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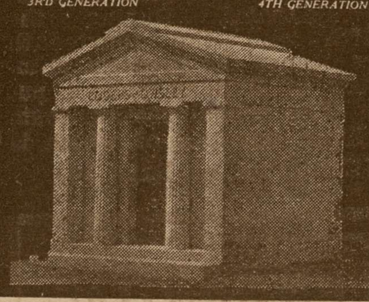

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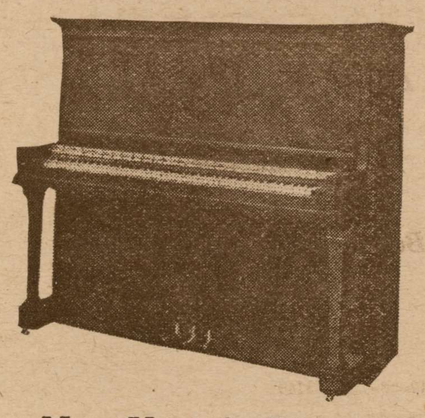

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"TWO-CENT" SUNDAY SCHOOLS—AND THE RESULT.

(Continued from Page 9)

devoted to class recitations. "The professional training of the Indiana Sunday School teachers for religious education is almost negligible. The rank and file of Sunday School teachers have had no courses in the Bible, religion or religious education in any institution of higher learning. The church colleges of Indiana have made little contribution to the Biblical or professional training of the Sunday School teachers of the State." Thirteen times as much energy, we are told, is devoted by the denominational colleges to the preparation of teachers for the State as to the preparation of teachers for the Church. "The great majority are doing the best they can with the light they have." To quote further:

"Counting 50 per cent. for general education, 35 per cent. for professional training and 15 per cent. for teaching experience, the typical Indiana Sunday School teacher would grade 39.9 per cent., and the largest single group of teachers would grade 25 per cent.

"Compared with the rural public-school teachers of Indiana, it may be said that 87.7 per cent. of all the Sunday-School teachers of Indiana fall below the lowest standards which are accepted by the State for rural public-school teachers in Indiana."

Inefficiency of method, we are told, characterizes the work of the superintendents, general and departmental. They are "earnest and consecrated," but "they give to their work just such time as they can take from ilves already overcrowded with other duties." Again, we read:

"Eight denominational boards spent nothing on their Sunday School work in Indiana during the five years preceding the date of this survey. Seven expended an agvregate of $19,300 a year for this purpose. Repeated efforts failed to obtain from the proper officials satisfactory statements regarding the amounts of money expended annually on their Sunday Schools in Indiana, and the amounts received from them for various church causes.

"In most of the denominations the leadership in religious education is divided. Several boards within the denominations issue separate and sometimes competing programs and promote unrelated and rival organizations within the local church.

"The lack of co-ordination within the denomination and of the denomination with the general movement for religious education is the most outstanding weakness revealed by the survey of denominational Sunday School agencies in Indiana. Not a denomination was found which had unified its various boards into a singular religious educational leadership to its own satisfaction. And the survey failed to reveal a denomination which had satisfactorily related itself to the general Sunday School movement. As a result of this failure of co-ordination, there is overwhelming evidence of friction, wastefulness, and in efficiency."

Statistics compiled in relation to church membership and attendance in proportion to the population show that of the 2,835,492 people in Indiana, 793,938 are members of Protestant churches, 275,914 are Catholics, 25,833 Jewish, 5,670 belong to other non-Protestant faiths, and 61 per cent. of the population, or 1,734,137 people, are not members of any church. Of the children and youth under twenty-five years of age, the survey finds that 137,940 are Catholic, 12,650 are Jewish, 2,820 belong to families of other non-Protestant faiths, 486,140 are Protestants, and 749,840 are nominally Protestants, but not identified with any church. There are 551,590 children, it is said, who are not receiving moral or religious instruction under the direction of any religious body. Of every four children enrolled in Sundoy Schools at twelve years, three drop out before they reach the age of eighteen.

No one conscious of the role the Church and its educational agencies must play if American society is to be molded aright, says the New York Evening Post, "will fail to hope for a wider appreciation among Protestants, and all other sects, of the fact that it is a poor kind of religion that tolerates inefficient methods and wretched tools."

A survey of Illinois, thinks the Chicago Evening Post, which devotes three leading editorials to the discussion, would probably show no gratifying variations from the facts set forth in the Indiana survey. These facts, we are told, convey a challenge to the Church, since religious education of the young is its "basic job." Therefore—

"The Sunday School must be something more than a pious duty if it is to justify itself. It must be an intelligent, efficient, thorough educational service. The Church has taken the task of religious education out of the home. It has coaxed and persuaded parents to send their children to its schools. What is it doing for them? If the State failed in secular education as the Church is failing in religious education, there would be a loud and angry protest from every pulpit in the land. It is time the Church took this responsibility seriously. Here, as nowhere else, it will find the cause for many of the disquieting symptoms of modern life to which it addresses its sermons and resolutions. Hope of betterment lies in the fact that recognition or failure comes from within the Church itself."

But the implications of the Indiana survey, thinks the Indianapolis Star, are unjust to Indiana, and leave an entirely erroneous impression of the Protestant church movement in that State. It is noted that

"The chief criticisms have been leveled at the small town and rural communities, but make the mistake of attempting to reduce such an intangible thing as spiritual growth to cold figures. If Indiana is to be accepted as the most representative American commonwealth, it is fair to assume that conditions are no less favorable than will be found in Ohio, Illinois, or other States. The survey's charge that the leading Hoosier denominational colleges devote thirteen times as much energy to the preparation of teachers for the State as they do to the preparation of teachers for the Church certainly reflects no condition peculiar to Indiana."

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CIVILIZATION SELF-DESTRUCTIVE.

That civilization, left to itself ,always acts to weaken and degrade a race, because it tends to preserve the unfit as well as the fit, and that the only hope of the world is to keep the unfit from breeding, is the contention of Albert Edward Wiggam, writing in Strength (Philadelphia). Mr. Wiggam believes that civilization is self-destructive, and he quotes President Stanley Hall as saying: "Man has not yet demonstrated that he can remain permanently civilized." We have apparently sufficient strength and intelligence to create a civilization, but not enough strength and intelligence to keep it going. Historians, statesmen and economists have said that this is due to political conditions. Markets shift, or moral paralysis settles down upon the people, so that their daring and enterprise decay. There is no question that factors of this type have always been present, but historians have not inquired why political and economic conditions became so bad or why markets have been taken by other nations. Mr. Wiggam goes on:

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"Some have claimed that nations go through a period of youth and vigor, followed by a long period of maturity; that then old age and senility set in and finally death follows.

"But at last biologists have come forward with evidence in favor of a new explanation. Let us suppose that a farmer has two bushels of potatoes of equal size, vigor, and freedom from disease. He plants one bushel in rich, mellow soil, and the other in hard, sterile soil. Beyond question the first season those in rich soil will yield both more potatoes and much larger potatoes.

"The results are so unmistakable and so immediate that he fails to inquire what has gone on inside the potatoes themselves.

"The next season he plants all of those raised in rich soil in the same sort of ground and those from poor soil he plants again in poor soil.

"At the end of a few seasons he begins to suspect that something is going wrong with his stocks. He finds among the seed from rich soil that there is an enormous number of little potatoes. The average size is greatly reduced. He also finds dry-rot, although the ones from the poor soil seem unaffected. He concludes that his soil must be deteriorating and that he has not expended enough time and energy in cultivation.

"The farmer therefore, buys expensive fertilizers and redoubles his effort at cultivation. He observes that those grown in poor soil remain small, but they are unaffected by disease and still seem vigorous. His fertilizers seem only to promote disease in his rich-soil potatoes, and to increase the numbers of small and puny ones.

"Next he plants a large sample of his rich-soil lot in the poor soil, and transfers those bred in the meager ground to the rich and stimulating environment.

"To his amazement, the whole picture is instantly reversed. The potatoes from the poor soil leap up in all their original vigor and even exceed his original planting of years ago. They are all healthy and of great size, while, on the other hand, those taken from the comfortable environment and put into the hard, forbidding soil scarcely survive at all.

"At last there dawns upon his mind by this expensive experience a new experiment. From the new lot, grown in rich soil, he selects only the finest, healthiest, and largest specimens for seed, and uses the balance for food or for the market. The next season he tries his selected seed in his most luxurious soil and gives them every possible care and nourishment. When the harvest comes he finds himself richly rewarded for his use of intelligence. His selected specimens are the largest and finest he has ever grown.

"Now, in their breeding qualities men and potatoes are exactly alie. Human beings in a state of savagery are in the same situation as the potatoes that were planted in hard, sterile soil. Every potato in such soil has to fight for its life. The weaklings never get above the ground, or if they do they are killed off. But in the rich soil all sorts of potatoes survive, and they also rear offspring. The strong are in time crossed with the weak. Thus weakness is spread. Feebleness and disease perpetuate themselves.

"Just so, when men are in savagery and barbarism they progress constantly in their physical, mental, and moral qualities. Barbarism is the only process by which men have ever progressed in their natural inborn strength of body and mind; and civiliza- which mankind has ever grown organically weaker. Civilization is thus the most dangerous enterprise upon which man has ever set out. In the days of his savage state, nature was looking day and night for the weak spot in every man's armor, and without mercy took her toll.

"But what happens when

(Continued on Page 7)

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