COMMUNICATION
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more important problems of marriage, birth, property and the like. Unfortunately, morality, which should be a living, teaching thing, something dawning upon a generation but splendid of possession, has become dead and dreary as far as most of us are concerned. That is because we have no real morality which we earned for ourselves, but are falling back for the support of our threadbare sentiments and ugly vices on the morality of our forefathers. I am of the opinion that when a man reaches the age of thirty-two or thereabout he is an old man in everything but physical age. He assumes youth that his vast experience has placed him on a pinnacle with the prophets. Not only do these moralists consider their moral the last word in conduct as compared with the preceding ages and centuries to follow, but they inform you that if the Slav or Spanish disagree with them, by that token they are immoral.

For example, in a discussion upon the observance of the Sabbath, I was able to perform a gentleman that in Germany it was quite customary, and indeed the rule to attend the theatre on Sunday. He regarded this an indirect approach peril to spiritual Germany. When I added that those whom I was sure he would call the “best people” supported the custom he heartily, he made answer to the effect that then they could not be really the best people. I have written at some length about this ludicrous if not pernicious theory that there is a fixed standard of right and wrong, and that if tangoing is considered wrong today it will always be so considered by “representative people,” because it is under this same false banner that the theatre is persecuted.

Let us take for example the glaring case so recently before our eyes: the censoring of M. Briieux’s “Maternity.” In all his plays Briieux concerns himself with social, moral and political problems. “Maternity” he develops three main themes which are:

1. In cases of seduction, the seducer and not the unfortunate girl and husband, should bear the blame.
2. The state which preaches increase of population should treat its employers accordingly and should not penalise maternity.
3. A poor man has no right to bring more children into the world than he can support.

Mayor Curley has been quoted as regarding “Maternity” as a degenerate play and his aim to break up the home. If placing the responsibility of seduction where it belongs instead of glossing over the affair with vicious sentimentalism such as “boys will be boys,” means breaking up the home, then logic has lost its usefulness.

The Mayor is the head of the American people. If to practice what one preaches is degeneracy, I withdraw. If to prevent poverty and wretchedness is to break up the home then truly “Maternity” is a dangerous play.

But I have not yet pointed out what I meant to illustrate. The digression was for the purpose of enlightening Technology students upon the subject of the play. I deepened of their ever reading it. I asked one of my fellows whether he would care to read the play. He replied that he did not care to read the “play.” “I asked: “Do you know anything at all about the play?” He answered: “No, but I don’t want to read that kind of a play.” Is this the result of a scientific education?

But the point is whether you agree or disagree with M. Briieux’s thesis? You may be bitterly opposed to his every conclusion. But if you are to consider yourself in any respect a fair-minded person, you will adopt the intellectual viewpoint and admit that it is possible that some one else may have different ideas on these subjects. Go to the play, be un-prejudiced and wary, relinquish your former views only when you are fairly convinced that the other man has beaten you. If he hasn’t, say so, about it from the house tops; make stump speeches about it. Be a sturdy human being with a mind of your own, not a bromide jellyfish.

You would not ask Mayor Curley whether you should read Walter Pater in preference to Anatole France; why should you ask him whether what Briieux says makes good humanity or not? On the one hand you are so weak-kneed that every Merry Andrew can shake the bottom out of your convictions. On the other hand are you so pigheaded that nobody can convince you on matters that you probably never gave a thought about before, because you considered that grandfather’s way was good enough for him and therefore must be sufficient unto you?

Every splendid thinker, every man who is regarded by humanity as a great soul was more or less of a shock to his contemporaries. Jesus Christ was persecuted and crucified because of the daring and novelty of his teachings. The people of his time regarded him as a danger to the community, a teacher of false and hidden doctrines. Indeed it is evident that he was held by the bulk of his contemporaries in much the same light as in modern times we have regarded such men as Tolstoy, Ibsen, Zola and Briieux. The fact is that Martin Luther was regarded as the most immoral of men when as a priest he actually married a nun. Yet the Protestant students at the Institute look back to him as their fearless pioneer. In short, it must be seen that almost every one of our idols of the past, including the founders of our religions, was persecuted and reviled as a hideous menace to public morality.

The curious thing is that if you do not permit the voice of your prophet to be heard, how will you gain wisdom and strength?

Is it not strange that the layman who persists in protecting you as a chemical engineer in order that he may spur you or your fellows to make things from potato parings, or calico dyes from bamboo, matters of which (Continued on Page Four)

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