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ST. AUGUSTINE, DE MAGISTRO. (Fourteen Chapters)

This Dialogue between Augustine and his young son Adeodatus was written in 389. The son died soon afterwards.

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Summary

1. By speech, albeit prayer, song, or teaching proper, we cause the very things to come into the mind of which the words are signs.
2. In commenting on poetry, we are expounding words with words, signs well known by signs equally well known.
3. In as far as man asks questions by means of words, he usually must put up with words as his reply. He may, however, get his answer through other signs or gestures, or the act itself may be performed.
4. A sign may point to things or to other signs. The word 'noun' or 'conjunction' points to signs; horse and river point to realities.
5. Every sign is both: sign and meaningful. Words are signs with regard to the ear, and meaningful nouns with regards to the soul. Any word (for instance: 'if', 'because') can be used as the subject of a sentence, i. e. as a noun.
6. Some signs signify themselves like the word "word". Others are reciprocal like vocabula and nomina. Some signs are synonymous. Words from different languages differ acoustically only.
7. Adeodatus sums up: All speech is teaching.

Words are signs.

Signs need not be words.

Acts may be shown without a sign.

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8. Augustine himself sees these points clearer now quam cum ea inquirendo ac disserendo de nescio quibus latebris ambo erueremus. (Tourscher: by questioning and arguing we both were drawing them from some unknown obscurity; Leckie: we unearthed them from unknown hiding places.)

The goal of this discussion is difficult to explain. Adeodatus may either consider this to be a game or expect some small result or he may become impatient because he is hoping for a big result. Augustine although playing is not aiming at a toy thing: "On the other hand, it may seem rather ridiculous when I pretend that it is some blessed and eternal life to which I wish to be led with you here under the guidance of God, and that is to say, of truth,

namely by some steps that will be appropriate to our poor gait. For, I have entered upon this highroad not by studying the objects that we signify, but their signs only. Yet, this prelude exercises the very energies by which the warmth and light of the region of the blessed life may be not just forborn but truly loved."

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The two syllables ho-mo may mean a real being, or these two phonetic fragments. Generally, the presumption is in favour of the reality of which the word is a sign. When we ask about the word as a word only, we should qualify our question. It is legitimate to answer an unqualified question as though the real thing was the object of the question. Sophists are abusing this righteous attitude.

9. A sign may be equally or more valuable than the reality signified. But our cognition of the sign is less precious than our cognition of the reality signified. Examples are "filth" and "vice".
10. The assumption in chapter III and VII that certain acts like walking are self-explaining, is refuted. Result: Nothing is taught without symbols. Adeodatus feels uneasy. Augustine, in fact, turns the tables now and shows that everything under the sun may teach us without the use of signs. We even understand new words only when we see the object which they signify.
11. "To give the maximum of credit to words, words challenge us to seek reality." We may and shall believe words. Understanding, however, should follow as frequently as possible. And understanding is not produced by words. It is not even achieved by the speaker although his words may challenge us. *Tantum cuique panditur quantum capere propter propriam sive malam sive bonam voluntatem potest.* (Leckie: there is revealed to each one as much as he can apprehend through his will according as it is more perfect or less perfect. Tourscher: It is opened out so far to each one as each one is capable to grasp by reason of a good or a bad habit of life.)
12. Sensations and mental perceptions are the two classes of our perceptions. Sensations never are replaceable through words of others, except on faith. In a case of mere belief, nothing is learned. The same is true of mental processes. "The auditor whom I tell that I saw a flying man, will answer: 'I don't believe you.' In the same way, he will deny the spiritual truth which he is not fit to know." Any auditor will either accept on faith, or deny, or consent by his own spontaneous testimony. In no case, then, will he have learned, properly speaking.
13. The listener is the speaker's judge, or at least, he is judging his speech. The speaker may quote texts in an attempt to refute them, and the listener still may approve of this very quotation.

Sometimes, it is true, we succeed in speaking our minds. However, we are talked to by as many lying people as by truthful men. Besides, by inattentive talking, slips of the tongue, etc., any number of quarrels and misunderstandings may be produced.

14. Nobody sends his children to school to let them think the teacher's ideas. They ought to get the objective knowledge. This they only learn by spontaneous consideration inside themselves. That we should call the man who speaks to us, 'magister', springs from the fact that no time seems to intervene between the moment of his speaking and the moment of our cognition. Because this time element is overlooked, the students think that what they learn from the interior truth, has been learned from the external admonisher.

The general usefulness of words which, well considered, is not small, we shall investigate elsewhere. Here, however, I wish to restrict their importance. I only have admonished you. We should not only believe but also understand why it is written with divine authority that nobody is our master on earth since one master is in heaven. Matthew XXIII, 8: "but be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. 9. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your father which is in heaven. 10. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your master, even Christ."

With all my questions, with all your answers, you have not learned from me. Confirm me, Adeodatus. And Adeodatus affirms:

Words from outside are admonitions. He only teaches that dwells inside. And I have experienced this during your talk which I have enjoyed. All doubts were dissolved by the inner "oraculum".

Some discarded digressions in de Magistro:

- Ch. I. What is the intention and value of music?
 II. "Nothing is a difficult problem."
 III. The words of prayer are not the essence of prayer; still, they have their proper social function.
 IV. It remains unsolved how a term like 'ex' should be defined.
 IX. A thing that serves another object need not be inferior to that object, Adeodatus thinks. Augustinus holds the opposite view.
 XIV. The positive usefulness of words is not to be discussed here.

On The

DE MAGISTRO of ST. AUGUSTINE

Paper read before the Augustinian Society
at Harvard University

December 17, 1938.

by

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1. Augustine's effect on sociology
2. Former evaluations of De Magistro.
3. Repentance for a social situation
4. The biographical place of De Magistro.

President Lowell of Harvard once said: "Progress in human affairs is a great deal like a boat sailing to windward. She sails first on one tack and then on another, for it is impossible for a boat to sail in the eye of the wind. Also it is impossible for man to progress directly towards truth. He must reach it by over-accentuating one point at a time." *)

We cannot sail in the eye of the truth because we cannot look into the light itself. The light we call Augustinus is so bright that the boat of mankind has sailed on various tacks to get the full benefit of it. It is the thesis of this paper that we are sailing today on another tack than the Augustinians of the 12th or the 17th century; we ask Augustine to help us in the sociology of the 20th century. I am following neither the theologians like Bonaventura, nor the scientists like Descartes. But I hope to convince you tonight that St. Augustine helps us in our own plight, if we are willing to over-accentuate one point at a time.

Fifteen years ago, in reviewing some books on St. Augustine, I felt that, compared to him, Thomas Aquinas and Immanuel Kant, Bernard of Clairvaux and Descartes all looked pretty far away, and that the two eras of medieval scholasticism and modern idealism were definitely over whereas St. Augustine still waited for us to be made the cornerstone of our metaphysics of society.**) His truth really seems inexhaustible. As your president has put it admirably in his "Mind of Latin Christendom":***) "If we may risk a Neoplatonic image, Augustine is the One out of whose abundance emanated the scholastic nous, out of which in turn emanated the scientific psyche." Let me add that beyond natural science a new branch is waiting to spring from the Augustinian tree, that of social and political metanomics. The Augustinian Society itself testifies to this expectation. We cannot hope to compete with Bonaventura's Augustinian itinerary of the mind into the infinities of eternity. And the Augustinians Luther and Descartes have opened up before us the infinities of the world of space already. There is needed a third itinerary, for the human soul. This third Augustinian itinerary must take us through the infinities of the times that coexist between primitive and educated, young and old, races, classes and individuals.

If this is so, we must begin with a study of "De Magistro". For the difference between a pagan and our own society can only be found in the fact that in the Christian era, society is based on the central problem of teaching. Our sociology-any modern sociology-will remain ineffective when it does not center on a sociology of teaching; and this is the topic of "De Magistro."

Why is that so? Well, in teaching, we cannot help realising that people of different outlook, different ideas, different age coexist and are asked to coexist peacefully.

*) Inauguration of President Nichols, Hanover 1909, pp. 125

***) Reprinted in "Das Alter der Kirche" as, "Augustin und Thomas in ihrer Wirkung auf unser Denken". Berlin 1928, II, 657-673, and in "De Mag." p. 671.

***) "The Mind of Latin Christendom" New York, 1937, p. 567.

The difference in age between coworkers may be accidental; the time difference between teacher and pupil exists by establishment. By definition, a teacher is-in some way or other-ahead of his student. Teacher and student represent past and future, and, also, the bridge of communication between past and present. They are, therefore, distemporaries, not contemporaries. Two times exist of which one is embodied by the teacher, the other by the pupil. In learning, in teaching, in education, the miracle is achieved of bringing both together in a third time.

Now, I cannot find that anyone except Augustine has pondered over the abyss of this situation. I have looked up, for the purpose of verifying this proposition, a long list of books on ethics, medieval and modern. Nowhere did I find that they saw a problem of the first order in the time abyss between teacher and pupil. Here, the darkest division of man stares us in the face. And our handbooks on ethics deal with justice and property and crime and labour and government. Education comes as an appendix, with all the optimistic colours of the easiest part of the ethical system.

Augustine saw that all our troubles spring from the educational task. For, to him, we small men form together one great man through the ages. From Adam to the end of times, man is one. The ages die. The generations die; the individual passes through at least seven ages during his little life. And yet their bloodstream survives every one age. The different times and ages of man must be made co-existent although every one of them only lasts a short time. Augustine says in *De genesi ad Manichaeos*, I, 43, 'The age of the mature man corresponds to the fifth day of creation when fishes and birds are created. Hence, this man must teach, pervading the air like a bird, with the winged words of celestial teaching. And he breaks through the waves of time, like a whale, with the power of contempt. His students, on the other hand, and their aetas, compare to the second and third day of creation. For, whereas as infants, they are bathing in the undivided light of the first day, the boy and girl begin to remember and to distinguish. And the very first distinction is between heaven and earth, high and low, carnal and spiritual. In this way, the ages may imitate eternity by their co-existence.' *)

It is, therefore, in line with St. Augustine to put the process of teaching in the centre of all sociology. This is the only important distinction between a christian sociology that is based on the word, and a naturalistic sociology. Usually, people derive the authority of a teacher merely from his expert knowledge. When we do this-and St. Thomas does it-we fall into the abyss of departmentalisation. When people deduce the right to teach from the 'State' they fall into the abyss of propaganda and lying. It is only when teaching is based on no other, external or logical, process outside itself, when education is recognised as an original and irreducible situation between two souls that we escape the hell of -, isms, of inquisition and propaganda. We all need an answer to the simple question: How can people who are not contemporaries live together successfully? I wish to be quite clear about my own personal bias in this matter. I am indeed studying St. Augustine for the sake of my soul and our society.

*) *Tempora fabricantur et ordinantur aeternitatem imitantia. Orbis temporum*

And it seems better to admit this bias frankly. After that, you need not be afraid that I let any repressed bias influence my judgment over details. I shall be perfectly indifferent to any disparaging result of our analysis. Perhaps, De Magistro does not contain the sociology of education which our own era is craving.

We shall see that the result is rather unexpected. At least, it will not coincide with the evaluation put on De Magistro by either one of the three groups that have commented on it. It might interest you to hear how De Magistro has been interpreted very differently in the Middle Ages, in the Renaissance, and today. You will hardly believe me the extreme character of the three evaluations. And yet, there is not one appreciation among these three that has favoured the dialogue as a whole.

Former evaluations of De Magistro.

To begin with our own times, we may say that the De Magistro is remarkably popular. Mr. Gilson gives it a number of pages in his study of Augustine. Twenty years ago, Father Tourscher published the Latin text; in 1924, he printed an appealing translation. In my own draught of a Charter of Latin for modern man the De Magistro forms the bulk of the reading in the back of the book. Finally, in 1938, there was published a new edition by a friend of Mr. Scott Buchanan, George Leckie, which I must mention despite the shocking fact that Leckie does not mention Tourscher. I must mention him because his long and very solemn introduction is the best illustration of what people in our days think that they can get out of De Magistro. Leckie's thirty eight pages of introduction deal with cognition, the liberal arts, especially grammar. The boy Adeodatus to whom Augustine is talking, the situation in which father and son were in 389, after leaving their academic friends in Italy, are not mentioned. The doctrine of the book is investigated because Leckie believes that the Greek trivium, Grammar, Rhetorics, Dialectics, still offers ultimate truth to us, at least in the purified form in which Augustine presents them. Science, intellectual virtue, not moral virtue, emanates from De Magistro, for this school of thought.

Now, let us look back into the Middle Ages, to the Augustinian Bonaventura. His interpretation is condensed in a picture. You probably all are familiar with Fra Angelico's painting of the scene which is Bonaventura's commentary of De Magistro. Bonaventura who wrote the famous 'Itinerary of the Mind to God' in the Augustinian tradition, receives the call of St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Thomas when entering his colleague's cell is surprised to find it devoid of bookshelves along the walls. 'Where is your library?' he seems to ask. Bonaventura withdraws a discrete curtain: a crucifix that hangs from the wall, is his library. Christ is the Master of this lonely soul. Not just the teachings of the living Jesus as found in the Scriptures, to be sure; but the inner Cross and the inner Christ on the Cross are his books. The last words of our dialogue are made the centre of the book for its medieval readers, not the trivial chapters on the trivium. Their earthly teaching and teachers are left behind much more definitely than in Augustine himself.

But it would be too simple, to see a dualism only: Bonaventura con-

numerosa successione quasi carmini universitatis associant.' Migne I, 1179 (from De Musica)

centrating on the goal, Leckie and the modern logicians on the pagan road. For, we have the tradition of humanism. In 1527, the Prince of the Humanists, Erasmus of Rotterdam, commented on Augustine's De Magistro. And in his few remarks, he gives the quintessence of humanistic criticism against Holy Writ as it has been applied ever since. He makes two points. 1. A few, plain truths of philosophy and theology (mark that philosophy has precedence) are obscured and frustrated by Augustine's skill in saying nothing in many words. The low scientific standard of his days led to this vicious performance. 2. The content of the dialogue may be reduced to the Platonic truth of the Logos, as the universal reason of all men. This Platonic notion has been quoted by St. John and was rhetorically expounded by Augustine. - To this, Erasmus adds the maxim of all reductionists: This dependance should be carefully kept in mind by all readers of the Fathers; we cannot understand the Fathers without investigating from which philosophy they got their ideas.

In short, Erasmus says: What is good in Magistro, is Plato; And the form which is bad, is the only property of Augustinus. I was surprised to find as early as 1527 the same scathing method of the source-hunters that has dissolved in dust Homer and the Bible, the Nibelungen and only by a narrow margin, has missed out with Shakespeare. The Erasmus of every age reduces a text to its alleged sources; the text so reduced appears as a pure and poor contamination and loses all value. Well we shall have to face this reductio ad Platonem too.

Is Bonaventura right in forgetting the human relations of the learning soul complete, putting her behind a curtain with her one Master in heaven? Is Leckie right that it is the best basic doctrine for a renewal of ancient ways of grammatical, logical and dialectical teaching? Is Erasmus right that the nucleus is Platonic, and that Augustine puffs this nucleus up rhetorically?

If any of these three judgments is right, I shall not care for the booklet. I certainly would not think of using it as an appetizer for living young students in our own society.

There is, apparently, no other way out of this confusion but to look at the book itself.

Repentance for a social situation.

The dialogue deals first with the meaning of speech, and then with the origin of truth for the boy who is spoken to. The dialogue takes place between father and son after they have left Italy and wish to establish themselves as baptised Christians in Africa again. As a dialogue, it still preserves the technique of that life that Augustine and his friends, including the son, had led together in Italy. On the other hand, this is the only piece in which father and son are on their own resources, without anybody else. The instinctive loyalty to the form of production that the life in Italy had asked for, is obvious; on the other hand, the death of Adeodatus left this dialogue as a mere fragment. Augustine's life in Africa soon followed a new pattern, of public and ecclesiastical character. Thus, the De Magistro is the obituary of a boy who must have been full of life and wit. And the boy no longer was a boy. He was seventeen; at that very age, Augustine had begotten Adeodatus. Adeodatus

is on the verge of independence and maturity.

At the end of the last chapter, Augustine hints at the situation in which the dialogue is written. It is meant to be the forerunner of more to come. The intervening death of Adeodatus has kept from us the sequence of *De Magistro*. And what does Augustine plan as a sequence? This is very important to know when we wish to interpret that what we have and what is a fragment only of what we would have without the loss of the son. For, if Augustine announces what he is going to do later, we may be sure that he does not think to have given us this same thing in *De Magistro*. And this indeed is the case. Augustine promises to write on the usefulness of words "which when rightly considered is not small". The *De Magistro* shows how the use of words should be "rightly" considered, without being itself the positive treatment of this usage. The *De Magistro* is not concerned with the positive teaching of grammar, speech, etc. as the modern significationists would like to find. Foundations are laid. Now, the use of the word foundations is handled so loosely that the meaning of this word is forgotten. Mr. Leckie thinks that the first chapters of *De Magistro* contain Augustine's final ideas on the subject. The whole dialogue, however, moves away from these introductory chapters. And any "foundation" has to do so. Why is that so? Foundations wish to get away from a surface that is unable to carry a building. We go against the surface and away from the surface not by building a skyscraper, but by excavating the ground when we lay foundations.

I am anticipating the result of our analysis for clarity's sake when I say, in accordance with the place of the dialogue in Augustine's own perspective at the time that he wrote it: The dialogue brushes away a dangerous and superficial situation in the Liberal Arts community, a situation existing between Augustine and Adeodatus, between any teacher and any student. There is danger, there is abuse. The foundation must be laid anew for the rebirth of the school. Everything will be and sound in the reborn school differently from what it now seems to be in the unregenerated school. Hence, all the grammatical and rhetorical arguments in the first part of *De Magistro* only serve the purpose of describing the processes in the unregenerated environment without passing any judgment on their final value. The purely descriptive character of the first part of *De Magistro* as a specimen of what people use to talk in schools removes our book from the Platonic pattern. It is not imitative of a Platonic dialogue. A social and scholastic situation is described and enacted so that it may do repentance and be lifted upon new foundations. The dialogue is a biographical event in the life of the two partners. Thought is political, the dialogue does not dwell in the realm of theory, it is an act within the practical life of Augustine and Adeodatus. Guittou has some very beautiful remarks on this difference between Greek and Christian thought; he says (*Le Temps et L'Eternite chez Plotin et Saint Augustin*, Paris 1933, p. 359). "The unsurmountable abyss between Greek and Christian thought is the Christian rehabilitation of the unique and temporal event. The moral order is general and abstract to every philosophical or Greek mind. In Christianity the time of every human existence receives a superior quality in its smallest fragments". One of these smallest fragments is the hour between 8 and 9 in which I am reading this paper or the classroom lecture in which logic is taught. For a Greek or

as we call it today not quite as sharply for the academic mind, this is a theoretical display of thought. Hence, it would seem that in the classroom, the events, the ideas, the people that the teacher mentions enter the classroom, the teacher and the students feign to have timeless minds. On these minds, the events, people, ideas mentioned in class leave an imprint. As a movie does on our imagination. With the movie moving and we sitting unmoved. In the dialogue De Magistro, the academic atmosphere and disposition disappear. Here, we have no difference between theory and practice. Augustine and Adeodatus think out their salvation as chapter 8 clearly says .

The whole dialogue and especially the break in chapter 8 remain understandable as long as we think in academic terms of a difference between theory and practice; for a dualism is here too; the book is obviously made up out of two parts. Only, this is the only dualism admitted by a Christian community. It is the dualism between play and seriousness. This dualism is at the bottom of the dialogue, and Augustine says so himself.

The dualism of one non-committal and one definite part divides the dialogue right in the middle into two septenaries of chapters. Out of fourteen the whole consists. In chapter seven, Adeodatus sums up the results of the first six chapters. What do we do when we speak?

Many sides of this question have been mentioned and left unsolved. They are listed at the end of the summary as unfinished digressions. The father has freely avowed his ignorance in some cases; and the son has been as often right against the father as the father has been against the son. They have cracked a number of jokes. For instance, in discussing the word 'nothing', they discover that it is a wonderful sport for sophisms on 'nothing' when this alternatively may mean the word 'nothing', or the difficult concept 'nothing'. Augustine gives up after a while, jokingly: Come on lest 'Nothing' us delay.

The whole first part is remarkable for its good humour and its poor results. And no wonder. For, we learn in chapter 8 that this was a play, a prelude, and an exercise only. And to prove that he means what he says, all the dearly bought results of part One are refuted or given up in part Two. At the end, we do not know what is true in this respect; and what is more, we do not care. What has happened? Augustine says explicitly that he wishes to lead both into a quest for the good and blessed life; however, he has taken an unusual start. Mostly, when a moral issue is involved, we plunge directly into the material problem involved. Instead, this time, the conversation begins with a reflection on the means of discussion, of speech and the signs used in speech. These very signs may be taken too seriously. And that is why Augustine wanted them to be shown up in their relative importance. The first half of the dialogue plays with the unimportant; the second is seriously concentrating on the essence.

Some of the modern Augustinians will dislike the idea of dismissing a part of the discussion as less important. To the logician, a difference in importance is a foreign idea. They are serious all the time; and so they become ponderous. I suggest that just this has happened to Mr. Leckie. The conditions of play and work are nearly unknown today to the philosopher. Yet, it is a fact that people who live together must

play and work together, both. We play together in our state of innocence. We must work together for our sins. 75 years ago, Horace Bushnell wrote an essay on play and work in which he said that play was the normal thing, and work should be lifted up to the level of play. And the church holds that the liturgy is a play of humanity in the face of their Father. In Heaven and so far as we are in heaven, we play; on earth, and in so far as we must work out our salvation, we work. The dualism that divides human activities, is the dualism between play and work. The difference between theory and practice is a fallacy. Thought is activity as much as any other doing. Of course when we compare leisurely thought, irresponsible talk on one side, and responsible labour and toil on the other, the division between mere theory and realistic practice is very tempting. We are misled by the fact that the act of thought is a play, the act of our hands is serious. Serious thought and wilful practice are divided the other way round: the practice of the player is quite irresponsible, purely 'theoretical', the thought of the doctor who tries a diagnosis, is strictly responsible, hence the most real practice.

In allowing Adeodatus first to play with him, Augustine prepares for the full warmth and light of that region where the blessed life is lived. Today when we work with one kind of people and play with another, our best thoughts remain our private property. Why has everybody today a private religion only? Because we cannot find the truth together when we do not play together. For that reason, we find little truth together; most truth that we find remains our private affair. The dialogue itself, in its method, is a specimen of how people may find the truth together.

By this method, Augustine is able to lift Adeodatus from one level of thought to another. This shift of level is the real goal of education. As long as people think of teaching merely as the instruction of facts, this shift in level is overlooked or even denied. Many teachers would say that we move on one and the same level during a lecture. That this is not true is proved by the simple fact that even they cannot help cracking a joke once in a while. If they would analyse the impact of this one little fact they would face the real educational mystery which is that man meets his fellow man only when he meets him on different levels. This is not a logical proposition; and it is not a psychological proposition. It is a social and historical phenomenon. And this is Augustine's problem all through the *De Magistro*.

The individual may be got into trouble by sin; the social process is getting us into trouble for a different reason. The signs used in our relations with other people, speech, teaching, learning, engulf us into the fallacy as if the two people who use the signs are the only masters of the situation. This is the sphere not of personal sin but of something very much like original sin, an inherent weakness of our quality as social beings. Misunderstanding the bearing of social intercourse, of authority, of speech, we overrate it and find ourselves in an ethical dilemma. The term 'original sin' is not used in this dialogue; and it is well known that Augustine never was able to explain this fact to his own satisfaction. However, in this dialogue, he is not far distant from it. He insists that our plays of rhetorics are apt to becloud the moral issue that props up in every conversation. As soon as we leave the conversation to the partners involved only, we attribute them a power which they do not have. We must

willy nilly transcend the play of rhetorics by facing the question: how can we remain on the path to the good life during our hours of talking and learning from each other? How far are we misled by the fact that people talk to us? How far is God the loser when we admire man too much in our discourse?

It is at this point of the student's temptation to think too highly of his teacher or the teacher's temptation to think too highly of his student that the De Magistro comes to our rescue. The dialogue leads to a conversion. This conversion is not achieved by a contrition of heart over one man's own act. It must be achieved by a fight against a social actuality between two or more people. In this actuality, one partner seems to teach and the other seems to learn. This actuality is presented to us in the first seven chapters. And it is put on a level of play on which the boy and his father move as equals; with Adeodatus as often contributing to the solution as his father. And refuting his father as much as the father refutes him. So, here the equality is successfully stressed. In chapter 8, the serious battle begins. All the theses of part One are discarded or doubted or refuted. In a deeper sense, the signs that were analysed in part One, are not indispensable. The universe may teach man without signs, since no mortal man can teach. That words should point away from themselves to reality, has been the thesis of the first part; it is of equal importance to ask the teacher to point away from himself to God. When he does this, man adopts his proper role of the loving admonishing neighbour. The teacher is stripped of his logical togs. He must be satisfied with an ethical role. The man of good will learns; the boy of bad will fails; the teacher may influence the will by his love that incorporates the boy into a bigger unit. The translation of Leckie is uneasy when it hits on the bold sentence that 'panditur' truth according to the good or the bad will of the man. Leckie says that truth is revealed to a less or more perfect will. Panditur is a poetical word that suggests to us how truth is spread as a linen or a rug on our good will. Only on a good will the linen of truth can be spread. The rug of truth to be spread in our heart's chamber seems to me a great expression.

Hence, the second part of the dialogue dethrones the teacher without inthroning the pupil. Whereas in a naive picture of teacher and student, a dualism seems to prevail, Augustine insists on a triangular relation. God who is truth and love, instills love in the teacher, truth in the student. The ancient pagans and their modern henchmen exalt the great teacher, the guru; the modern progressives admire the child and degrade the teacher into a hired man. According to them, the child discovers the world all by himself. Perhaps, that any dualism in the social world will be reduced to a monism when and as long as it is not interpreted as a trialism. It is of great historical interest to see how Augustine produces this trialism. He quotes from the prophet the very word from which the famous 'credo, ut intelligam' was taken and developed later. And he says that the student first must believe the teacher and then must understand himself under God's guidance. The same phrase: 'Nisi credideritis non intelligetis', that served the Scholastics, is used by Augustine in a rather different sense: we begin rightly by believing our loving elders because they love us. We go on to understanding because God is not Love only; he also is truth and wants to be met as truth as well. The teacher

and student, are one. Both enter into one hour of forgetting time and space, by playing and thinking together, and therefore released from fear. The hour from eleven to twelve in the classroom in a course of logic is a battle-field of reality; is a full present. Teaching is the greatest political act there is. The teaching of the truth is the most actual and the most political adventure. The teacher is not teaching in the name of his science as Thomas Aquinas thought; he is not teaching in the name of a board of education or of the State as most people think today. Teaching has not any authority outside its own realm of charity by which it establishes the fellowship between an older and a younger specimen of the human race. Teaching is the model social situation. Without it we cannot understand society. Any sociology, that omits to put teaching in its centre, is unreal. That is why we have so many unreal sociologies.

When we ask ourselves why teaching is so central, we shall penetrate even further into the very heart of Augustinianism. The De Magistro must make up for a tremendous danger of Augustine's doctrines. To him who saw everything as biography, everything as transition and change in the human life, the soul is in every moment in danger of being nothing but passing.*) The educational situation as I shall show in a moment is the antidote against too much temporality, too much transition and rush in our inner life. How can we avoid to overtax our poor soul by too much change? As you already know, St. Augustine must put humanity in its place between the divinity and the world of matter. All change, all history, all evolution is inherent to man; God is in eternity; matter is in space. Augustine literally says that time is the special property and qualification of man. You easily see how dangerous such a doctrine may be for the individual. Mere change is so fatiguing, so exasperating, because it makes you lonely time and again, from one of our ages to the next. Although growing in wisdom, I grant you that, her growth must be balanced by achievement. This is done by the educational situation, between human beings. The experience of an old and the growth of a young person are welded in an hour of communication. In this hour, the partners are lifted beyond their individual age. They now represent two different ages, at least, in one 'body of time'. Together, they represent different tenses in the grammar of society or, with a favourite term of Augustinus, two different verses in the dramatic song of creation. The teacher and the student do not and cannot think the same things in this hour of communication. It would be blasphemy for a teacher to identify his thought with the student's thought. The itineraries of their minds are personal and must differ. But because this difference is survived and overcome, because the partners in the dialogue give each other time to express experience, time to grow, time to communicate, they represent the model opportunity for man to have peace. By giving each other time, we communicate and become brothers; peace is nothing else but a state of society in which we are able and willing to give each other time. In war, in the struggle for life, in the jungle, there is no time. And at this point, I have said

*) "Quot optas gradus aetatis tot simul optas et mortes aetatum. Non sunt ergo istae....Aetates labuntur, fluunt." Enarratio in Psalmos 127 Migne IV, 1686.

what I felt that I should like to say in the face of Mr. Leckie's new edition of De Magistro.

As an epilogue, or as a summary, I would like to look for a last time into the text. In chapter 14, we read that people are apt to overlook the time element in teaching. Because we perceive quickly, the teacher seems to do what time does for the student. Augustinus says: Mostly (plerumque) no time passes. Although this occurs perhaps in the majority of cases, the fact that it does not happen always, is sufficient proof that it is a fortuitous coincidence. And the key to the educational process is furnished by the minority in which time passes (mora interponitur) between the teacher's words and the student's grasp. This interval is precious for our understanding, and it may be given a special name, as for instance incubation. Here we have a point which, with President Lowell, I recommend to over-accentuate in the future. This period of incubation is at the heart of education. Augustine allows for incubation. To deal with time, between human beings, requires not less than all the three cardinal virtues. Faith is indispensable on the side of the Student before he can understand. Hope is required on the side of the Teacher who must hope for the growth within the Student. And both must love the opportunity to communicate. The reality of teaching is in need of all three qualities and of the three times. The body of the time, to use the Shakespearian phrasing, contains past, future, and present in order to attain reality. Left to themselves, the times are abstractions. Incarnation is due to the possibility of communication. And Augustine's remark on incubation shows as strongly as his pet phrase: Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis, and his combining love (charity) with truth, that all the elements of the process are keenly observed by him.

And his own book is the best illustration of his program. I like De Magistro as the full incarnation of two people in their biographical conflict and harmony. And if ever the book on Latin sees the light of the bookseller's shop, the dialogue shall retain its place. It is easy to define the beauty of this piece. A great man and an adolescent play together. In doing so, they eventually forget their earthly station as father and son, magister and discipulus, hero and follower, and go beyond their accidental roles. They move before us like two verses in one song of praise. And with an Augustinian notion, we see the beauty of temporal vicissitude, and see the orbits of their times associated to the song of the universe. *)

*) de vera religione 23; de musica VI, 29.