

THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN

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Conflicting Philosophies of Education

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EDITOR'S NOTE. *Educational theory and practice always have a philosophy back of them. We are publishing this article, with the hope of provoking thought on the proper philosophical basis of a liberal education.*

"The full possibilities of a Catholic society will never be discovered until there shall appear one which possesses both an educated clergy and an educated laity. Such a society has never yet existed."

—CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS, *The Monstrous Regiment.*

ARE we Americans an educated people? An affirmative chorus goes up from millions of voices. Surely nothing could be clearer. The naive American passion for bigness comes to the rescue; our emotional American logic solves it beyond the shadow of a doubt. The American educational system is bigger than any other; therefore it must be better. So runs our American enthymeme. Yet

more and more the note of scepticism is being sounded. While all will admit that our romantic attempt to give all the children of all the people the benefits of a secondary and, if possible, of a college education has been one of the greatest social experiments the world has ever seen, many caustic critics contend that so far it has been a ghastly and colossal failure.

Merely to list the indictments of American education made in the past decade would be a difficult task. Some stand out by the vigor of their assault. Such a book as *The Quality of the Educational Process in the United States and in Europe* by Learned of the Carnegie Foundation is hardly a comforting book to the American educational chauvinist. Still less is Flexner's *Universities: American, English, German* where the shoddy and tawdry quality of the stuff masquerading as research at American