

EDUCATION AND POLITICS

ONE important reason why education should, as much as possible, be a guide to politics, instead of the other way around, is that in education being "right" is of relatively little importance, whereas in politics it is all-important. Education is concerned with human growth and development; this being the case, to be "right"—except in fields such as mathematics, and even here the matter may be arguable—depends upon where the individual stands, what he sees, and what he values. Since a man who does not alter his opinions from time to time is likely to be one who is not growing at all, education must adopt the view that today's "right" may prove tomorrow's "wrong," so that hard and fast definitions of "right" are a natural menace to education. The only thing that can be eternally right for education is a continual change for the better, and this process leaves behind it an unmistakable trail of abandoned "rights" which turned out to be "wrongs."

Education might even be defined as the area of human experience in which being right or wrong is a strictly private affair, while politics has only public definitions of right and wrong to offer. A good political system, then, is a system which formulates notions of right and wrong such that the development of the individual's private scale of judgment is not harassed or frustrated by the laws which the system imposes. This means that the political system results from the work of men who value educational processes more than political processes—who regard the moral survival of the individual as of greater ultimate importance than the physical survival of the mass.

It is often difficult to separate the educational processes from the political processes in a given society or situation. We have some illustrations to show this difficulty.

During World War II, young men who affirmed that they were conscientiously opposed to participation in war, and who could qualify as religious objectors in the terms of the Selective Service Act, were sent by the Government to work camps under the supervision of what was called Civilian Public Service (CPS). By far the majority of the men came from the traditional "Peace Churches"—Christian denominations which had rejection of acts of war written into their creeds or traditional formulations of faith. The major religious groups of this category of Christian churches are the Mennonites, the Brethren, and the Quakers, but it includes a number of other, smaller bodies. The Mennonites trace their descent from medieval apostolic Christianity and have a long record of peaceful ways in community existence, primarily as farmers. Mennonite religion, however, is strongly authoritarian, great pains being taken by the elders of the Mennonite Church to protect their young from the corrupting influences of the world. Through this exercise of authority, the Mennonite mode of education acquires what may be called a "political" aspect, since conformity to approved Mennonite beliefs and ways is naturally an obligation of those who choose to remain members of the religious community. At the other end of the scale are the Quakers, who exercise a minimum of control over their co-religionists. The Religious Society of Friends is the source of a highly educated minority of religious pacifists who are, so to say, wholly exposed to "the world" by far-reaching commercial and professional activities. It seems fair to say that "group opinion" and the pressures of conformity are less of a factor among the Quakers than among any other Christian denomination.

Our first illustration of the confusion of educational and political processes is found in the

story of a young man who belonged to a peace church similar in character to the Mennonite group, from whom he had learned that war is a crime and a sin. This youth had been a shepherd with little or no contact with the world at large. It was not until he came to a CPS camp that he mingled with a miscellaneous body of men who, while all pacifists, were of every possible degree of sophistication and educational background. So, strangely enough, it was while in this camp that the shepherd became aware of what may be called *social* thinking. Simply by reading papers and magazines and talking about the war with other campers, he experienced a thorough exposure to all the conventional arguments for war—arguments he had never really heard before, or which he had previously ignored as belonging to the world of sin and the Devil. He realized, first, that some people called the Japanese were hurting and killing his countrymen. Somehow, he had acquired an interest in his countrymen—a social sense, however primitive—and this discovery of value slowly wore away the force of the religious prohibition against war on which he had been brought up. So, in the course of a year or two, the shepherding religious pacifist changed his mind and entered the army as a combat soldier.

What, actually, had happened? This man, one might argue, had experienced a growth in point of view which made his version of the welfare of his fellow citizens seem more important than the salvation promised him by his church for obeying its prohibitions. Accordingly, an educational advance caused him to break with the socio-political rules of his religious background. Conviction triumphed over conformity and he went off to war.

His former fellows in the C.O. camp regarded his departure with mingled feelings. The more sophisticated of them had been pleased to see the social sense dawning in the shepherd's mind—for here was a man who was beginning to have convictions of his own, instead of only

echoes of indoctrinated religion. Yet this awakening brought the decision to abandon the war objector's stand, which they deplored. The Fundamentalists, of course, felt that he had sold himself to the Devil. But it took a fairly liberal brand of religious pacifism to conclude that it was "right" for the shepherd to join the Army. Actually, only the philosophical objectors, of whom there were a few, could make this judgment, since theirs was an objection based upon individual insight rather than creedal instruction. For these, at least, the action of a man as an individual, and not as a conforming believer, was better than the conformity he left behind, even though it led to war. They saw him go, in short, as a conscientious soldier, and this they were bound in principle to approve; and they believed, moreover, that if only conscientious soldiers were willing to fight in wars, the effect might be far more salutary for peace than the efforts of a handful of pacifists!

Our second illustration relates to an incident in the Korean war, reported in the *Progressive* for November, 1953. A British war correspondent, Philip Deane, who spent most of the war in a Communist POW camp, writes about a "GI Joe" who was one of those who embraced communism while a prisoner. Since "Joe," before being persuaded by the Red indoctrinators, had looked after the wounded of the captured group he was with, and had saved Deane's leg from going gangrenous by sucking the poisons out of the latter's wound, it seems reasonable to think that Deane is likely to do his best to explain why Joe became a communist.

The experiences of the first three months were enough to make Joe assure Deane that he was going to spend the rest of his life "fighting these Red bastards." Then the change began. Joe joined a "Red Star Club" to get better food, and this meant listening to the Communist indoctrinators. Joe was told about the Capitalists. He was told that wages are set at a survival level. He was told that useful inventions are suppressed

to assure the continuance of profits. He was told that the working people make progress only when they take power through organization and frighten the bosses into making concessions. Deane continues:

All this was illustrated by examples from history. The examples, unfortunately, were often true, and Joe knew them to be true. The fact that they were quoted out of context, that they were presented as independent bodies in a vacuum, did not cross his mind. The indoctrinator was telling Joe of happenings which Joe had heard from his father, his schoolteacher, and in church. The indoctrinator was connecting all these things which Joe had always regarded as independent accidents. The indoctrinator was explaining why these things had happened. And—this was very important—he was telling Joe why such things would happen again.

The result, as Deane says, was this:

Joe, the brave, selfless, patriotic kid from a decent family of the United States, became a convinced Communist, and was an active member of the so-called "Peace Committee" organized by the Reds in North Korea to proselytize prisoners.

Deane thinks that Joe was persuaded by the indoctrinators because he had not really absorbed a "way of life." With the means of reasoning and the facts at his disposal, he became convinced that the communists were right.

Elsewhere, Deane suggests that the indoctrination process proved most successful with the "less mature prisoners," which was, perhaps, to be expected, but what shall we say about Joe, man and human being?

Politically, he stands convicted of a serious offense—disloyalty, some would call it. But what about the educational process? True, he was taken advantage of by glib indoctrinators—but men who probably believed what they told him. Is it too much to say that for Joe to cut himself off from his familiar world, his home in America, his family and friends, took a certain courage? Perhaps not, but on the other hand, perhaps it did. Joe had both courage and loyalty. If, according to his lights, he became convinced, what would you

wish him to have done . . . go against his convictions from fear or an unwillingness to break with his past?

Is there any room in our political philosophy for a man to be honestly wrong, or is the danger to the political community from such individuals so great that we must punish them impersonally before the virus spreads?

A major evil of the communist system is that it seems to make no distinction at all between politics and education. This is the real meaning of civil liberties—that they entitle the citizen to differ fundamentally and persistently with prevailing political notions of "right," so long as he does not commit or conspire to commit violent acts against the existing social order.

Democracy, on the other hand, according to Lyman Bryson's definition in *The Next America*, which we adopt willingly and entire, is that system of government in which the educational processes are held to be of the greatest value to human beings. From the democratic point of view, then, the shepherder's decision to go to war and GI Joe's alliance with the communists were both choices which may be regarded as resulting from educational progress, since both were made out of regard of a moral ideal and both were decisions which went against the grain of an indoctrinated past. They were acts of free decision.

Even if we say that GI Joe was victimized by the communists, it is better from an educational point of view to be victimized than a victimizer. A man who is fooled by an appeal to his best thinking is at least loyal to his best thinking, and an educator who discounts the value of this sort of loyalty must also abandon the whole idea of education.

But, it will be asked, can we *afford* this sort of freedom? How can there be any sort of social unity without some constraining limit?

Suppose we admit the necessity of some constraining limit to differences of opinion. The anarchists refuse this need, but we are willing to

admit it so long as agreement is obtained that it will be invoked only as a last-ditch measure. The trouble with constraining limits is that they are always being made to close in. The more you depend upon a constraining limit to provide social ("national" is the more applicable word, here) unity, the less you rely upon the capacity of individuals to come to just conclusions by themselves. And the less you rely on them, the less able they are to think clearly and justly.

The constraining limit becomes a vicious and evertightening circle, unfitting the GI Joes to cope with situations such as Philip Deane describes. The thing that democrats must come to realize is that they can't have genuine education and a politically sure thing as well. They have to choose between the two.

THE ARTS OF PEACE

SOME weeks ago, a contributor to the *Christian Century* was quoted elsewhere in MANAS as mourning that the best educational work is done by people who "instruct us without intending to." We have not been able to forget this fact—for it seems to be a fact. The point, perhaps, is that people who are without overly conscious "educational" intentions, yet are deeply concerned with the importance of what they are doing, may be better educators than teachers who try very hard.

Well, here we are supposed to be instructive about the arts of peace, and since the "arts" part of this assignment presents obvious difficulties, a certain pleasure arises from being able to offer a pertinent quotation from Lewis Mumford. Writing on the product of modern artists, Mumford notes (in *Art and Technics*) that their work often reflects "the blankness and disorganization of our lives . . . the actual nightmare of human existence in an age of mass exterminations and atomic catastrophies." Mumford neither joins the cult of "modern art," nor airily disposes of it as incomprehensibly subjective. Instead, he makes this comment:

Such paintings are of value as documents, even if they are sometimes almost worthless as art. Those who could interpret these images during the last twenty years had a far better grasp of the shape of things to come than those puerile politicians who prided themselves on their common sense and their realism; and who were therefore ready for neither the sacrifices of war nor the even greater disciplines and renunciations now needed to achieve peace.

But Mumford speaks also of those artists who are relatively untouched by the turmoil of their lives—who "live and quietly sustain themselves" as "spiritual recluses." Such "self-enclosed artists," Mumford says, reveal "the unshakable determination of life itself." In them, also, may be found a profound instruction in the strength and resources of the human spirit.

The artist is a man whose primary interest is in the idea or feeling he is trying to get into words or on canvas. He lives so intensely in this world of his convictions that he is likely to be regarded as "odd" or even slightly mad by his conventional contemporaries. For what are truly "oddities" we make no special defense, but suggest that they do not matter and should not confuse our appreciation of the artist. When Albert Ryder, an American painter who was born in 1847 and died in 1917, lived in a small apartment in New York city, surrounded by dirt, dust, scraps of food, permitting only a few old friends to enter his rooms, we may wonder how he stood it, but the important thing is what this strange indifference to squalor represented in Ryder's life. During the fifteen years he lived there, the place was never painted or papered, and rarely cleaned. A Whitney Museum catalog of the Ryder Centenary exhibition (1947) tells the story:

Wallpaper hung in long streamers from the ceiling. He never threw anything away, and the rooms were piled waist-high with every conceivable kind of object—furniture, trunks, boxes, old newspapers and magazines, canvases, frames, painting materials, soiled clothes, food, unwashed dishes, milk bottles, ashes. There were paths through this rubbish to the door, the easel, to the fireplace. Over all lay the dust of years. Ryder did cooking of a kind on an open grate or a small stove, except when he went out for cheap meals in the neighborhood. Being unable to keep his cot clean, he slept on a piece of carpet on the floor.

This was the reality; but he said to Marsden Hartley, "I never see all this unless someone comes to see me." How it appeared to him he described: "I have two windows in my workshop that look out upon an old garden whose great trees thrust their green-laden branches over the casement sills, filtering a network of light and shadow on the bare boards of my floor. Beyond the low roof tops of neighboring houses sweeps the eternal firmament with its ever-changing panorama of mystery and beauty. I would not exchange these two windows for a palace with less a vision than this old garden with its whispering leafage."

Ryder's life was a long and intense love affair with nature and the essentials of human

experience. After one knows all there is to know about his personal life—which is not much—there remains only the impression of his extraordinary devotion to his art and the visible record of that devotion in his pictures. For those whose natural appreciation is of Ryder the painter, his life and what he said about his work may serve as a kind of intellectual confirmation of the depth of imagination and commitment that the pictures reveal. On the other hand, people who find in his attitude and single-minded devotion a veritable sermon to his times may enjoy a sense of discovery in being able to see how his paintings symbolize the artist's philosophy and direct relations with life.

Ryder was like the Japanese painters of past generations in that he seldom copied nature. But he absorbed the forms, colors, feeling and imagery of the world about him as ordinary persons breathe the air. Then, as Lloyd Goodrich says in the Whitney catalog,

. . . with all his remoteness from ordinary realism there was a strain of naturalism in his work. Indeed, his distortions were probably largely unconscious. His skies with their strange cloud shapes were well observed, and few have painted moonlight so accurately—the way it subdues colors without effacing them, and the subtle unity of tone it confers on the whole composition. In early years he had pictured relatively realistic light, sometimes even sunlight, . . . but as time passed, he painted more and more "a light that never was on sea or land." In some later works, notably *The Race Track*, the light is that which we experience in dreams—we cannot say whether it is night or day.

There is a story behind *The Race Track*. Early in his career, when Ryder was struggling for recognition, his brother William, who owned the Albert Hotel, found him half-starved in a furnished room and brought him to the hotel to recuperate. Ryder lived there for a while, annoying his brother by fraternizing with the servants. One of the latter, a waiter, who had befriended Ryder, lost all his money on a wild bet at the race track and committed suicide. Ryder painted his feelings about this happening, showing the figure of death

riding around a deserted and dilapidated country track.

In all the later paintings, Ryder's own feelings and imagination dominate, making a design which has the unity of a new creation. Of his work, he said:

Art is long. The artist must buckle himself with infinite patience. His ears must be deaf to the clamor of insistent friends who would quicken his pace. His eyes must see naught but the vision beyond. He must await the season of fruitage without haste, without worldly ambitions, without vexation of spirit. An inspiration is no more than a seed that must be planted and nourished.

The canvas I began ten years ago I shall perhaps complete today or tomorrow. It has been ripening under the sunlight of the years that come and go. . . . It is a wise artist who knows when to cry "halt" in his composition, but it should be pondered over in his heart and worked out with prayer and fasting.

Ryder was utterly faithful to this view of a man's work. The thing that impresses us, here, is the idea that the peace of men would be completely guaranteed if all would regard the work they have chosen to do with the same seriousness and devotion. (Four pages of color reproductions of Ryder's paintings appeared in *Life* for Feb. 26, 1951.)

REVIEW
"MODERN EXPERIMENTS IN
TELEPATHY"

IF one arrays before him the recent volumes dealing with the paranormal world, he can hardly fail to be impressed by the number of distinguished scholars now contributing to the literature of this field. A year or so ago, MANAS reported on physicist Raynor Johnson's *The Imprisoned Splendour*, containing a truly remarkable collection of evidence as to the existence of "realms beyond the senses" which science does not know how to touch. Disregard of Johnson's own assertions in respect to the existence of an independent "soul" within the body is difficult to justify, after reading this book. J. B. Rhine's latest volume, *New World of the Mind*, is similarly impressive, if less assertive about "soul." Also during the past year the famous work of another well-known psychical researcher, G. N. N. Tyrrell's *Apparitions*, has been re-issued, so substantial has been the demand for authoritative writings in this field.

Finally, *Modern Experiments in Telepathy*, brought out in this country by Yale University Press in 1954, has already secured a number of favorable reviews. Taking together these several publishing incidents, and reasoning that they signify a trend of some significance, one might conclude that the single ray of light on psychic phenomena which attracted the eye of William James and later absorbed the attention of Dr. William MacDougall, has been refracted in many directions by the lenses of scientific experiment. More than ever, then, do MANAS editors feel justified in having included among the "Books for Our Time" (see MANAS for Nov. 25, 1953) a book dealing exhaustively with ESP phenomena—Rhine's *Reach of the Mind*.

So exhaustive is the research reported upon in *Modern Experiments* that we can here do little more than offer a few generalizing quotations. This volume is jointly authored by two British

mathematicians, and will undoubtedly win more converts to the view that telepathy is not only now demonstrated beyond a shadow of mathematical doubt, but also that its implications require a thorough reevaluation of current physical and psychological hypothesis. S. G. Soal is Senior Lecturer in Pure Mathematics in the University of London; he has been president for the Society for Psychical Research and was awarded a Fulbright research grant for work in this field. The introduction to *Modern Experiments*—further evidence of how respectable ESP is getting—is supplied by G. E. Hutchinson, Sterling professor of Zoology at Yale University. Dr. Hutchinson indicates his determination to see that recalcitrant sceptics give Soal and Bateman a fair hearing:

It will be evident to anyone who examines this book carefully that the authors have indeed written a most excellent work on telepathy. It is sober, factual and detailed, three virtues that are essential in any writing on a difficult and controversial aspect of experimental science. They have incorporated into their account a great deal of fascinating new material. It is, in fact, the sort of book to which no outsider should, in normal circumstances, contribute an introduction. The circumstances are, however, not normal.

The whole literature of parapsychology is disfigured by books and articles which are supposed to be critical evaluations, but which on examination turn out to be violent attacks by people who either have not read the works they are attacking or have wilfully misunderstood them.

Bertrand Russell has said that in approaching the work of a philosopher it is necessary first to read him from his own point of view so that one comes to understand him, and then to read him again making every possible criticism that can be made against his position. Such an attitude is surely also the correct one to take about the matters discussed in this book. The present writer has tried it and is convinced that Soal and Bateman withstand honest attack extremely well. Other more ingenious critics may, of course, discover loopholes; but until they do, there would seem no alternative to acceptance save a blind agnosticism which would make the development of any empirical knowledge totally impossible.

Significant in revealing the nature of a new and broader outlook on paranormal phenomena is a statement from the authors' preface, explaining that "the experimental work in telepathy arose out of a vast hinterland of spontaneous paranormal happenings reported through the centuries." Perhaps some of the ancient lore relating to "magic" is more than superstition! Profs. Soal and Bateman also recognize the need for carrying the case for telepathy to the average reader, believing that "experts" have an obligation to let people know what is going on—especially since authentic experts seldom feel that they know everything about their subject. They write:

In a book intended not only for the educated reader but also for the scientific student it was felt to be essential that exact figures by means of which the results of the numerous experiments are assessed should be given wherever these are available. Nowadays, most of us, whether we are scientists or not, have acquired some notions of probability, perhaps from discussion of football pools and racing. That rather irritating phrase "the odds against chance are so-and-so," which may ring in the ears of the reader like a clipped and debased coin, is an abbreviation for "the odds against the deviation in the score of this experiment from the expected value being due to chance are so-and-so." We have throughout used the term "odds" instead of "probability" because of its significance being more immediately apprehended by the non-mathematical reader.

Much of the story we have been trying to tell seriatim in *MANAS* is summed up in Soal and Bateman's appraisal of shifts in scholarly opinion during discussion of early statistical experiments in telepathy:

Our own feeling is that, with the exception of Estabrook's work and perhaps the Gronigen experiments, the use of statistical methods up to about the year 1932 yielded results which were either wholly negative or at best suggestive rather than conclusive regarding the operation of a paranormal faculty. What is chiefly noticeable is a curious lack of persistence on the part of some experimenters. One psychologist after another would make a few half-hearted attempts to demonstrate telepathy, and then abandon the task. One reason was that, during the first three decades of the present century, the subject

was considered hardly respectable in most academic circles.

A psychologist who received a special grant for the purpose might perform a limited number of experiments with impunity so long as the investigation appeared to prove that telepathy did not happen. But if an academic man showed any enthusiasm and a tendency to go on in the face of discouragement, he would soon be frowned upon and accused of wasting his time. His sanity might even be doubted. The general scientific opinion of the day insisted that telepathy was merely an exploded superstition, a thing decently buried, which it would be unwise to resurrect. The subject of parapsychology was associated in the academic mind with fortune-telling and fraudulent mediums, with astrology, phrenology, numerology, and similar nonsense.

How were these circumspect and cautious professors to know that, before the half-century had turned, the mental climate would have so far changed that the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and London, would be conferring doctorates for theses on the paranormal? How could they guess that in a few years the Rockefeller Foundation, the Royal Institution, and the Fulbright Commission, would be taking an active interest in promoting parapsychological studies or in acquainting the public with advances in this field? The important Waynflete lectures at Oxford University (Eccles, 1953), and Dr. Thouless's Friday evening lecture at the Royal Institution have only given expression at higher academic levels to the increasing attention which parapsychology has received from academic bodies. Parapsychology is no longer a field in which a professor of "English" or "French" at a university can give opinions without being thoroughly read in the literature of the subject. There is, of course, no shortage of people who feel that, because they are qualified in psychiatry or psychology, they are competent to pass judgment on the work of the parapsychologist. The "expert" knowledge of such persons is usually based on some quite elementary books on the subject which omit the essential experimental details without which a proper evaluation of the work is not possible. It would be interesting to meet the psychiatrist or psychologist who has perused every page of the 49 volumes of the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research, and who remains a complete sceptic. It is no coincidence that those most sceptical of ESP research are almost invariably those who are least acquainted with the facts.

So "those most sceptical of ESP research" are now having a more difficult time burying their heads deep enough in the sand of naive materialism. With physicists, mathematicians, zoologists, and an increasing number of psychiatric researchers pondering the meaning of telepathy, the predictions of Drs. MacDougall and Rhine seem likely of early fulfillment. Both these men have held that the psychological sciences would pass out of infancy only when the amassed evidence of centuries, in support of the view that the mind has powers and functions of its own, apart from physical causation, is recognized and adopted as a working assumption.

COMMENTARY
WHO CHOOSES BATTLEFIELDS?

IN MANAS for Dec. 1, 1954, in "The Arts of Peace," the story of a schoolhouse built by the natives of Okinawa was quoted from the Phi Beta Kappa *Key Reporter*—the interesting part being the fact that the Okinawans built the schoolhouse many miles away from any human habitation, with the idea of establishing a new village around the school—which, they felt, should be erected first of all. The MANAS writer added the comment that these are people whose homeland we Americans thought it necessary to use as a battlefield, to protect "our homes and schools from ruin."

A reader objects to the implication, writing to say that Okinawa became a battlefield because of "a concentration of enemy troops" in that area. He continues:

Our forces had no desire for Okinawa as a battleground; it was obviously a very costly and bitter one. The enemy made that choice for us.

War has never been a good or decent affair. War involves large measures of death and destruction, neither of which is particularly enjoyable. But once the course of war has been set upon, it behooves the right-minded participant to reach its culmination with all possible expedience. Okinawa, unfortunately, was an integral part of the process of reaching that culmination.

Bearing the foregoing in mind, your editorial is notably misleading, to say the kindest for it.

Our article was obviously too brief, too condensed, to prevent some readers from supposing that we questioned the moral aspect of the military decision to "take" Okinawa. We did not challenge the logic of *military* decision. A soldier who accepts the responsibility of winning a war from the people—or from those who represent the people, well or poorly—must do exactly as our correspondent says.

What we ought to have made clear is that when a powerful nation enters into a modern war—a *total* war—its course will be marked by several if not scores of "Okinawas"—places where

innocent people are subjected to the horrors and immeasurable destructiveness of the conflict. So, in this sense, any nation which participates in war—unless that nation can claim to be absolutely guiltless of its cause—must bear a measure of the responsibility for what happens to the Okinawas of the world. As the decades go by, war is increasingly a slaughter of the innocents, and the nation which would be blameless for this collective crime must be "innocent" indeed.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

PSYCHOLOGISTS have for so long been saying that all children's emotional troubles are directly traceable to adults that it sometimes becomes an interesting project to try to prove that it isn't quite so. We have several times made such an effort, here, and still incline to the belief that there appear to be certain inborn traits in one's children for which environmental circumstances fail to account. It is also possible, by over-emphasizing the "they're only what they've been made" philosophy, to demolish any real meaning in the concept of individual moral responsibility; if *we* were once children—and it seems fairly logical to hold that we were—a lot of adults made us what we are, too. If we suffer, then, it's really someone else's fault, and if a present someone else suffers through us, the guilty party or parties are the same. To sum it all up, if we can't help being the way we are—if change is impossible unless we hire a psychoanalyst to put the emotional machine together around a different pattern—then there really isn't much use in thinking or talking about "independent inquiry," "autonomous judgment," etc.

But if there are disadvantages and dangers in emphasizing environmental conditioning, there are also some advantages. Indeed, if "conditioning" be regarded as only a modifying influence rather than the major factor in the formation of character, certain things come into very clear focus. With regard to the effect on children of adult attitudes, for instance, we are led to wonder if manifestations of violent partisanship are not merely reflections of parental habits of mind. Probably the reason why we quickly assume that children are partisan and selfish to an extreme, until they have been conditioned to accept Christian or other ethical precepts, is that we adults seldom admit our own biases. Having acquired a veneer of sophistication, it is easy to disclaim prejudice even while exhibiting it. We do know we are not really supposed to let our judgments be determined by factional considerations; by unwritten compact, adults sustain each other's masquerades, pretending together that nothing but the light of

reason leads them to criticize "Reds," Catholics, Protestants, Unionists, Capitalists, the neighbor down the street, or whatever. But children, nakedly unsophisticated, penetrate to the essential facts of our dislikes—then proceed to imitate them, without the hypocritical precautions dictated by convention.

Whence, really, comes the classic "my father is richer than (or can lick) your father?" So far as we know, small religious communities in which neither fighting nor a super-fluity of material possessions were admired did not produce children who shouted such things at each other. But in a competitive society, where the struggle for dominance—or at least pre-eminence—is pronounced, although glamorized by phrases like "free enterprise," the matter of which parent is most *powerful*, one way or another, automatically becomes most important. As we have often said, you can't really fool children, because the fooling tools and techniques can be properly grasped only after years of practice. Psychologists and semanticists insist that no form of "race prejudice" can possibly be regarded as innate. (Stuart Chase, in the *Progressive* for December, remarks that "no child is ever born with ethnic prejudice; it is always built into him, like table manners.") All right, why not carry the same assumption over into all our factionalisms, and not only to the obvious instances of political and class bias, but also to the very *tendency* towards factionalism?

There are two reasons for our present trip down this fairly familiar trail. First, no educational efforts are made except on the basis of a number of philosophical (or unphilosophical) assumptions. If *educere* means "to draw out from" the pupil his latent capacities, and if no specific value judgments are innate, every effort to convince the young that our church, our family, our nation or our party is superior simply confuses them. Carried to its logical conclusion, all religious instruction of conventional nature is either irrelevant or an actual obstacle to development of ethical perception. (We wish we had Socrates to carry on the argument from here: he would be good at showing just how it is that sound ethical judgment must be based upon freedom from the pressure of external factors and opinions.)

Similarly, the well-meaning attempts of highschool boards and teachers to instruct in the superiorities of "American Democracy" have really nothing to do with education.

It may be pointed out that any proposal to stop preaching Christianity and Democracy altogether is apt to get a person shipped off to Russia these days, but one does not need to stop instructing just because he stops preaching. The ethics of the Sermon on the Mount and the Bill of Rights are independently impressive; practicing their ideals to the full, by resisting our own "built-in" prejudices, can show children what sort of attitudes courageous, calm and happy men are likely to have. You don't learn much about a product listening to the advertising claims made in its behalf, as most of us know by now; the quality of the product can be understood by watching its use for a period of time, and, finally, by trying it out for oneself.

We are among those who suspect that the greatest single cause for disharmony between the generations is the unconscious hypocrisy of elders. The children don't know we are being hypocritical, at least not always. What they do know is that much of the adult world seems vaguely phoney. As children, they have seen parents display elements of ruthlessness, selfishness, power-hungriness and sensualism; these frailties of the "lower man" can easily be imitated and usually are. But then the adolescent, old enough to cause a deal of embarrassment if he openly emulates these traits in his school society, is lectured with great sententiousness on why he should act in a completely opposite manner. So the young man or woman, who doesn't know the ins and outs of ethical rationalization, nor the working techniques of hypocrisy, *feels*—and quite naturally—that things are pretty "phoney" all around. Of course, all these things we have been describing go on in the subconscious minds of parents and children; during the formative years, when adults are making their first impressions upon their young, a host of minor psychic impressions are being stored up. They cause obvious trouble only when action taken upon their example comes into conflict with society—"society"

being represented by such things as parents, relatives, neighbors, schools, and juvenile courts.

But if factionalism is not "innate," if the contentiousness and cruelty often displayed by children are reflected derivatives from adults, we may turn away from the "up-from-the-ape" view of man's nature. This postulate, hanging over us somewhat like the theological cloud of "original sin," leads us to rather expect that the instincts of self-preservation and self-aggrandizement will dominate. And, as we think ourselves to be, so are we quite likely to become. The other view of man, and there is really only one other, is that each man is both a central self and a personal self. The personal self can be conditioned into factionalism and prejudice, and once these habits have been acquired, nothing but the "central self" can shake them off again. Can you imagine authoritarian methods successful in *removing* prejudice? A dictator can redirect prejudice, call off the dogs and start them up another trail; but, since indoctrination and prejudice are aspects of each other, it is impossible for the authoritarian to combat prejudice, even supposing he wanted to, which is unlikely. Another reason why we can't indoctrinate virtue is because indoctrination reaches only to the personal self, and touches the central self not at all.

Always at this point someone says, "But this is dualism—that old logical horror of religion." Yes, it is dualism, but what has this to do with Christian theology? Theology teaches no "central self" but rather that the personal self is "central." The "soul" of Christianity is the property of God, not man—not an essence, but an image. The purely selfish part of the personal man, the factional man, is the center of all important doings, because this is the part of us where the sinning goes on—and the part salvation may rescue. But if one holds with Plato that there is a "central self" which knows virtue, which can neither be saved nor dammed except through its own agency, and which, above all, cannot be conditioned or affected by factionalism, logic commands us to concern ourselves less with our young and more with ourselves.

FRONTIERS

Freedom and Character

THE following story about the life of a young convict may bring some light to the intricate question of whether man's will is free or not.

Günther had never known his parents. He was brought up in the home of foster-parents in Berlin, where he had a happy youth. The foster-parents were also satisfied with having adopted this boy, as he proved to be clever and intelligent, and went through school as one of the best.

At seventeen he had to go to war for some months. When it was over, his captain dismissed the men, advising them to try to get home, and giving them each 1000 marks. Günther reached Berlin after a week or so, having spent only 200 marks. He gave the rest of the money to his foster-mother, as a deposit of his own money, he thought; as a contribution to the family finances, she thought.

About six months later she became angry with him for some small offence he had committed. Then she discovered that there were only 750 marks left. Günther said that it was his own money, that he had taken the 50 marks to spend for himself. She said that he had stolen. She was enraged and reproached him in a violent way. Being sensitive to this accusation, he suddenly lost his temper, and, in a fit of rage, took a hammer that was on the table and killed his foster-mother with a single blow. He was sentenced to seven years in prison by the juvenile court.

Günther fully realized what he had done. From the very beginning of his punishment, he labored to erect the wall against his weakness that he thought was necessary. Every morning and every night he repeated ten times to himself: "I have to control myself . . . I have to control myself. . . ." He continued this discipline without break through five long years. When he read in a book that Julius Caesar, the great Roman Emperor, who was of the same temper and knew it, had trained himself to count to three before making a decision, Günther said to himself: "That man was right, but my case is

worse. I will count to ten every time I feel that I am in danger of losing my temper."

After five years in jail, owing to his good behavior, strengthened character, and good prospects, he was sent to an auxiliary camp where he was allowed leave on weekends, etc. A certain Mrs. Linde, with two grown-up daughters and one son, invited Günther to spend Christmas in her home. Soon Günther was in the Linde family as if he were another son of Mrs. Linde.

There was an incident of which Mrs. Linde did not speak until much later. One afternoon, she missed her watch. Nobody but Günther could have taken it. But she knew how sensitive and even ambitious Günther was, how it would hurt him if she taxed him with having stolen. She found a better way. She said to all her children: "I have mislaid my watch and cannot find it. Please all of you help me," and she arranged things so that it was Günther who looked through the room where the watch had been. He "found" it and gave it to Mrs. Linde, and she thanked him in a way that did not disclose that she knew it had been in his pocket.

This was genuine kleptomania. Such men take things unconsciously, often from people whom they like or even love. Kleptomania is very rare. In all my prison career, acquainting me with many thousands of thieves, I have not met a single man suffering from kleptomania but Günther, who never had been punished for stealing. Even those who knew him well were unaware of this deficiency.

A short time later, Günther obtained work as a carpenter in the home of a woman doctor of neurotic diseases. While this woman sometimes speaks in conferences about psychology, I think she has no idea of what this means. For here is what happened:

Günther was on good terms with the doctor, almost as with Mrs. Linde. But one day when she had been to town, he put her handbag under his jacket. Then he remembered: "I have to control myself," and when she came home he faced her, taking the handbag out from under his jacket. "I beg your pardon, madam," he explained. "I had a weak moment. I apologize."

Now if that lady had had half the tact and intelligence of Mrs. Linde, all would have gone well. But she did not. "You thief! You criminal! You scoundrel!" she yelled. "You have other things! Take off your clothes! I must search your body!"

Günther hesitated. Probably he counted to ten. He muttered: "I am a man. . . . I cannot strip in your presence."

"You will do it now! I am a doctor. Do it now!"

She was mistaken. At that moment she was not acting as a doctor. But Günther controlled himself, and humiliated himself even more, in order to appease her. He did what she had asked. Of course, he had nothing else.

But his humiliation accomplished nothing. She went to the telephone, saying: "Now I will inform the prison authorities, who recommended you, what a miserable criminal you are!"

In that moment, this woman was in danger of her life. Günther had suffered a new provocation against his self-respect—even worse than when his foster-mother had accused him of having stolen 50 marks.

But Günther was no longer the same man. The wall he had erected against his own temper, in five long years, proved strong enough. Perhaps he counted ten. At any rate, he turned and ran away—without committing another act of violence.

We have never seen Günther again. I knew he would never come back; after his defeat, after his hidden vice had come to light, he would rather kill himself than face again myself and the others who had confidence in him. There are rumors that he is in the uranium pit in Russian-controlled Saxony, where nobody can ever find and arrest him. If Günther could know how we all think about him, he would come back. We have never considered his flight as that of a man unwilling to serve out his term. Instead, we have praised him for being able to control himself in such a situation.

Is, then, man's will free? I think not. In the moment that we act, we act according to our

character. The coward is not able to commit an act of heroism. He will act as a coward when the critical moment appears. The irritable man, like Günther, will react in a violent way when he is offended, as Günther did in the case of his foster-mother.

But we are free, absolutely free, to change our character. Day by day, during five long years, Günther had been busily erecting a bulwark against his irritability, which he had decided was necessary. And then, when the test came, that bulwark proved a solid defense his bad temper could not break down. His will was not free then, either. He acted as his character bade him. But his character was no longer the same as five years earlier.

I do not know whether Günther is living or not. But even if he is not, his life was not wasted. I, for one, have learned from him that we have to study our own character and to work upon it, in order to make it equal to the hour that may come. And he has shown us all, I think, that one *can* change one's character.

BERLIN CORRESPONDENT