'éducation ni son but social; toujours elle a considérée l'enseignement comme une tradition, et le contenu de cet enseignement comme un bien spirituel.¹⁶

Willmann and his social pedagogy gave to De Hovre the value of the history of pedagogy.

¹⁵ Otto Willmann, "Hörsaal und Schulstube," 285-286 as quoted in Frans De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, 219-220.

¹⁶ Frans De Hovre, "La Pédagogie Sociale en Allemagne," Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, Louvain, II, 1913, 194.

Il y a d'abord à faire l'histoire de la science pédagogique et didactique, on étudiera les opinions, les théories, les systèmes, les hommes et les œuvres qui les ont fait progresser. La spéculation abstraite risque toujours de prendre le contingent pour le nécessaire, le particulier pour le général et d'établir ses généralisations sur une base trop restreinte. L'histoire de l'organisation de l'éducation et de l'instruction doit prévenir ces erreurs.¹⁷

These were the words of Willmann which made known to De Hovre the value of the history of all science and directed him into the history of pedagogy, in which he found the field of his predilection.

Willmann also passed on to De Hovre his social pedagogy. Education for Willmann is a passing on of all the existing values. Therefore, education does not take place only between two persons but also between two generations. Seen from this angle, education and instruction become the means for the perpetuation and rejuvenation of both life and society.

So, education and instruction do not exist solely in the interests of the individual but they have to fulfill a social role. They are the agencies for the renewal of the social body through the transmission of the social heritage from the older generation to the younger and through the incorporation of youth in the bonds of society. Social goods and social bonds con-

¹⁷ Cited in Frans De Hovre, "La Didactique D'Otto Willmann," Revue Néo-Scolastique, XVII, 1909, 101.

stitute the very essence of our culture. The handing on of these, the communication of them through instruction guarantees the continuity of our culture. Consequently, instruction is the agency through which the intellectual goods are handed down and this process is essential to the permanency of social intellectual life.

With this esteem for tradition, Otto Willmann definitely sides with the moderate socialists and takes a position against the radical socialists.

First of all, his fundamental principle of sociology asks for two termini: the individual and society but not society alone as it is for the radical socialists.

In the relation between the individual and the community, the latter is not superior to the individual: both are complements of each other, and neither of them is merely a means for the other. There are two termini in the moral world: the one is the personality of the individual, the other is the intellectual and moral community; the structure of the physical universe here makes way for a new architectonic principle.¹⁸

In the application of this principle in the field of pedagogy, Willmann does not favor unconditionally the new branches e.g., all kinds of special sciences in immediate preparation for a profession, such as stenography, bookkeeping, etc., even if asked for in the name of social education. In application of the

¹⁸ Otto Willmann, Didaktik als Bildungslehre in ihren Beziehungen zur Sozialforschung und zur Geschichte der Bildung, I, 1889, 52, translated by Frank C. Kirsch as quoted in Philosophy and Education, 220-221.

same principle he definitely took a position against State education, especially as it was going on in Germany. But above all, Willmann confirmed De Hovre in the social role of the intellectual and moral values. While saying that education is a passing on of the ideal goods to future generations and the incorporation of youth in the moral organisms, he claims that the diffusion of the culture to the people includes also the moralization based upon religion.

As a conclusion, it can be stated that De Hovre, under the influence of the social pedagogy of Willmann, goes into the stream of social pedagogy but definitely in the path of the moderate socialists with rather a critical eye for radical socialism.

This esteem for the person and the work of Willmann was clearly expressed in the quotation of Foerster at the end of a study on Willmann, words which De Hovre made his own:

I am convinced that the time will come when the works of Willmann will be still more appreciated than they have been and not alone by Catholic educators; when many of our modern educators will take hold of these works and find therein what they have long been asking for.¹⁹

De Hovre published his thesis La Didactique D'Otto Willmann, in Revue Néc-Scolastique in 1909.

¹⁹ F. W. Foerster, "Willmann als Padagog," as quoted in De Hovre Philosophy and Education, 231-232.

That this was a good analysis of the work of Willmann is shown by the fact that it was immediately translated into German and published in Zeitschrift für Christliche Erziehungswissenschaft; (the official review of the Verein für Christliche Erziehungswissenschaft; in fact the Willmannbund).

In 1913, when he published his article, "La Pédagogie Sociale en Allemagne" in Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Louvain, he gave a whole section (Chapter II) to Willmann whom he chose as the representative of the conservative-socialists. He says: "A Otto Willmann revient l'honneur d'avoir tracé le nouveau programme des disciplines pédagogiques et d'avoir édifié un système didactique adapté aux exigences sociales et historiques de notre époque."²⁰

In his work, Philosophy and Education, he also gave Willmann a large part as representative of the conservative social educators.²¹ Finally, when he was looking for a spokesman of Catholic philosophy and Catholic education in Germany, his choice fell immediately upon Otto Willmann.²²

His next publication in 1910 was La Philosophie Sociale

²⁰ De Hovre, "La Pédagogie Sociale en Allemagne," Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, II, 176.

²¹ De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, 215-232.

²² De Hovre, Catholicism in Education, 383-393.

de Benjamin Kidd.²³ This whole social aspect must have had quite an interest to De Hovre. Benjamin Kidd acquired a world reputation by his work, Social Evolution, published in 1894. It has to be remembered that at the turn of the twentieth century, Darwinism and all materialistic evolutionary ideas were in grand vogue. All the defendants of spiritual and religious values had a hard time. One can imagine how big a welcome they gave to a work, especially in the rising sociology, that gave all spiritual and religious factors their true values.

De Hovre was glad to read the proof of the bankruptcy of science in its pretension to dominate the whole of life and education and surely he must have been confirmed by the concept of social inheritance, established by Kidd as the dominant factor in education. He must have been impressed also to see stressed at that time the social efficiency of religion and morals, not only because of tradition but also because it can be found in the analysis of modern social life. He writes:

Kidd n'a pas uniquement repris au passé le principe séculaire de l'efficiencce sociale immense de la religion et de sa morale, il l'a dégagé des entrailles de la société présente par l'application des méthodes les plus actuelles: l'étude des phénomènes sociaux et l'évolution de l'organisme social; il a montré que le principe traditionnel n'est pas seulement valable parce qu'il a porté le fardeau de l'histoire (What was

23 Frans De Hovre, "La Philosophie Sociale de Benjamin Kidd," Revue Néo-Scholastique, Louvain, XVIII, 1910, 376-394.

the argument of Dr. Willmann), mais parce que, l'observateur consciencieux le retrouve en-dessous de tous les phénomènes de la vie sociale moderne.²⁴

It must have been in reading the works of Kidd that he became more and more interested in the part which the ethical and religious values play in education. It is good to remember that he had felt this influence in his own education; now he was looking for a systematization and justification of these ethical and religious values. That brought him to look deeper into the work of Foerster. In 1912, in the same Revue Néo-Scholastique, "L'Ethique et La Pédagogie Morale de Foerster" was published.²⁵ We take that as our fourth point in the formation of De Hovre.

d. Educational Theory of Fr. W. Foerster

Baur said that by finding Foerster in the first years of his ascent in the pedagogical world, De Hovre manifested the intuitive quality of a historian.²⁶

Fr. W. Foerster was born in Berlin, June 2, 1869. He was a man of integrity and despite the abuse to which he had been subjected and of the suspicion that had been heaped upon him, despite the hatred sworn against him by many of his countrymen, despite prison and exile, he remained passionately attached to

24 Ibid., 382.

25 Frans De Hovre, "L'Ethique et la Pédagogie Morale de Foerster," Revue Néo-Scholastique, Louvain, XX, 1912, 116-132 and 201-216.

26 Baur, Foerster, 7.

truth and loyal to the voice of his conscience. This brought him to several professorates at different universities in Germany, Austria and Switzerland.²⁷

An evolution can be seen in the ideas of Fr. W. Foerster. As a child, he had known the Ethical Culture Movement launched by Professor Adler in New York. But coming in contact with Italian and religious art, his sense for reality gave him the feeling of the insufficiency of naturalism. Little by little, the Christian conception of life appealed to him more and more clearly as profoundly realistic and at the same time highly idealistic. He expressed it in what can be considered the guiding thought of all his work: "Return to reality means a return to truth; return to truth means a return to Christ." He set himself as a task to lead men back to the traditional truths of Christian teaching by an analysis of reality.²⁸

De Hovre found in him a Christian philosopher of culture for whom "the soul of all culture is the culture of the soul." He saw him also as a leader in the field of Christian ethics and character education, which was based, according to Foerster, upon the principle of self-knowledge.

But De Hovre admired Foerster especially because he acted as a conciliator. Foerster himself was aware of that. In Schuld and Sühne, he says about himself: "The author has always

27 De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, 342-343.

considered it a duty to endeavor to reconcile the spirit of traditional education with that of modern education."²⁹ That was what De Hovre was looking for: the old traditional truths brought forth and adapted to the modern findings. He too had felt that the scientific psychologists were dividing men in different parts but now in Foerster he found an artist in psychology. He had for De Hovre, psychological insight.

That is why he liked him so much. In his own education, he had felt the effect of a character education. Foerster saw the character of man as a synthesis: it has both positive and negative elements; it combines the strength of the man with tenderness of the woman; it tempers force with love; it is as unyielding as adamant, yet tender as a mother's heart. All these forces have to be organized, e.g., the teacher has to bring harmony into the soul of the child, to assist the child in the attainment of self-mastery; one has to master the forces within himself to direct them on the way to his goal. Let us, as an example, see what social education meant for Foerster, as seen by De Hovre!

Pour Foerster, l'éducation sociale est donc avant tout l'éducation de soi-même, l'émancipation de la conscience et du cœur de tous les penchants égoïstes, la régénération de la volonté, en un mot, l'affermissement du caractère. L'éducation sociale

29 Fr. W. Foerster, Schuld und Sühne, Vorwort, III, as quoted in De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, 392.

contemporaine, par contre, s'est trop exclusivement donnée pour tâche d'adapter l'homme à la solidarité sociale, de faire de lui un membre actif de la société. Cette tendance est erronée, parce qu'elle néglige un élément intégrant de toute éducation. En vertu du dualisme de la nature humaine, toute culture comporte nécessairement un élément positif, qui consiste à éveiller et à développer l'énergie d'action, et, l'autre part, un élément négatif, qui consiste à cultiver l'énergie d'inhibition. C'est ce dernier élément qui a été presque totalement négligé. Il est indubitable qu'en vertu de sa nature sociale, l'homme doit être éduqué pour la société et, à ce titre ses tendances, ses aptitudes, ses énergies sociales doivent être développées, mais il n'est pas moins manifeste, d'autre part, que les aspirations supérieures de la personnalité humaine trouvent dans les instincts sociaux des ennemis redoutables, dont elles doivent s'affranchir.³⁰

It is nothing else than the old Christian ascetism that De Hovre had seen working in his home and school. But he was aware at the same time that these same old principles had to be adapted again and he saw how Foerster had

plumbed the uttermost depths of real life and established his foundation on the rock bed of truth. By viewing human life sub specie aeternitatis, he has been able to determine what is true to life in the literature of the present and in that of the past; and he has combined, as no other modern writer has succeeded in doing, these partial views of truth in a single, unified vision of reality.³¹

30 De Hovre, "La Pédagogie Sociale en Allemagne," Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, II, 252-253.

31 De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, 402.

As a conclusion, De Hovre found in the work of Foerster, an expression of the principles he had seen working in his own education but in these teachings he saw an adaptation to the new findings of psychology, sociology and the other auxiliary sciences of education.

De Hovre went on to say, that Foerster, although he threw new light upon the natural basis of religious life, did not explicitly work out this religious element of his theory of education. Foerster recognized this point but said that he did not work it out because of other reasons; he admitted "my whole system of ethics has no foundation other than the one laid down from above, viz., Jesus Christ."

De Hovre wrote his first article about Foerster in 1912, "L'Ethique et la Pedagogie Sociale de Foerster," Revue Neo-Scholastique, Louvain, 1912. In 1913, when he published in Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, "La Pédagogie Sociale en Allemagne," a whole chapter was about F. W. Foerster. After the War, these two remarkable men came to know each other and it became a real friendship based on admiration for each other. De Hovre gave a whole part (part IV) to the philosophy and educational theory of Fr. W. Foerster in the book, Philosophy and Education. When in 1930, De Hovre wrote his book, Catholicism in Education (translated 1934), Fr. W. Foerster wrote in

the preface:

It is not without some hesitation that I have accepted the honor of writing a preface to this work from the pen of my dear friend, Doctor De Hovre, for, to be frank, it is rather difficult for one who is not a member of the Catholic Church to pass judgment on a work that is essentially Catholic, the reading of which, moreover, makes him feel keenly his incompetence in matters ecclesiastical.³²

c. Taking a Definite Position.

In the meanwhile, De Hovre was studying and looking deeper and deeper in the social theories of Germany. This research was gathered and published in 1913 in Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie under the title "La Pédagogie Sociale en Allemagne."³³

The tone of this essay was already quite different. It was the work of a man who had mastered the subject and had taken a definite position. At this point, we may say that his views about social pedagogy were quite well established. In this essay, he treated first Otto Willmann as the representative of the conservative socialists, then Paul Natorp as the representative of ultra-social pedagogy. He criticized him especially because il subordonne l'individu à la société and of course also because he said that morality exists only for society. In a third part, he

³² Fr. W. Foerster, Preface to De Hovre, Catholicism in Education, vii.

³³ De Hovre, "La Pédagogie sociale en Allemagne," Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, II, 1913, 165-264.

took up Foerster as the representative of social education based on social ethics.

De Hovre had definitely taken his stand. The two figures that presided in his formation can readily be seen as Otto Willmann with his social view of pedagogy and Fr. W. Foerster with his stress on character formation based on religion. At this point, we can see that De Hovre had reached almost the end of his formation in the strict sense of the word. Another article was written during this period (1914) i.e., "Pestalozzi and Herbart." Because of the outbreak of the War, however, it could not be published and it had to wait until 1920 when Les Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie were published for the first time after the War.³⁴

He gave a good analysis of both educators (typical for his method) and then a good criticism in which he stated what was good and what was lacking. One feels that at that time he had his own definite standards by which to compare the different systems.

From this point on, De Hovre felt that something had to be done and that he himself could do something for the education in Belgium, especially Flanders. Another friend of his, Dr. De

³⁴ Frans De Hovre, "Pestalozzi et Herbart," Annales de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, Louvain, IV, 1920, 297-308.

Coene, also was roaming around with plans.³⁵ But in 1914, the War broke out and there were other things to do: his "producing" period had still to wait a few years.

d. The War and Contact with English-American Education.

His formation seemed to be finished when the War started. Circumstances brought him to England with other Belgian refugees. His first work was to help them materially and spiritually, but of course, after a while, he was working for the organization of the education of the younger refugees. But even all this other work did not keep him from examining the English and American educators and their philosophical systems. In 1917, he was able to formulate a solidified opinion of these systems and in German and English Education,³⁶ he gave an analysis and comparison between the ideals of the two different systems. That it had some real value can be assumed from the fact that the English Bishops were quoting in their letters whole passages from that booklet.³⁷

Again, he was working according to his method. He first went to the basis of the educational systems. He found that the soul of Germany, at that time, was the Kultur and as a consequence,

35 V. D'Espallier, "Hovre, Frans De," Katholieke Encyclopedie voor Opvoeding en Onderwijs, Pax, Den Haag, 1952, II.

36 Frans De Hovre, German and English Education, New York, 1917.

37 Baur, Festrede, 6.

education was the transmission of the Kultur, a capital which is essentially national and intellectual; therefore, education had to be given by the State, for the State, because Kultur is the possession of the State.

This was not so in England. Civilization for the Englishman was concentrated around the person and although pragmatism had found its way into the depths of that civilization, still it was based on the Christian principles of personal freedom and brotherhood of mankind. The characteristic of English education was the formation of the "gentleman" with stress on his moral education. De Hovre said that English education was sound in principles but it has to be completed. First of all, he says, it needs an extension of its educational horizon and that means especially the social aspect. Furthermore, English education must deepen its intellectual culture and try a more efficient organization.³⁸

As a conclusion, he sees the war as a clash of two educational systems based on two different philosophies of life.

And just as in life, we find that in the end, right is might, that the righteous man is also the strong man, the righteous nation also the strong nation, in the same way we shall come to see that the education which is based on the righteous principles is also making the strongest man and the strongest nation.³⁹

38 De Hovre, German and English Education, 100-103.

39 Ibid., 99.

The war taught and confirmed him more and more in the conviction that one-sided education is very, very dangerous for humanity.

Moreover, the war will have shown with effect the tragic aspect of science, of inventions and of theories of life so as to make it plain to the most superficial mind, that progress in knowledge, in intellect, in science, which is not attended by a corresponding progress in character and conscience, in heart and soul, is bound sooner or later to end in a catastrophe not only for individuals but for entire nations.⁴⁰

De Hovre came back from England with a deeper insight into the relationship between philosophy and education and also with a broader view of the existing educational systems. He had seen the English system at work. He had read the works of the American educators. Only a few months were necessary to bring some balance and relative rest in Belgium so that De Hovre, more mature than ever, was able to start with his "public life."

⁴⁰ Ibid., 106.

CHAPTER III

WORKING OUT HIS THEORY OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Belgium was recovering, materially speaking, very rapidly from the destruction of the war. But as in any war, this time changes also had taken place in the minds of the people, e.g., in 1919, universal suffrage was adopted in Belgium. While many ways were taken up again, in every field new ideas sprang up. De Hovre, together with De Coene, thought it to be the good moment to bring more life in the educational field and to widen the horizon of the many Flemish teachers. They agreed upon starting a new educational review, Vlaams Opvoedkundig Tydschrift. It was certainly a risk because the Flemish teachers as a whole were not yet ready for such a thing but it was the conviction of De Hovre that they had to be made ready for it.¹ This publication provides further insights into the development of De Hovre's theory of education. While its influence is discussed later, his ideas received even more substantial circulation in other ways. Through more and more contact with the many systems of education

¹ V. D'Espallier, "Hovre, Frans De," Katholieke Encyclopedie voor Opvoeding en Onderwijs, II, 1952, Pax, Den Haag, 275.

in the different countries, he became deeply convinced of the interrelation of philosophy and pedagogy. De Hovre applied this principle to the different non-Catholic educational systems and so he was able to bring back these systems to their basic philosophy. This is the burden of his first main book, Paedagogische Wysbegeerte published in 1924 (later on translated in French by G. Simeons and in 1931, translated from the French edition into English by Rt. Rev. Edward B. Jordan under the title, Philosophy and Education).

Of course, as readily can be seen, this work asked for a supplement, which came in 1930 when he published Het Katholisme, zyn paedagogen en zyn paedagogiek (translated in French by G. Simeons and in 1934 translated from the French edition into English by Rt. Rev. Edward B. Jordan under the title Catholicism in Education). This work used the same principle of the interrelation of philosophy and education applied to Catholic education and illustrated by the different representatives of Catholic education in America, France, England, Belgium and Germany.

It is especially in these two books that can be found his theory of Catholic education. In a second and third part of this chapter, the work of De Hovre in the more practical field will be dealt with, although it is good to recognize at once that even his two main books are not just written for the sake of theory but they are also written as textbooks to help his students at the Higher Institutes of Pedagogy.

A. THEORY

It was through the history of education and through his contact with the many educational systems in the different countries that he became more and more aware of the interrelation of philosophy and education. Because this is a basic principle in the whole theory of De Hovre, we will see first what he exactly means by this interrelation. Then we will see what he finds to be the basic principles of Catholic philosophy from which then a Catholic pedagogy has to be derived.

1. Fundamental Law of Interrelation Between Philosophy of Life and Education

Every system of education is based on a philosophy of life. All education properly so-called is based on a complete philosophy of life. All true education is based on the true philosophy of life.²

These are the words in which De Hovre states his fundamental law of interrelation between philosophy and education.

When De Hovre states this law, he presupposes a particular idea of education. Education is for him, as for Willmann, a passing on, from one generation to another of all the existing values in a certain culture and civilization. In other words, education is the incorporation of the child in a system of spiritual values and of ethical ideas which it does not create but finds

² Frans De Hovre, Catholicism in Education, New York, 1934, 3.

already established. The child has first to be incorporated in the social institutions into which flows the stream of tradition. But having received the nurture of this tradition, the educated man will be able to offer something to the further development of humanity: "in a word, education is the spiritual propagation of the human race."³

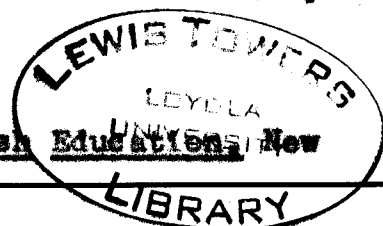
This definition of education is descriptive and historical. It does not say what education must be philosophically, but it tells us what it is in the concrete, what it was in the past, what it is now in the different countries: it is rather the definition of an educational system. It tells us what the educational systems are in America, in Germany, in Japan and elsewhere. This viewpoint, though, is very interesting because it brings new light to the different educational systems of the past and of the present. It shows us that even for so-called primitive people, there is a kind of educational system: education therefore bears this stamp of the cultural development. The truths, the values, the ideals and the moral standards that govern the life of the tribe are handed on from generation to generation, e.g., for a great part in the initiation ceremonies. It shows us too why the educational systems of the Orient are so greatly different from those of the West.

3 Ibid., 24.

With this definition of education in mind, one can see immediately that every system of education is really based on a philosophy of life because education is nothing else than passing on the philosophy of life prevailing in a certain culture or civilization. Further, one can see, even within the same culture or civilization, many different educational systems. This can be set down as the natural result of the confusion and uncertainty of the prevailing philosophies of life. De Hovre has shown clearly how the different educational systems are only an expression of the following philosophies of life, e.g., naturalism, socialism, nationalism, individualism, etc. All these philosophies have worked out educational systems because it is through the educational system that they have to survive and that their principles have to be handed down. De Hovre became so convinced of this fundamental law that he stated that "the spirit of a people is epitomized in its educational system. . . . In education, more than in any other domain of culture, breathes the spirit of a people. . . . In a word, the ideals of education are the cultural ideals of a race or people."⁴ In Germany, education was the passing on of the Kultur with all its connotation. In England, a characteristic of its education was stress on the formation of the gentleman with an emphasis on the moral values.⁵ And here too, there may be an explanation of why the socialism of Dewey has

⁴ Ibid., 11.

York, 1917,⁵ 72. Frans De Hovre, German and English Education, New



been able to find its way into American schools because the American mind felt the need of a philosophy of life which could manage to get along with people of all kinds of cultural background. On the other hand, at the root of the many complaints about modern progressive education in certain circles can be seen the dissatisfaction of many with the pragmatism underlying it.

This interrelation between philosophy of life and education does not mean though that philosophy and education are one and the same thing. Philosophy has its own object and its own point of view. Both deal with man as man. For neither philosophy nor education is man simply an animal, or an intellectual being, or a member of society. For both he is a human being in all his various aspects.⁶ This distinction between philosophy and education can, in the view of the present writer be made clear by the following: For philosophy, man is seen in his very nature. Education sees the man in the concrete approaching his goal. Philosophy looks upon man in his relations to absolute values, e.g., where has he to go according to his nature. Education deals with a concrete child, a growing man, moving to a goal. Philosophy must furnish the elements: man - goal - direction. But once these elements given, it will be the further task of education to see how this individual child, growing every day, will reach that goal. We can call philosophy the basis of an educational system,

6 De Hovre, Catholicism in Education, 23.

but other sciences as psychology, sociology, etc., will have to help the educator to provide the best way to attain the goal. As Jacques Maritain says in the preface to the French translation of Paedagogische Wysbegeerte (Philosophy and Education) "Education is not an autonomous science but is dependent upon philosophy."⁷

2. Principles of a Catholic Philosophy of Life

De Hovre writes in Catholicism in Education about the fundamental principles of the Catholic philosophy of life; he does not give us a strict philosophical analysis of the elements that constitute this philosophy. We do not find a deep explanation of the concept of God, of the nature of man or of the goal of man. That, as he says, can be found in treatises on philosophy and theology. He tries rather to give a synthesis of Catholic thought underlying the Catholic educational system. It is in the same approach as the work of Karl Adam, Peter Lippert, Erich Przywara and Romano Guardini. As these authors attempted to make a synthesis of complete Catholic thought into one living unity, De Hovre tries to make a synthesis of this Catholic thought in the field of education. So this work is not an exposition of "philosophical principles in education" (Opvoedkundige Wysbegeerte) but an exposition of Catholic philosophy of life (levensphiloso-

⁷ Jacques Maritain, Preface to Frans De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, New York, 1931, vi.

phic) i.e., a conception of life that takes in account everything that is real, whatever the source may be.⁸ To make the distinction clearer, the present writer would prefer to speak about the principles of the Catholic conception of life or simply the principles of Catholicism.

De Hovre sees the Catholic conception of life in three circles, which may also be called magnetic fields: cosmos, man, society. Each of these circles is centered in a central idea that will be able to reconcile the apparent contradictions.⁹

a. Cosmos

This circle is centered around the idea of creation. The difference between Creator and creature is governed by the fundamental law of ontological analogy, which results in the following principles:

Both God and creatures have an existence proper to themselves.

There is a resemblance between God and the created things.

There is no equality between God and the creature. These principles make it possible for the Catholic ontologist "to take a via media between conflicting theories and to harmonize the

8 De Hovre, Catholicism in Education, 33.

9 Ibid., 53-54.

contradictions that the contemplation of reality presents." It is very interesting, as De Hovre does, to see how, historically this concept of creation has kept the Catholic conception of life from falling into naturalism or supernaturalism, subjectivism or objectivism, phenomenalism or substantialism and many other exclusive one-sided systems.¹⁰

b. Man

The central idea of this circle is the Incarnation: God, who became a man: the Man-God. Here, the same principle of analogy works: "The concept of Christ and the concept of man are in part similar and in part dissimilar. The Incarnation is at once a link and a barrier between Christ and man." Christ is the ideal of all humanity: He is the ideal man to whom everybody can look up. In Christ, it can be seen how human nature can be elevated and certainly this gives a more comprehensive conception of man which, for example, biology or mere naturalism never will be able to find.¹¹ Moreover, the present writer thinks that we still can go further, if we do not limit ourselves to the historical Christ but go to the mystical Christ as well, we will find in "supernatural grace" new forces which even the most developed human psychology is not able to suspect. At the other side, we find the concept of original sin and its effects upon man. De

10 Ibid., 53-61.

11 Ibid., 61-63.

Hovre does not mention this explicitly in Catholicism in Education though, of course, he presupposes it in the dogma of Incarnation. So, we see how through the central idea of the Incarnation, the Catholic concept of life holds up the tension between the extremes: not pessimistic, not optimistic but real. And again, history shows how Catholicism had to defend the dignity of man's reason and will against fideism and rationalism, against determinism and indeterminism. We see how this conception of life finds place for charity and firmness, for self-abasement and self-assertion.¹²

c. Society

The central idea here is the Church, seen as the perfect society or as a real community and not only in its external organization.

In other social organizations, the vital principle that animates them comes from without. The action of this principle is from without inward, from the periphery towards the center. In the Church, on the contrary, life flows from within outward, from the heart of the organism to the members, from the Head, which is Christ, to the members, from Rome to the four points of the compass. Its social structure, therefore, is organic in the proper sense of the term. In the Church, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; in fact, the whole is antecedent to the parts. The Church is thus a living organism in a sense that is not true of any other social organization.¹³

¹² Ibid., 69-71.

¹³ Ibid., 72.

With this concept of the Church, the principle of analogy works again. The Church has a resemblance to other social organizations yet it differs from them in many ways. The Church, like any other social organization, gives concrete expression to the idea of incorporation; but because life also flows from the Head to the members, Catholic sociology is based on principles distinct in part from those applicable to other forms of social organizations. These principles are the source from which the Church draws that power of harmonizing social conflicts which it has always possessed, e.g., the tension between individual and society is solved not by giving up one for the other but in this highly centralized society the sovereign worth of the individual personality is never lost sight of. By being incorporated, the individual gets in contact with a new life he never could dream of, he gets into a stream of new life without becoming the stream itself. Never may the organization of the Church come to stand between God and the individual but the organization of the Church guides the individual to God; guidance which never should become obstructive and is by no means a limitation. This conception of the perfect society is able to reconcile religion and all forms of real culture, tradition and progress, nationalism and internationalism, aristocracy and democracy.¹⁴

¹⁴ Ibid., 71-84.

As can easily be seen, the Catholic conception of life is thus God-centered, Christ-centered and Church-centered. Looking upon this conception of life, we find the following characteristics:

This conception of life is universalistic, i.e., it stands open for all reality in all its multiple forms of relations and interrelations which man has with the beings surrounding him; it has a viewpoint which embraces all humanity and not only a particular group; it has a comprehensive view of life as a whole and is not spell-bound by just one phase of life.¹⁵

A second characteristic of the Catholic conception of life is the coincidentia oppositorum. "The mind of Catholicism perceives relations, unity and harmony among the various aspects of life which to the narrow, limited and superficial view of the unaided mind must always appear contradictory and irreconcilable." It is because Catholicism takes all phases of reality into account that there always will be a tension existing between the seemingly contradictory extremes; Catholicism does not bend over to one or the other of the extremes but keeps the tension, characteristic of all sound life.¹⁶

3. Principles of Catholic Education

15 Ibid., 38-40.

16 Ibid., 51-52.

Catholic education is not merely one of many systems of pedagogy. On the contrary, it is the archetype, the perfect pattern, to which all education should conform. It is the pedagogia perennis, the fountain-head of educational tradition, the mother of educational wisdom, the herald of educational truth.¹⁷

This is the thesis that De Hovre dares to put forward. Proof for this thesis of course lies in the essential organic connection of Catholic education with the whole of Catholicism. It is merely an application of the principle of the interrelation of the philosophy of life and education.

Education, as Catholicism sees it,

deals with the soul of man, its object is his complete transformation from a child of the flesh to a child of God. It aims to open his mind to the vision of truth, to clarify his sense of values, to adjust him to the things of eternity as well as the things of time, to make him a faithful member of the divine society which Christ established, to lead him to God. . . . The teacher is an alter Christus whose work is a continuation of the Master's. Education is an ethical, a religious activity which is concerned with things that rang highest in the scale of values; the soul of the child and its eternal destiny, the truth of Christianity, the Church and God.¹⁸

As the Catholic conception of life is theo - Christo - and ecclesio-centered, so Catholic education too gravitates to these three centers.

"God is the corner-stone in the structure of Catholic

17 Ibid., 91.

18 Ibid., 118.

education. Educational aims and educational values are to be determined with reference to Him."¹⁹

Christ, the God-Man is the ideal of man: He is the Way, the Truth and the Life, the center of religious education. "He is the Model for education; He is the inspiration and the ultimate end of all educational endeavor."²⁰

The Church as the Mystical Body of Christ enlivens every member. The Church in its essential characteristics is a teaching body, and because It gives at the same time the strength to keep what It teaches, It is essentially educative, e.g., one could show the educational value of each of the dogmas and the Sacraments.²¹

As these three centers have been explained when we dealt with the principles of Catholic philosophy of life, let us see how these three centers for De Hovre gave to Catholic education its essential characteristics.

a. Universalism

As the Catholic conception of life was open for all information about reality whatever the source may be, Catholic education also must be open for all sources of light coming from other sciences. De Hovre notes how the grasp of fuller reality

19 Ibid., 120.

20 Ibid., 121.

21 Ibid., 122.

gives to Catholic education a more universalistic and broader viewpoint in particular fields of education.

This universalism is a key to the history of education. To be scientifically historical, the historian has to sympathize and try to understand the individual, the epoch or the event he took under study. It can not be denied that the Catholic conception of life has played a dominant role in the history of the past two thousand years. The history of Western culture, thus impressed by Catholicism, must be studied in the light of Catholic teaching. Seen in this light, the history of education will be much broader, e.g., than the history of education represented by methodologists or educational psychologists who are looking into the history for a confirmation of their limited view of reality.

The widening of one's horizon, the deepening of one's thought, and the humanizing of one's investigations and researches in the fields of education and of the history of education are necessary conditions if these researches are to lay claim to the scientific character; and to the extent that these conditions are fulfilled, to that extent will such studies be Catholic as well.⁸²

This universalism finds its expression also in physical education. Physical education, as it is seen by the naturalists, takes care of the body, but the body alone, and such a viewpoint is very narrow and even dangerous to the health of the body be-

⁸² Ibid., 126-129.

cause it disdains the sources of health and vitality that the individual may find in the higher powers of his nature. No one part of man can be developed without giving attention to the other part or the development of one part becomes detrimental to the whole. The Catholic education looks upon physical education as a means for the development of the whole man. Moral health and physical health must go hand in hand.²⁵

Universalism in the Art of Teaching With modern stress on psychology in the field of education, maybe nothing is treated more in books and pamphlets than methodology, or methods of teaching. All kinds of methods have been presented and still general acceptance has not been found because usually all these methods lack unity; they have no soul, no form or organization. New centers of reference have been proposed, e.g., nature, society, State, etc., but all seems to be in vain. As opposed to these changing views stands the Catholic educational system with the basic psychological and methodological principles of a philosophical approach to universal truth; an organic unity in this truth; and aiming at education instead of mere instruction. Only a philosophical approach to truth can give the child a scale of values in the studied material. This approach will give him an insight into what a subject, e.g., natural sciences, has to do with his life

²⁵ Ibid., 129-132.

and the attainment of his goal. Catholic education necessarily aims at the development of this philosophical spirit; it is out of this spirit that the university grew.²⁴ Together with this philosophical approach goes the principle of organic unity.

There is a clear distinction between what is primary and what secondary, between what is fundamental and what accessory. Yet the connection between these is never lost sight of. Catholic theory of education is possessed of a structural unity and order that are lacking in other systems. It maintains a hierarchy of values and puts the proper emphasis upon each and every phase of the work of education.²⁵

And a third principle of Catholic education in teaching is the conviction that it is not a matter of mere instruction but the teacher must aim at the transformation and development not only of man's ideas but also of his impulses, his interests and his will. Catholic education enlightens by the truth it imparts but it also gives the sources for strength and power to live according to the truth so that the educand, guided by Christ, may attain his eternal destiny.²⁶

As one can see, these principles give still enough freedom to the individual teacher to adapt himself to the child. It is only in as far as the modern systems will come back to these fundamental principles that their methodology will conform with reality.

24 Ibid., 132-135.

25 Ibid., 136.

26 Ibid., 137.

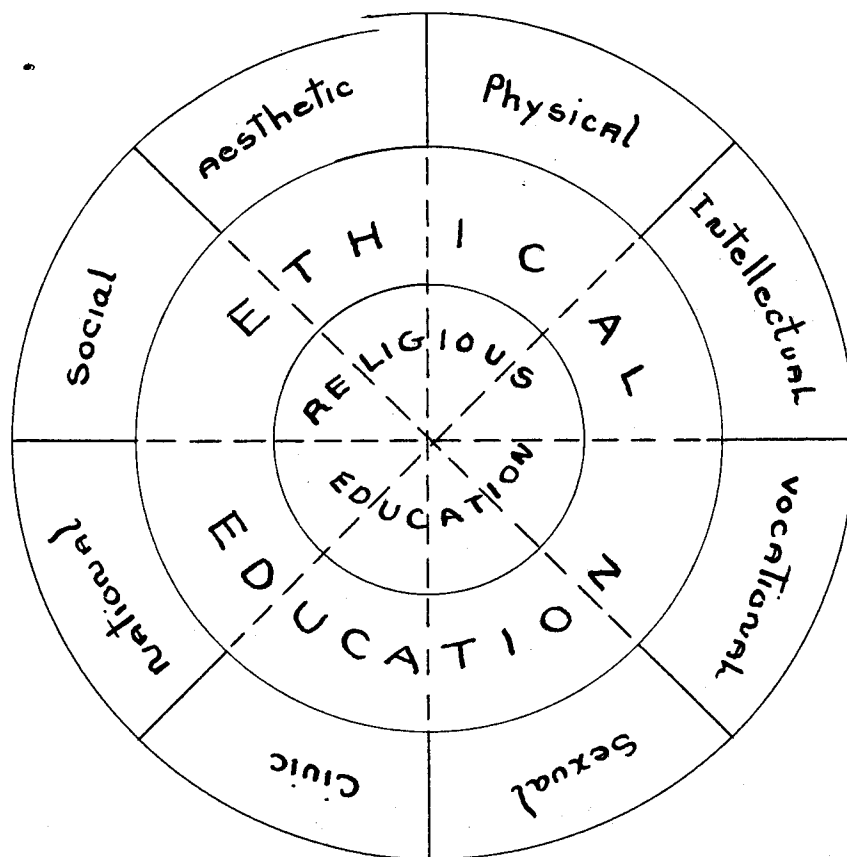
Universalism in Character Education The modern trend to character education seems to be largely on a rational foundation. It is again a limitation taken up in the name of science and so-called truth. It is possible in thought to cleave human life into animal, rational or maybe supernatural parts but when it comes to practice, it is impossible to hold the division any longer. Man acts as a whole and where character education has to be taught on mere rational basis, it is limited and is not based on the full reality. Catholic education again is much broader and is able to take up the formation of the whole man, natural and supernatural, rational and religious. No field has to be excluded but all can be taken in account and bound together in an organic unity.²⁷

b. Organic Unity

"Seek ye therefore first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matt. VI, 33) This principle of Christ applied to education gives Catholic education its organic unity. "Religious and moral training constitute the vital principle of Catholic education."²⁸

27 Ibid., 139-140.

28 Ibid., 141.



Here we have three concentric circles. The innermost stands for religious training which is the core of Catholic education. About this is drawn another circle to represent moral training which, according to Catholic teaching, is absolutely dependent upon religion. The outermost circle is divided into several sectors corresponding to the special fields of education, intellectual, physical, ethical, etc. Each of the circles and each of the sectors, has characteristics of its own that delimit it from the others. Yet, it is apparent that there is an intimate connection between the outer and the inner circles, since one includes the other, and that the activity manifested in any one division is the activity of the whole man.²⁹

²⁹ Ibid., 141.

This diagram shows very clearly the moral basis of each division. These are briefly indicated.

Physical Education "Mens sana in corpore sano. Industry, temperance, chastity, self-confidence, courage, self-mastery and good humor are important factors in maintaining health."³⁰

Intellectual Education Native ability has its value but can be over-estimated. To do real intellectual work, a strong will-power is required. "All the necessary conditions for genuine study and genuine teaching, including interest, attention, mental activity and the rest, are just as much a product of the will as of the intellect." Even to be objective requires a will-power that does away with egoism, pride and prejudices.³¹

Vocational and Professional Training Each profession asks at least as much character-strength as knowledge. The good leader can be helped in matters of knowledge; seldom though can another make up for the defects in his character.³²

Sexual Education As Pope Pius XI stated, the best kind of sex education is the indirect one. There is a time and a place for acquainting the child with the facts of sex but the child must primarily be prepared by practice of self-denial and will training.³³

30 Ibid., 143.

31 Ibid., 143-145.

32 Ibid., 145-146.

33 Ibid., 147.

Civic Education It is not the knowledge of the state institutions that makes a good citizen, but rather his personal character, his honesty, his industry and his fidelity to duty.

National Education Heroes have their place in a national education but a nation is dependent upon the ordinary men and women.

A nation of individuals who have lost the spirit of sacrifice, for whom morality, virtue, conscience and justice are little more than empty words, cannot long endure; it is bound to collapse.³⁵

In the view of the present writer, a word could be added for international education. Objective knowledge of other people and cultures is of great importance (and even here moral training is necessary, as we saw in intellectual education). When it will be necessary to share common sources, good will and sacrifice will ask for strong character.

Social Education Society influences its members but the members influence the social environment. "The reformation of the individual is the conditio sine qua non of social reform."³⁶

Aesthetic Education It aims at more than the mere appreciation of the beautiful. It aims at being an expression of a person's emotions. Hence, the great importance of well developed and directed emotions. "All great art is the work of great personalities."³⁷

35 Ibid., 147.

36 Ibid., 146.

37 Ibid., 147-148.

All these divisions need a moral basis but as shown in the diagram, character and moral education itself must be based upon religion, otherwise we have only a partial basis and not a basis of full reality. It is the difference in basis that shows us, e.g., the difference between real charity and philanthropy. Philanthropy hangs in the air or dreams of a social utopia, while charity goes back to a special relation between God and the neighbor. "Amen I say to you, as long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me." Matt. XXV, 40.

Catholic education furnishes a concrete and solid basis to all moral education; it gives a personal model in Christ and once again, it gives, especially through the sacraments, the strength for moral practice.³⁸

While religion then becomes the unifying basis of all education, it has to be taught in that light; it must be shown that religion is a way of life not a compilation of supernatural concepts; it must be applied to every day life. "The ideal of Catholic education is the well-informed Catholic who lives his life in conformity with the teachings of Christ and the Church."³⁹

c. Social

Catholic education is essentially social; it is social

38 Ibid., 148-150.

39 Ibid., 161.

to the core though not in the same sense as radical socialists understand it. First of all, social education is an integral part of general education. It belongs to the development of the whole man and is not just an adaptation to existing society or a mere instruction about social institutions. "Social education is not to be conceived as something separate from and unrelated to, the complete moral and religious formation of character."⁴⁰

The aim of Catholic social education is the realization of the Kingdom of God; the perfect society. Its spirit is the spirit of love announced by Christ: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Its method is based upon a thorough knowledge of human nature. Man is social by nature, yes, to a certain degree, e.g., man has social instincts "which have to be trained and developed, guided and directed along the lines of genuine social culture if they are to be employed in the service of society."⁴¹ Thus, social education starts with the development of personal virtue. The mastery of the social instincts will then be possible by self-
 renouncement but as Foerster says: "self-renouncement that is completely felt and known and willed."⁴²

Without personal virtue, social influence of a person would be for evil rather than for good. "The foundations of

40 Ibid., 155.

41 Ibid., 153.

42 Ibid., 156.

society must be laid in the minds and hearts of its members."⁴³ Once he has fortified himself against the danger of being swallowed up in the crowd, the educated will be able to contribute to society and to the solutions of social questions, in other words, he will be able to bring something to society. But then also in working positively for the society, by his knowledge of human nature, he will be able to allow/^{for}and to understand the faults and foibles of men which are not conducive to love. Catholic teaching will make him love the neighbor not for his own sake but for God. "Hence, religious inspiration is, in the last analysis, the only solid basis of social consciousness and the only motive force of social action."⁴⁴

Thus, the teachings of the Church and the practice of the spirit of Christianity must create in the child the social attitudes necessary for life and the solution of social problems. Historically, it could also be shown how this teaching and this practice of love has wrought deep changes in society. Of course, to say that Catholic teaching and spirit is essentially social does not mean that Catholic education is not open to the empirical conclusions of sound psychology or sociology. Again, they must help to show how the basic social attitude in man, created by the teaching of Catholic doctrine, is best expressed and applied.

43 Ibid., 154.

44 Ibid.

While, therefore, modern social education needs grounding in the basic principles of Christian sociology, Christian education must widen its view to include the present-day needs of society and adjust its procedures so as better to attain the accomplishment of social aims. Otherwise, it cannot justify its claims to produce the perfect type of social efficiency.⁴⁵

Characterized by universalism, organic unity and social impact of teaching and practice of love, Catholic education has to be the archetype for all other educational systems; at least it has the principles to be so.

Every system of education is based on a philosophy of life. All education properly so-called is based on a complete philosophy of life. All true education is based on the true philosophy of life.⁴⁶

B. VLAAMS OPVOEDKUNDIG TYDSCHRIFT

(V.O.T.)

(Flemish Educational Review)

Having sketched De Hovre's theory, it seems pertinent to advert to his favorite vehicle for spreading his views. Even before World War I, the idea of editing an educational review for the Flemish teachers had sprung up in his mind. The outbreak of the War had postponed the project but as soon as possible, in fact, already in 1919, together with his friend De Coene, he

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid., 3.

started what is called Vlaams Opvoedkundig Tydschrift.⁴⁷ From that time on, all his articles appeared in this review. Surveying the numerous articles of De Hovre during this thirty-five year period and knowing the sympathy with which it was, and still is, accepted not only in higher educational circles but also by the ordinary teachers, one is able to get a hint of the immense influence De Hovre has exercised on the Flemish pedagogical world.

This review appeared every month until a few years ago when it became bi-monthly. Each number presents an article about an educator, psychologist or sociologist whose work has had an influence or connection with pedagogy. It is amazing to see the diversity of the authors and books presented and reviewed. Just as an example: in 1953 were presented - St. Paul as teacher and pedagogue - ideas about instruction and indoctrination by Professor W. Niblett of the University of Leeds (England) - the work of Dr. Igor Caruso, psychologist in Wien - the psychology of the meeting of cultures by Professor Arnold Toynbee, English historian - Man according to C. G. Jung, psychologist of Zürich (Swiss) - Man according to Ed. Spranger, psychologist and pedagogue in Germany. It is also in this review that as a rule for the first time, the American educators and psychologists are presented by

47 V. D'Espallier, "Hovre, Frans De," Kath. Enycl. voor Opvoeding en Onderwys, 275.

De Hovre himself or in recent years by some of his co-workers, e.g., Professor Kriekemans of the University of Louvain. Besides the presentation of these people, several articles can be found about current problems in pedagogy and psychology. Just a look over the index of last year shows the range of the published articles: from "The Positive Meaning of Existentialism" to "Modern Musical Education", from "The Growing of the Western Cultural and Pedagogical Ideal," to the "System of Education in U.S.S.R." etc. Further are treated, for a great part by De Hovre himself, the reviews of the latest books in the educational world of Western Europe and the United States. As can be seen from the titles of the quoted articles, the spirit of the review is in the tradition of European pedagogy which stresses the philosophical and rational side of education and psychology much more than the experimental viewpoint one finds in most American educational reviews.

This general survey of the review is sufficient to show the broad-mindedness of the editor and also the immense work required to keep pace with the ever-growing field of education in so many countries. But at the same time one becomes aware of the immense good such a review is able to do for teaching personnel and for those interested in pedagogy.

C. HIGHER INSTITUTES OF PEDAGOGY

Very soon, De Hovre felt through his Flemish Educational

Review, that the formation of teachers in the "normal schools" was not sufficient any more to cope with the fast growing developments in the educational field. At the universities there were departments of pedagogy of course, but these were directed more towards the theoretical and research side of education and they were practically not accessible to the ordinary teachers. It was for them though that something was needed; for the ordinary teachers who liked to know more about the modern trends in education or who liked to get some in-service training. This need became clearer to De Hovre and, in 1925, he started the first higher Institute of Pedagogy at Ghent. It was an in-service training program of three years at the level of higher education. The courses offered were fundamental subjects such as ethics, aesthetics, logics, theology, other auxiliary sciences of education and then especially psychology and pedagogy or philosophy of education. This whole thing was a kind of a private enterprise but it met such success with the teachers that in the following years, similar institutes had to be opened in Brussels, Antwerp, Hasselt and Bruges. Seeing merely the list of the professors teaching at these institutions, we can get an idea of the fact that these institutions are the real centers of influence for the ordinary teachers. It was and it still is a happy formula for the in-service training of the Flemish teachers and it is a happy combination where the university world has direct con-

tact with the practicing teachers.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Ibid., 276.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION

Having finished in the foregoing chapters the survey of the work and the theory of De Hovre, it seems to be in order to try to assess the effect his work and his theory have had in the educational circles in Belgium, to estimate his influence in the United States and to try to show which points in his theory can be of value for American education.

A. IN BELGIUM

1. Social and Intellectual Uplift of the Teachers

Baur, in the already mentioned speech, said to De Hovre:

The Catholic spirit in you has sufficiently awakened and fostered your social sense so that you sought always to keep as the richest task in your life the intellectual and social uplift of the teachers.¹

These words, from a man who has known De Hovre very well, are important in the evaluation of the work of De Hovre. Indeed it is in this light that his whole educational work has to be seen. It characterizes the spirit that works behind all his studies, behind all his articles in Vlaams Opvoedkundig Tydschrift, behind

1 Frank Baur, Feestrede, St. Lucasschool, Gent, 1938,
11.

his books and last, but not least, behind all the trouble and difficulties of the higher Institutes of Pedagogy. As was said in the beginning, it is the spirit of the more or less naive idealism of the Flemish Student Movement that channeled through his priestly vocation, has taken concrete shape in the uplift of the teachers. If the Flemish wanted to be recognized as full citizens in Belgium, they did not have to lose their own culture and language. It was not by throwing overboard what one had in his own culture and by taking over another culture that one became great and recognized as such. It was only by exploiting the values which one possessed in his own culture and patrimonium and then by opening his mind and heart to all the enriching features of other cultures that a man would become the all-rounded, well-educated and esteemed person. That was sound humanism. To revive, in the Flemish people, the esteem for their own culture and patrimonium, the first thing to be done was to make the teachers aware of it. That was the task that De Hevre set up for himself.

a. Making Them Aware of the Treasure of Catholic Education

The Flemish culture and patrimonium is based upon the Catholic conception of life. The Reformation never had a real impact in Belgium. Thus, the education in Flanders was essentially based upon the Catholic theory of education. It is, however, a fact of which nobody seemed to be aware at that time and it

took even De Hovre a few years to achieve this full insight. But once he got it and once he saw how the influence of naturalism, radical socialism and other isms were creeping into the mind of the educators, he really set himself to work and wrote his main books, Philosophy and Education and Catholicism in Education. We think it is of very great importance to see his books in this light: they are written to make his teachers aware of the one-sidedness and insufficiency of the non-Catholic theories but above all, to show them the value of the Catholic theory of education they possess and to make them enthusiastic for it. As a good disciple of Cardinal Mercier, he did not do that in a naive way by just labelling the other theories but by a deep study not only of their theoretical but also of their practical value for life. He weighed them and found them too light. So he always tried to approach the different theories not in cut-up, little compartments, but as a whole.

As a result of this approach, it seems sometimes a little confusing especially through the numerous subdivisions of the English translation. It is through this approach also that some points in Catholicism in Education seem to be treated rather superficially. For instance, in his presentation of Catholic conception of life, the doctrine of original sin is only implied; in his theory of Catholic education, the educational value and positive strength of the sacraments is not stressed at all. But it

is this approach of the Catholic conception of life and pedagogy as a whole that makes the student aware of the value of his Catholic religion and education. It is only this approach which will make him enthusiastic about it.

Thus seen under this light, his books also show De Hovre much more as an educator than as a theoretical scholar or original thinker, in fact his books are textbooks to be used in class and are asking thus for an enthusiastic teacher who makes the whole theory a living one. He always has the teachers in mind: how can he help them to be better teachers, to be better apostles and guides for the children on their way through life and to God. It is in this light that one can see his preference for the history of education and his predilection for the men who represent a theory. As an educator, he knows that doctrine as such is dry, that it must be enlivened in the representatives of this theory. Hence the numerous monographs he has written.

b. Widening Their Horizon

Along with getting the teachers convinced and enthusiastic about the value of their Catholic theory of education, their intellectual outlook also must be widened. De Hovre, as a true humanist, has always had respect for the searching of the human mind and in all theories he is able to find something good. He is convinced that contact with the educators of foreign countries is very widening for mind and heart. Hence he does not

limit himself, especially in his review to the educators of Belgium. As it was pointed out, in the review he presented sociologists, psychologists and others for the first time to the Dutch-reading public. No one who had a certain influence is excluded, though we get the impression that the German and English-American authors are in the majority. To cite a few treated during recent years: Newman, Sprangler, Spalding, Durkheim, McDougall, Stanley Hall, Max Scheler, Peter Wust, Ebner, Von Hildebrand, Romano Guardini, Freud, Jung, Adler, Prinzhorn and Klages.

Here, too, must be mentioned the in-service training offered to the teachers by his higher Institutes of Pedagogy. The educational level of the best of the teachers-corps has certainly been raised considerably by these higher institutes. Together with the Flemish Educational Review, these institutes have had and still have a remaining influence in making the Flemish teachers what they are today.

c. Deepening the Understanding of Education

He not only worked on the horizontal plane but he was not afraid to guide the teachers more deeply in order to keep always before their eyes the ideal of education, namely, in two things which he liked to stress, social education and the fact that education is more than methodology.

Social Education Here he guided the teachers especially by showing them the true social aspect of education. He has received

this social insight from Willmann and it is certainly one of the characteristics of his whole theory. After the individualism that had kept the school as something apart from society and life the value of the social aspect was being better appreciated. As a reaction, the radical-socialism of Dewey and others had a tremendous appeal. De Hovre recognized the value of this new trend but he saw also the danger of its radicalism. He was sincerely convinced of the elevating role of sociology for education.

Sociology has served to deepen our educational understanding; it has clarified the work of education; it has ennobled the task of the instructor; it has extended and vitalized educational ideals; it has increased interest in the field of education; it has brought the school into contact with life; it has revealed new bases from which we may see the relations that exist between the ideal of education; particularly character education, and the social life. In short, by and through its contact with sociology, education has been stripped of much that was merely external ornament, pedantic and foreign to life, and has come forth richly endowed with the practical knowledge that the modern social movement has brought to life.²

But as was pointed out earlier, this social impact for De Hovre is quite different from a superficial socialization. "All merely external socialization is illusory if it is not based on the interior organization of man."³ It is not the change in school organization, the change in method that will bring a better socie-

² Frans De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, New York, 1931, 190.

³ Ibid., 191.

ty."⁴ So he shows that first the individual must master his social instincts, keep them in check. Only then, based on this personal culture, will social culture be able to flourish. He showed the teachers that, what was needed, was a modification in social pedagogy, let us say, more stress on the social value of education but not a radical reform. No break with traditional education was needed but rather a social continuation of ethical and religious education. He showed how the synthesis of social education and the education of the personality could be found in Christian social education, but he liked to stress that in practice, Christian pedagogy and the character training must take more account of the social needs.

Education is more than methodology. "Methods, program, organization, educational technique are, without doubt, important, but they are, after all, merely secondary."⁵ Education, striving to become more and more scientific, is at the same time in more and more danger of being reduced to palpable facts, experiences and the like. It is completely true that in education many things can be tested and reduced to some kind of scientific principles but the error begins when somebody gets the idea that the whole of education can be reduced to that. In theory, everybody will agree that education is much more than facts and tests but sometimes one gets the impression that if one uses this or that

4 Ibid., 192.

5 Ibid., Preface, vii.

method, infallible results will follow. That is a heresy which De Hovre pointed out to the teachers. We have to keep first values first. What one is teaching and what the goal is, is always of first importance and then only comes the question of how shall one teach! Pedagogy is first of all a problem of values and ends and then a problem of method.

2. Shaking the Official Neutral Pedagogy

Public education in Belgium is largely controlled by the government through the Minister of Public Instruction. After the First World War, this position was held almost constantly by a member of the Liberal Party, the motto of which was a so-called neutrality in education. The intrigues behind this neutrality, to say the least, were deeply felt by the Catholic system of education at the different points where it had to come in contact with political maneuvering, for instance, in the examination of inspectors.

These circumstances influenced De Hovre to stress more and more the very heart of his whole theory: all education supposes a philosophy of life and one does not live by neutrality because a man simply does not live by adhering to nothing. He saw in these circumstances in Belgium an evident proof for the foundation of his theory. If he was not able to change the government and the influence of the Liberal Party in public instruction, he was at least able to keep the spirits of Catholic teachers

alive and alert. By doing that he was protecting them for the sometimes tempting presentation of a neutral pedagogy. He could and did show them what was behind it.

This may be sufficient to give an idea of how the influence of De Hovre can hardly be over-estimated in Flemish education. The points in his theory that have been of the most importance in Belgium are the same points that brought his work to the other countries: namely, (a) the fundamental principle which states that all education goes back to a philosophy of life and this principle thus makes away at once with all so-called neutral education (b) his social pedagogy (c) a Catholic philosophy of life, the richest and most complete foundation for a sound education.

B. INFLUENCE IN THE UNITED STATES

1. Actual Influence

It is, of course, rather difficult to estimate to what extent the books of an author have influenced the growing of others. One way of obtaining a fair idea of the influence of an author may be to look up the references given by other authors in their books. Another way would be to see if there are some articles written about the author. In this connection, there are only a couple of articles in the Catholic Educational Review, for instance, U. De Hasque, "Dr. Frans De Hovre, Outstanding Belgian

Pedagogue."⁶ And a presentation of his book, Philosophy and Education by George N. Shuster under the title, "Solid Ground for the School."⁷ In the Catholic School Journal, very short sketches of the authors treated in Vlaams Opvoedkundig Tydschrift were introduced to the English-reading public, especially in the years of 1938, 1939 and 1940. This was interrupted by the war and after the war only one article by De Hovre was found in the Catholic School Journal, entitled "Catholic Educational Thinker: Dr. Edward A. Fitzpatrick."⁸ Certainly one of the reasons that so few articles of his appeared in English is the fact that all his articles in Vlaams Opvoedkundig Tydschrift are written in Flemish, which is less often translated. Already it can be seen by these articles that his influence is limited to Catholic reviews and journals. The same can be said by glancing through the reference of the books in the educational field. It is largely in books presenting a Catholic philosophy of education that his work is mentioned but they are always referred to. This can readily be understood by the very content and the very thesis of his books especially Catholicism in Education.

In a concluding remark on his actual influence in the United States, it can be said that his work, besides the fact that his books are used as textbooks in some Catholic colleges,

6 Catholic Educational Review, June, 1931, 321-327.

7 Catholic School Journal, June 1949, 189-185.

8 Catholic School Journal, June 1949, 184-185.

is consulted by American Catholic philosophers of education. Sometimes this influence is pronounced as can be seen in recent books, for instance, in A Catholic Philosophy of Education by John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan.⁹

2. What Can His Theory Bring to American Education?

As was said, the points in his theory, which were of the most importance for the Flemish teachers, can be of the most help to the educators in other countries, including the United States.

a. His Fundamental Principle That Links All Education To a Philosophy of Life It is true that in recent years, more and more people have raised their voices to proclaim the inter-relation between philosophy and education but still it is far from being seen as a fundamental principle which even in practice, has far-reaching effects. A look for example, at the steps in curriculum construction as given by Chamberlain and Kindred in The Teacher and School Organization shows that some weight is given to the philosophy of education but it is not yet seen as the fundamental thing.

Although the recommendations of various students of curriculum differ in detail, the general procedure is somewhat as follows:

⁹ John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education, Milwaukee, 1942.

1. Determining social needs and problems through the discovery of facts about the conditions of life in the community.

2. A study of human development involving detailed consideration of the nature of growth and the needs of children.

3. Formulating a definite philosophy of education which reflects an understanding of the facts arising from a study of social needs and problems and the basic considerations underlying human development.¹⁰

Of first importance are the immediate goals and only in the third place come the goals for man as man; only in the third place the fundamental question is posed. It reveals in itself a whole philosophy of life!

Especially the different results and outcomes of education are not yet brought back to the underlying philosophy of life, although in some educational circles some uneasiness is felt, but as a rule, this is not clearly pronounced. There is a lot of truth in what Woodring says in his book, Let's Talk Sense About Our Schools. "The philosophy which underlies the new education is unacceptable to a large number of Americans."¹¹

An examination of the professional journals quickly reveals that any real disagreement or fundamental issue is never tolerated. A teacher may read dozens of such journals without finding a single article which questions

¹⁰ Leo M. Chamberlain and Leslie W. Kindred, The Teacher and School Organization, Prentice-Hall, New York, 1949, 343.

¹¹ P. Woodring, Let's Talk Sense About Our Schools, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1953.

the validity of pragmatic principles.¹²

It is through the fundamental principle of the interrelation between philosophy and education that we become aware that a system of education has to be judged ultimately by its underlying philosophy. A system of education can have a good method, adapted to the child, but the direction in which one is going is more important than the situation of the road. The child-centered education is very good but it is not the only element in education.

It is clear, says Jacques Maritain, that the teacher must adapt himself to the child, but education properly so-called does not begin until the child adapts himself to the teacher and to the culture, the truths and the systems of value which it is the mission of the teacher to transmit to the child.¹³

We always have to weigh the principles and see where they lead to. The ultimate value of a system of education remains always, "Where does it bring us? What is the goal?"

The fundamental principle of interrelation between philosophy and education shows also the neutral pedagogy as a contradictio in terminis. Neutral education is the education that shies away from all indoctrination or philosophy of life; the teacher must be neutral, objective, unprejudiced; he has to keep his own conviction for himself. All he has to do is to explain

12 Ibid.

13 De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, Preface, vii.

what is for or against a certain conception of life and then leave it to the students to make their decision. It is very interesting in this respect to see what De Hovre says about the change of the English pedagogues after World War II.

Having realized the force and the power of the education in the totalitarian states they admit that the propagated theory of these states was wrong but that their diagnosis was right: an education without indoctrination brings forth spiritual anaemia and moral paralysis in the individual as well as in the society. The English pedagogues recognize that education without indoctrination runs counter to the formation of living human beings; it brings only to over-estimation of one self, to scepticism and total lack of conviction for the youth. This neutrality takes away the spiritual influence of the teacher's personality and it lessens the vital influential power of the teacher as a whole. To deny the teacher to enounce his conviction and leaving the decision of the great problems of life to the immature youth is in the long run an act of cowardice and, as Prof. Wolfenden says, 'chickenheartedness.'¹⁴

Besides that, it is educationally unsound even to strive for neutrality. It is impossible to educate neutrally. It would be simply giving no education at all because education is at least guiding us towards a goal and this goal must be known clearly and not vaguely, both to the teacher and to the student as far as possible. In as far as a goal is set, education loses its neutrality. This goal is an ultimate goal or it is not. If it sets

¹⁴ Frans De Hovre, Translated from his Introduction to Professor W. Niblett, "Losse Gedachten over Onderwys en Indoctri-
natie," Vlaams Opvoedkundig Tydschrift, 1953, n. 2, 65.

an ultimate goal, it is evidently not neutral any more and even if it states only proximate goals, these goals in turn are already directed towards a further goal, in the long run proximate goals, too, lead further to an ultimate goal. Education is guidance and guidance must lead somewhere or it is no guidance at all. Because this so-called neutrality is applied most of the time to religious education, it is perhaps fitting to quote Sidney Smith, president of the University of Toronto, speaking about tolerance in religion.

I believe, he said, that we have gone too far along the road of secularizing institutions of higher learning. There is a gap in liberal education; it has been caused by the policy, which is all too prevalent in universities throughout the English-speaking world, of evading, ignoring or even opposing the teaching of religion. This lacuna in liberal education is both lamentable and inexcusable. To the student who knows nothing of theology, much history is meaningless, much philosophy is distorted and much literature is unintelligible. The tolerance of religious differences is not the same thing as ignoring religion altogether. One can be tolerant in a positive way, through sympathy and understanding or one can be tolerant in a negative way, through apathy and moral cowardice. This negative kind of tolerance begets indifference and indifference is at the root of religious illiteracy.¹⁵

b. Social Pedagogy In the last fifty years, the social aspect of education has been brought more and more to the forefront. That is why the position in the social education taken by an author is always of the greatest importance. As we stated before,

¹⁵ Quoted in Time, May 4, 1953.

De Hovre, in line with Willmann and Foerster, takes definitely moderate stand on this question. In Belgium, where the radical-social position had slowly been creeping in, he warned of the danger of radicalism but at the same time, stressed the great importance of the social aspect of education. He tried to make his students and the teachers in general, fully aware of the social value of Catholic doctrine. For American education, we do not regard his refutation of the radical-socialism of Dewey as important as his approach to the social element in Catholic education. He himself did not work out in great detail the social value of the different principles of Catholic conception of life but he pointed out how the Catholic doctrine is the synthesis of all sociological contradictions. Here again we see in him not the original thinker but much more the animator, the man who gives guidance and shows clearly what direction is safe.

Social education is only a part of general education, or as Willmann said, education has two termini: the person and society. Education aims at a complete development of the personality but at the same time it knows that a personality finds only his full development in and through society. Education aims at development of the individual but an individual living in a society. Education does have a vital social function, namely, the continuation of culture and tradition, the preservation and development of society, the transfer of spiritual values and insti-

tutions. Both aspects, individual and social, have to supplement each other. This shows already how social education is not a radical new theory of education; it is only a supplementary aspect. This means that social education does not ask for a break with tradition, as Dewey seemed to require. It is a new aspect that enriches the traditional values: we have thus to integrate the new aspect in the tradition and only then will we have made sound progress because real progress is only made by building further on what tradition gives us and not by discarding completely the treasures built up through the centuries. That is why, e.g., the curriculum has to keep the student in contact with the treasures of tradition.

It is of very great importance to look upon social education in this manner. It shows that the real socialisation of the students must come through the content of the doctrine and through the strength and motivation they get to live according to that doctrine, e.g., what does one see in his neighbor, just another man he has to get along with or does he see in each man a special relation to God? And what forces are there in his conception of life which can help him to live according to that special relation, e.g., the sacraments. Social education, or rather social training as William H. Kilpatrick sees it, is rather superficial. He says that the child must learn to take turns in swinging because that is, till now, the best way we know of to

get as much as possible out of that situation. That is very poor motivation, and we easily can imagine a smart child reaching this conclusion: if I only can make Johnny play with the sand so that he keeps quiet, I will have the swing for myself alone.

Socialization then is in the first place something that takes place in the person himself, in his ideas and in his will to live according to these ideas. Social-mindedness is first of all in the mind and the heart and that is why in social education, attention has to be paid to the formation of the mind and the heart. This is nothing else than teaching the social values of the Catholic doctrine together with the self-control and character-strength needed to live according to that doctrine. Only personal perfection can lead to social betterment. Only when a person has mastered his social instincts, is he able to go into society and play a stimulating role. This does not mean, however, that there are two separate phases: one, the formation of the personality, the other taking contact with social life. We are not here concerned with the time but with the matter of importance. In practice, both aspects have to grow together but what should be especially stressed is the danger of throwing the young man in society without forming his personality. It is not merely by adapting oneself to the others and finding out what will work best that one becomes social-minded. One can get along with other people out of pure selfishness!

Also, social-education does not consist in adapting oneself to the existing society, but it must be the striving and aiming at an ideal society. Describing how society is and how it works in its different institutions maybe sociology, but it is not social education. Since education is concerned with what ought to be, social education, therefore, presupposes that we know what society ought to be; a definite ideal of society together with a definite ideal of a socialized human being.

Catholic education gives or, at least, should give an eminent social education. From what has been said, it can clearly be understood that the Catholic doctrine need not be changed but the social aspect and value must be given more emphasis in education.

We shall find the solution of the social problem in a conservative theory of social education which, holding fast to all that is of lasting value in the traditional education of Christianity, adapts its methods and its content to the existing social needs.¹⁶

The elaboration of the social aspect of Catholic doctrine in all its possibilities is still in progress. Though we may be glad to see a trend in that direction, we must recognize that much still has to be done. The social aspect of the dogmas and the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ is still far from being exhausted.

16 De Hovre, Philosophy and Education, 203.

The social impact of the Ten Commandments and the Christian ethics in general has been vaguely felt but not very clearly stated nor expressed in action. The social value of the sacraments and their socializing power are still far from being a deep influence on the Catholic people.

All help in translating the social value of the Catholic doctrine and ethics into concrete instruction at school and in church should be welcome. The work of De Hovre can be very stimulating in this respect. In trying to bring out the social value of this doctrine, he shows the immense possibilities which still are hidden to a great extent for most of us. His work has a stimulating effect and perhaps will help to bring about the real, sound socialization, which is a condition for the realization of the perfect society, which is the Kingdom of God.

c. Catholic Philosophy of Life, the Richest and Most Complete Foundation of Realistic Education, Must Be Governed By a Central Idea Karl Adam, in his work entitled, The Spirit of Catholicism,¹⁷ speaks about an external and internal Catholicity. External Catholicity, which means the capacity for adaptation to the whole world, to every nation and to every period of time is, of course, a very important aspect but here we are concerned especially with the internal Catholicity. It means that

17 Karl Adam, The Spirit of Catholicism, New York, 1929.

Catholicism is based upon the whole of revelation and tradition, that it deals with man in his entirety. Catholicism is able to enclose all aspects of reality. That is why it can be called the richest and most complete foundation for a realistic education which takes in account all phases of reality.

However, to grasp this universalism of Catholicism as a conception of life and thus as a theory of education, it must be seen as a whole, as a unit. Herein lies the merit of De Hovre's work. It is not his exposition of Catholic philosophy of life or even not his exposition of the theory of education as such that is so important but it is his approach to this conception of life and theory of education which is enlightening. One can argue about some points which are not sufficiently stressed but the attempt to see this philosophy of life and its theory of education as a whole is very valuable. It is very well to analyze a theory into its different elements, as for instance, to speak about the nature of God, then the nature of the child, etc., but these are not complete. Analyzing a doctrine in its elements can help to give a better understanding of the parts but if they are not put together and seen in their mutual relationships, the whole doctrine can never have an appeal to the students; it is dead; it has no value for life. That is why the Catholic conception of life has to be taught from a central point of view, it has to be governed by a central idea. This central idea, this unifying element can be different. In this context, one can take "life,"

another "the Mystical Body of Christ," another can see everything from the angle of the Holy Trinity or look at it from the three poles of God, Christ, and the Church, as De Hovre does. In the long run, it is not so important what the center is as long as there is a center which is able to give unity to the whole; otherwise, it can not be lived. This lack of a unifying center is greatly responsible for the fact that children lose interest in religion when they come into higher grades of elementary school and in high school. We have set up classes in which religious instruction is provided point by point, but we have too often forgotten to show the unity; to synthesize it and to relate it to life. Hence, we sometimes experience a complete lack in discriminating the essential from the accidental. Further, we have forgotten again that classes of religion are good but not sufficient; our conception of life must be brought out in all classes and subjects and in the whole spirit of the school and the home. It is evident that conflicts in the philosophy of life between the home and the school can be very disturbing in the development of a child.

We should be glad that more and more efforts are made in that direction of seeing Catholicism as a living unit, as illustrated in the work of the Sisters of the Christian Schools, Vorseelaar, Belgium. But the field is still wide open, especially on the high-school level. Men like De Hovre are able to stir up and

awaken the minds to go further and further in that direction.

To conclude this study of the work and the theory of De Hovre, the best we can do is to quote D'Espallier in his article about De Hovre:

De Hovre is an animator, a searcher of the sources. Everybody in Flanders who plays a role in the pedagogical world is directly or indirectly influenced by him. Practical pedagogy, psychopedagogy or so-called scientific pedagogy never kept his full attention. But what concerns the scientific study of modern theories of education and their conformation with the Catholic theory of education, his work is a still working stimulus, even outside the borders of Belgium.¹⁸

¹⁸ V. D'Espallier, "Hovre, Frans De," Katholieke Encyclopedie voor Onderwijs en Opvoeding, II, 1952.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Raymond P. Ranson, C.I.C.M. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Education.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

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Date

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