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## Good Boys

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## Good Boys

Obviously it cannot be the function of a quarterly to enter the lists of journalistic controversy. The movement is too fast for our leisurely pace. By the time our observations are printed, the conflict has moved to other terrain. However, something appeared recently in the controversy raging around Father Delaney, which brings out so neatly the enduring issues from which the controversy was born, that we feel we may comment upon it without running the danger of finding ourselves like the boy on the burning deck "whence all but he had fled."

A newspaper columnist recently discussing the affair at U.P. recalled nostalgically the days before the war on the old Padre Faura campus. Things went well then, he thinks, without chaplains: "There was religious peace and toleration," "no one can say there were more bad boys... under the old set-up." It is a pity, he feels, that the university authorities did not stick to the old way of doing things.

This comment contains the enduring heart of this controversy, and merits discussion. What constitutes a "bad boy" and what a good one? Catholics have very clear ideas on this subject. What are the columnist's ideas? No doubt, he means that there were not more drunkenness, crimes of violence, debauchery, theft, revolt on the campus than there are now. Perhaps not. It is a matter which could be checked with the police. Certainly these *are* things that make a student a "bad boy." But they are not the only things; nor even—and this may come as a shock—the most important things.

To understand what a Catholic considers a "bad boy," one must understand that Catholics accept Christ as a model for old and young, and His teachings as a code of life. A "good boy," therefore, is one who believes all that Christ teaches, and lives according to that belief, and, since that belief is delivered to men through the Catholic Church, to be a good boy means obedient participation in the life of the Catholic Church.

That is the Catholic point of view. It is not, of course, expected that the critics of the Catholic Church will accept that point of view. Nor would the Catholic Church wish to have this point of view interpreted as a denial that Christ at times reaches men by other paths. But for *her* children *this* is to be a good

boy, and it is idle for those opposing Catholics to assume that Catholics accept *other* standards of morality. For Catholics, not to live as a Catholic is to be a "bad boy," to lose the Catholic faith is to be a "bad boy," consistently to violate the Commandments of God and the Church, even in thought and desire, even in a manner that does not earn social rebuke, is to be a "bad boy."

Therefore when this columnist says that there were not more "bad boys" on the campus in pre-chaplain days, he is assuming a morality which Catholics do not accept, and it is astonishing that he can so misunderstand the Catholic position as to believe that he is making a point. It is as if one should attack the artesian-well campaign on the grounds that the people used to get perfectly good water out of the Pasig. People who knew nothing of typhoid and other dangerous contaminations may have judged the Pasig river good water, and no doubt there are people in the remote barrios who take their drinking water from polluted sources and think it good water. But it is obviously not upon opinions held in this school of hygienics that the campaign for more artesian wells is being conducted.

And it is not upon a moral philosophy held by agnostics that the Catholic efforts at U.P. are erected. Those who think that things were going well before believe that to a Catholic boy loss of faith is not lamentable; that lapse into irreligion or agnosticism is not a disaster; that it is not required of a boy that he retain his belief in God or in a Christian revelation. If he is a Catholic he can be good while he rejects Catholic belief, defies Catholic law, scoffs at Catholic practise and ends up in apostasy. His political philosophy can embrace anarchy and communism; his moral code divorce, bigamy, free love and utter licentiousness. These do not prevent his being a good boy, provided his conduct is decorous. Goodness is good manners.

It is not surprising that those who believe in this "goodness" resent the efforts being made on the U.P. campus to change things. They are in fact very logical. But what is surprising is their assumption that their postulates command universal acceptance. Intellectually their position is about as thin a fabric as man ever constructed. Liberalism of their stamp never achieved the status of a philosophy. It was never more than organized sentimentality trying to give respectability to the revolt of Adam. But let these critics hold it if they will, and defend it if they can. However let them not suppose that Catholics are impressed by

their position, or that Catholics must sit by while Catholic young men and women are perverted to it.

Every teacher from Plato to Pestalozzi agrees that the purpose of education is to make good men. Ruskin says: "Education is the manufacture of souls of good quality." Even if no such moral ideal is incorporated expressly in an educational program, it is inevitable that it will be formed there—from professors, texts, subjects, movements, organizations, etc.

The presence, therefore, of this ideal is universal. But there is no such universal agreement as to what a good man is. No one can deny that the good man of the U.P. campus has too often been one with something very closely resembling Voltairean lineaments. Catholics do not accept this as a good man; they have a very different ideal. They recognize that a state university in the Philippines cannot positively promote the religion of Catholics; but they do not see why it should be allowed to promote the religion of Voltaire. They feel that they have a right to demand that their sons and daughters be preserved from any influence on the campus which endangers their faith, and that they be allowed to enjoy at the University whatever help and protection they need to live as good Catholics.

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