

Religion and Life

By Very Rev. George C. Pidgeon, D.D., LL.D.
First Moderator of the United Church of Canada
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LEARNING BY DOING

A few days ago we read a challenging editorial entitled "Learning by doing." The writer favored the old system of apprenticeship as a method of acquiring the skills needed in modern industry. Many young people today prefer the academic approach in which they learn a trade in a school or technical institute instead of "by actual work on an actual job." This article showed the advantages of the system in which "the young man benefits by the precept and example of the older workmen with whom he associates" so that "the standards of the firm become part and parcel of the youth's habits of mind and action." The writer's conclusion is that "to learn to do by doing is proved by long generations of experience to be the best way."

As a matter of fact, both methods are necessary for the mastery of any of the arts or skills of life. As to which should come first, opinions will always differ. A noted English educationist has pointed out the advantage of a return to study after a young person has had a taste of practical experience. He knows then the issues that have to be faced in the world struggle and is eager for information about the ways of dealing with them. He has learned to appreciate the light which the experience and thought of the past can throw on the problems of the present.

A few years ago we had in the Christian ministry a man notable for the sheer energy of his thinking. It seemed to his young admirers that there was no phase of the thought of his time with which he was not familiar, and the thoroughness with which he thought through the practical questions brought before him turned his admirers into followers. He explained that his church called her candidates for the ministry "probationers" and sent them out into her mission fields for practical experience, as a preparation for their studies in theology. When he came back to college after his first season on the mission he was just one big question-mark. He was athirst for information on the various problems which he had met when dealing with people, and the truths and principles taught in his classes were "living and powerful" because of their bearing on the needs of the human soul. The vast knowledge that he gained afterwards was never merely theoretical; it was precious in his sight because of the higher life which it enabled him to live. He too "learned by doing."

Many readers of the New Testament regard the seventh and eighth chapters of John's Gospel as the least helpful section. Yet in those chapters the method before us is emphasized again and again. Against the criticisms which then were leveled at Him, Jesus protested that He was not "self-

taught" and was not doing His wonderful works on His own initiative. His Father had sent Him, and His Father taught Him. It was in response to a direct communication of His Father's will that each miracle was wrought, and it was the truth His Father inspired that He taught. When His critics marveled at His knowledge, He said: "My teaching is not mine but His that sent me. If any man wills to do His (the Father's) will, He shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

It is the deliberate purpose that He stresses here rather than the actual performance. The performance may be far from perfect, but it is the doer's intent that God answers. As Robert Browning put it:

"All I could never be,
All men ignored in me
This was I worth to God."

Therefore Jesus' answer to His opponents was to this effect: "You will believe in God? Then do His will as you know it and you will recognize my teaching as from Him."

No reflection ought ever to be cast on Tennessee's "Honest Doubter." The doubts of such a man as the poet describes so often arise out of his lofty views of God. His ideas of God are so high that he cannot accept current interpretations of His words and works, and faith for such a one will always be difficult until he reaches conceptions of God that satisfy his mind and soul.

At the same time, anyone who has had to deal with men and women in the actual struggles of life realizes that intellectual doubts often have moral causes. Some people cannot believe because they will not obey. A young missionary once wrestled for weeks with a man over his intellectual questionings, and failed to find an answer that satisfied him. Then he discovered that back of his mental searching was moral failure, and had to conclude: "That man can never believe because of his double life." This sad fact should never be assumed in forming our estimates of other people, but everyone ought to search his own heart to make sure that his own moral faults are not the cause of his spiritual difficulties.

In the highest ranges of truth we too "learn by doing." Obedience and understanding is Christ's word to the honest and earnest everywhere. No matter how much men already know, obedience to God's will as they understand it will lead to knowledge deeper still. For example: A man who enters the redemptive process will find his perplexities about atonement and redemption disappear. One who could never accept the doctrine of the atonement and was always worried about it, began helping a certain class of derelicts

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ENGAGEMENT — Mr. and Mrs. G. Clarke Fall, Crapaud, P.E.I., wish to announce the engagement of their daughter Marion Ruth, to Gordon Denver, son of Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Cairns, Kinkora, P.E.I., marriage to take place the latter part of June.

No single method is effective in all cases, but here is one way to faith pointed out by the Redeemer Himself: "If you continue in my word, then you are my disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

back to usefulness and virtue. His success in reclaiming men who had made life's great mistakes was satisfying to his soul. His worrying about mysteries ceased when he became Christ's agent in restoring lost ones for whom Christ had died.

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Ordination At St. Peter's Cathedral

Rev. W. G. Hogg was ordained a priest of the Church of England at St. Peter's Cathedral yesterday morning by the Right Reverend R. H. Waterman, Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia. Assisting the Lord Bishop were the Rev. J. R. McMahon, Rev. E. M. Malone, D.D., Rev. J. T. Ibbott, Rev. A. E. Piercey, Rev. R. W. Coupland.

Prior to his ordination last March as Deacon, Mr. Hogg was a well known business man in the City. He always had a desire to enter Holy Orders but was unable to do so until his retirement as manager of the Confederation Life Insurance Company in Charlottetown.

The service began with a sermon which was preached by the Venerable Archdeacon Harrison of Summerside then the candidate was presented to the Bishop, who required any of those present who knew any reason why he should not be ordained to declare it. No impediment was alleged and he was commended to the prayers of the congregation and the Litany, with special prayers, was sung.

The Holy Communion followed and after the reading of the Gospel, the Bishop, seated in his chair, set forth the meaning of the office and the duty of a priest in the church. The candidate for the priesthood was then examined and made certain promise, after which the hymn "Come Holy Ghost" was said. When this prayer was over the Bishop with the Priests present laid their hands on the head of the Deacon, while the Bishop rehearsing the functions of a priest conferred on him the authority to perform them, and his ordination to the Priesthood was completed.

He was then given a Bible and the chalice and Pater for the celebration of the Holy Communion, and the service continued in the accustomed manner until the congregation was dismissed with the Bishop's Benediction.

The great Dutch painter Rembrandt did many paintings of his wife, Saskia Van Uylenborch.

Minutes of the last meeting were read and approved, and the school committee reported buying supplies for the school. New committees were appointed as follows:— Sick, Mrs. Keith Barrett and Mrs. Ivan Clarke; school, Mrs. A. S. Johnson, re-appointed; sandwich, Mrs. Budd Birch and Mrs. Robert MacLaurin.

Mrs. A. S. Johnson read the minutes of the district meeting, and the officers were appointed for the district convention on July 2nd. Mrs. Ernest Inman and Mrs. A. S. Johnson were appointed to attend the annual convention at Charlottetown on July 9th and 10th.

The June meeting of the Belmont Women's Institute was held at the Inman home with twelve members present and one visitor. Meeting opened by singing the Institute Ode, followed by the roll call which was answered with "What I Like Best About My Husband."

The next roll call is to be answered with "What I Dislike Most About My Husband." Mrs. Lowell Inman kindly invited the members to her home for that meeting. The singing of "God Save The Queen" brought the meeting to a close and lunch was served by the hostesses assisted by several ladies and collection taken amounting to \$2.50.

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The LAURETTE
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- Red Delicious TOMATOES, pkg. 27c
 - Golden Ripe BANANAS, lb. 23c
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MAPLE LEAF

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