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## Box 09, Folder 19 - "Nature and Grace" (E.M.S.)

Edwin Mortimer Standing

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For Appendix

NATURE AND GRACE

"As you know, grace does not destroy nature. Grace presupposes nature and the operations proceeding from it. Far from being opposed to one another, grace and nature, as regards what is good and pure in the latter, are in harmony, each preserving its own character and beauty. . ."

"Grace does not suppress or reverse nature, either in its essence or in its good qualities. Doubtless it constitutes a new super-added state, infinitely superior to our natural state. A profound modification has been effected in us, both as regards our end, which has now become supernatural, and the forces which serve to attain it; but our nature is neither troubled nor diminished thereby. It is in exercising our own faculties--intelligence, will, love, sensibility and imagination--that our human nature, even when adorned with grace, must perform its actions; but these acts, proceeding from nature, are raised by grace to the point of being worthy of God."

"We must first of all remain ourselves, living in a manner conformable to our nature as free and reasonable beings; this is the first element of the 'truth' of our actions. I will add that we should live in a way that corresponds to our individuality."

"We must keep our personality in our supernatural life, as to what is good in it; that is part of that 'truth' or that 'sincerity' which the life of grace demands. Holiness is not a single mould where the natural qualities that characterize one's personality have to disappear so that only a uniform

type may be presented."

It would be hard to find any statements which more perfectly express the importance of the individual training that Montessori gives, even from the point of view of religious development.

I would love to have this printed and circulated to all the good Irish Sisters and Brothers who spend their time trying to push unrelated facts--willy-nilly--into the heads of their pupils, while at the same time making even this more difficult and painful by attempting to do all this through the medium of the Irish language with which they have no organic acquaintance.

The above are only a few extracts; there are plenty of other good ones as apt to the subject, e.g.: "You know that in man there are inherent in his nature certain faculties--intellect, will, sensibility, imagination--which are principles of action, powers of operation, which allow us to act fully as men; without these a man is not perfect in his concrete reality as man."

Or again: "It is the nature and perfection of a power to accomplish the act correlative to it: A power would remain inert, for instance, an intelligence would never produce an act of thought, would never reach the end and consequently the perfection due to it. Faculties are given us only that we may put them into action."

In how many schools--alas--the intelligence is very rarely given the chance of producing a free, spontaneous "act of thought"--whilst the memory is over-burdened with meaningless and unrelated facts which have no vital connection with the child's developing personality?

(Here ended the first "lesson." Forgive me letting off steam on harmless and innocent you!)