VOLUME VIII, NO. 44
NOVEMBER 2, 1955

EDUCATION WITHOUT CONFUSION

SOMEWHERE—perhaps in his *Theory of Education in the United States,* perhaps in his *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*—Albert Jay Nock sketched in a sentence or two a view of higher education which, if not complete, is at least unforgettable. It was that scholars and men of high attainments in various fields should pursue their work with the devotion that has brought excellence to what they do, and in the relative isolation they need, while students may be permitted to approach them respectfully, watch what they are doing and how they do it, and ask questions from time to time; the students may also be shown how to help with the work, if they exhibit promise of the necessary qualifications.

There is some exaggeration here, as in much of what Nock wrote, but his point is unmistakable. Education is not only something given; it is something which must be striven for, and *taken.* Any other view of the higher education at once devaluates both man and education itself. To suppose that an education can be acquired by some kind of "exposure" to learning for a conventional period of time is to misconceive entirely the educational process; and, correspondingly, to woo the young with what are supposed to be the "attractions" of learning presumes that they are without a natural hunger for knowledge, that they must be cozened into manifesting this prime human quality.

It is true, of course, that the sort of education we are talking about is education with philosophical ends, and not the training which is undertaken to fit a young man or a young woman to make a living. It is rather education which has the end of a greater understanding of what it means to be alive. Training in how to make a living is by no means unnecessary or unimportant, but it should never be confused with genuine education.

How, then, should higher education be pursued? The best contemporary answer to this question is found, we think, in the April 1955 *Bulletin* of St. John's College in Annapolis, which is entirely devoted to analysis of the College Program—the Report of a "Project of Self Study" conducted by the faculty with the assistance of the alumni and some educators from other schools. But before examining this Report, there are some things to be said about the Nock theory of higher education.

First of all, the idea of scholars and great men practicing their arts and sciences under the aspiring eyes of students suffers from a medieval flavor. It assumes or implies, that is, that these exemplars of culture know what they are about and what they hope to achieve. In Nock's picture, they seem to pursue the classic ideal with a classic calm. But this is not an accurate picture of contemporary culture. *Today, the best men in every field come very close to questioning the fundamental meaning of what they are doing.* The educational ideal is in doubt. The ideal culture is controversial. The nature of man is profoundly uncertain. The special pursuits of scholarship, in these circumstances, are themselves under a cloud. The very concept of scholarship cries out for fresh definition, so that the scholar, as a responsible human being, is or ought to be a somewhat perturbed man.

It follows, then, that even classical theories of education suffer from the common confusion. In such a period, where ought a young man to turn, to get himself an education—to begin, that is, the process of understanding the world he lives in, and himself?

At St. John's there is at least an awareness of the confusion of the modern educational world, and considerable grasp of its cause, or causes.

The teachers at St. John's, so far as we can see, are not *victims* of the common confusion, but are very busy defining its character and coping with the limits it places upon the educational process. Naturally enough, the result seems to be that more and better education is going on at St. John's.

The reading of this Bulletin on the Self-Study Project at St. John's is a rather exciting experience. Because it is entirely about the College, it concerns many of the things college catalogues usually describe or discuss, but with this difference: there is not a trace of window-dressing or pompous declaration. This was a project undertaken, not to exploit the "successes" of the institution, but to track down its failures, if any, and to explore what might be done about them. The project, in other words, was just what it is called—self study, or self-education on the part of those responsible for the school. The professors and friends of St. John's found several things they thought might be done better, if ways could be discovered to do them better, and they gave sharp form to the central problems of education as they appeared to the participants. But of actual educational failures, the reader of the Report, at least, can discern little trace. The reader—this reader, anyhow—found the Report far too educational a document to even hint of failure at St. John's.

The Report is made up of an introduction by Richard D. Weigle, president of the College, a general account of the St. John's Program, a chapter on "Learning and the Community," two sections on alumni opinion about the Program, and a summary of a "Self-Study Conference," followed by a statement by Dean Jacob Klein. The Report was drafted largely by Clarence J. Kramer, a St. John's graduate and a teacher in the college.

For those unfamiliar with the story of St. John's, it may be said that in the fall of 1937, this third oldest of American collegiate institutions (founded as King William's College by Royal Charter in 1696) became the scene of an educational experiment in which the entire curriculum of the college was built around a representative selection of the Great Books. As Mr. Weigle puts it, "Through continuing discussion in seminars, supplemented by four years of non-elective work in language, mathematics and the laboratory sciences, St. John's College sought to develop in its students the intellectual skills that are in truth the liberal arts." Concerning the reaction to this program, the President comments:

> It is understandable, if somewhat amusing, that St. John's should have been criticized in recent years for being too conservative and traditional and, at the same time, too radical and unconventional. It will be clear from the content of this volume that the College is neither revolutionary in the sense of annihilating the past, nor conservative in the sense of allowing the dead hand of a "golden age" to restrain its continuing effort to reformulate liberal arts in a contemporary context. St. John's could not, even if it would, insulate itself completely against the tempestuous present and establish an idyllic sanctuary in imitation of a mythical past of sweetness and reasonableness. The blaring of bands, the roar of airplanes, the clatter of commercial traffic, and the groanings of a bulldozer inevitably disturb the tranquillity of the classroom—there is no soundproofing against the here and now. The instructor can only shut the window and patiently redirect the attention of the students to a drawing of the Ptolemaic universe on the blackboard. Education is not a negative process of exclusion, but a positive one of attention.

There is, however, a measure of abstraction from the bustle and "crises" of the hurrying present sought at St. John's. The chapter on "Learning and the Community" has this paragraph:

> St. John's frankly advocates a certain insularity for the academic community. This is not because of an ivory tower attitude toward the contemporary world or because of an arrogant assumption that outside all is darkness. Rather it stems from a conviction that the intellectual development of a student is most properly viewed as if it were a biological phenomenon. For American undergraduates, a special environment—one might almost say a culture—seems necessary and desirable. St. John's does not wish the value of precious years of

> leisure at college to be destroyed by a preoccupation with the political and social activities of the adult community outside. It believes that attempts on the part of colleges to encourage such preoccupation by students, however well-intentioned such attempts might be, are wrong. Neither the student, the college, nor the non-academic world is likely to profit from such premature engagement. The net result is frequently only to dissipate student energies that might have been utilized more fruitfully in the classroom. Leisure is allowed a student so that he may develop intellectually, and the College considers it a misuse of this academic privilege for a student to divert attention to more "pressing" problems.

It is fair to say that the account of St. John's Program and objectives presented in this report pays no attention at all to the contemporary slogans and catch-words of education. It rather pays the reader the compliment of assuming that he is not interested in slogans, but in hard thinking. In a paragraph which introduces the idea of "a community of learning," the report points out that a community is much more than individuals living in proximity of one another, proceeding to severe criticism of modern society:

> It [a community] requires a tradition—that aggregate of past experience and understanding accepted by all members as relevant to the affairs of the community—and beyond that it requires some commonness of effort, desire and ambition. Though, ironically, more and more attention these days is being devoted to the study of social phenomena, the contemporary scene, in all areas of our lives, is marked by a virtual disappearance of a sense of community. Among the causes of this, surely the failure of schools and colleges to fulfill their function of transmitting an intellectual tradition to the young is one of the most significant. In a broad sense, the essence of the St. John's Program lies in the effort to reclaim that function for the liberal arts college.

On the other hand, St. John's has no bland words to offer on the subject of security:

> . . . it is an unfortunate fact that risks are involved in this process of learning—for both the individual and the community. Young and immature students are exposed to certain inescapaable dangers. They are required during four years to analyze searchingly and honestly the very foundations of their own lives and of their own society. These foundations may be destroyed, and alternative foundations are not always readily found or, when available, may not be deemed acceptable by the student. St. John's cannot guarantee to supply new foundations; and it could not, without denying the fundamental principle of its existence, promise that a student's inherited moral and social foundations will remain unchanged.

Only by accident is this Bulletin a "defense" of an educational program centering on the study and discussion of the great books of Western civilization. What is really impressive is the thinking in the bulletin, which must be, in some measure, the fruit of an education gained from the St. John's program. We neglect the occasional arguments and justifications in behalf of the great books in order to have space to illustrate this thinking—for example, on the subject of America's preoccupation with "productivity":

> The almost incredible industrial and agricultural productivity of the United States is a fact, irrespective of the means by which it has been achieved or of its possible consequences. Among other things this fact presupposes a concern with efficiency that has almost transformed us into a nation of efficiency experts. St. John's in no way wishes to detract from this legitimate and laudable concern in business and industry, but it has grave doubts regarding its relevance to education.
>
> A college is not a factory; the mind of a human being is not an engine block; a curriculum is not an assembly line; a graduate is not just a product. A teacher is not an engineer working from a blueprint; he is an artist trying to embody a vision in the most intractable of materials.
>
> It is imperative that schools and colleges not allow a concern with efficiency and productivity to determine their academic policies for the simple reason that nothing so interferes with the accomplishment of the institution's or individual student's purpose as an obsession with demonstrable results. A concern for productivity now so pervades our whole life that it is even considered a compliment when an activity of any kind is described as "businesslike." That students should almost invariably exhibit anxiety about how much and how quickly they are learning is, therefore, no surprise. St. John's believes that the grip of this anxiety must be broken before a reflective attitude prerequisite to

> learning can develop. Four years is a very brief period in which to achieve this.

Throughout the Bulletin, it is intimated that the teachers themselves are doubtless learning more than the students. This, we think, is inevitable, is as it should be, and is admitted, as it ought to be. The tutors and instructors of the college go to school to one another. The ideal teacher at St. John's is the man who can "teach" any of the Program's activities. The faculty, being maturely engaged on a philosophical quest, is bound to convey to the students something of the capacity for wonderment which was the genius of the ancient Greeks; and, interestingly enough, a chief believes that the grip of this anxiety must be broken before a reflective attitude prerequisite to learning can develop. Four years is a very brief period in which to achieve this.

Throughout the Bulletin, it is intimated that the teachers themselves are doubtless learning more than the students. This, we think, is inevitable, is as it should be, and is admitted, as it ought to be. The tutors and instructors of the college go to school to one another. The ideal teacher at St. John's is the man who can "teach" any of the Program's activities. The faculty, being maturely engaged on a philosophical quest, is bound to convey to the students something of the capacity for wonderment which was the genius of the ancient Greeks; and, interestingly enough, a chief concern of the Self-Study Conference participated in by the President, the Dean, several teachers, and some friends of the College, was that there should be no prejudging of the outcome of the search for truth. The quest for knowledge, in other words, can have no predetermined conclusions. As educators, the teachers at St. John's insist upon the intellectual integrity of their educational enterprise.

There is a sense in which the experiment that began at St. John's in 1937 was a declaration of independence for education—or, more exactly, a declaration of independence for the human mind. Speaking of the contemplated selection of additional books for seminar discussion, Dean Jacob Klein said:

> It [the faculty] has to avoid, with all the circumspection at its command, two pitfalls. It should not give emphasis to the superficial discussions of current political problems which reflect, perhaps more than anything else, the deplorable infantilism of contemporary life, and thus increase the reigning immaturity in judgment and action. And it cannot rely on the existing social sciences with their unquestioned and yet highly questionable methodology and terminology borrowed from the natural sciences. Like any other material chosen for the nourishment of the learning mind, this one, presenting basic issues within an industrialized and global civilization, must be seen in the light of the traditional crucial problems which man cannot avoid facing at all times and which, in fact, form the texture of the great books throughout the four years.
>
> The task is not to build an easy bridge connecting the student with the political realities around him. There is no danger that he will find himself cut off from the smaller or larger communities to which he belongs by birth, no danger that he will remain unaware of, or untouched by, the pressing exigencies of life, no danger that he will not be well "adjusted" to the demands imposed upon him by society. The danger is, on the contrary, that he might become too well adjusted to them, that he might forget that the walls around him comprise not only things but also ideas, rooted in a variety of traditions and original insights, that he might not have learned to look at himself within such a room with mature eyes, and then to take his stand.

In conclusion, we confess to having reviewed the report of the St. John's Program with an enthusiasm which simply confirmed and extended the expectations felt when we wrote for a copy of the *Bulletin.* Though St. John's may not have the *whole* answer to the educational needs of our time, that part of the answer which St. John's *does* have is so undeniably important, so clearly comprehended by its advocates, and so lucidly and fearlessly described, that the enthusiasm, we think, can hardly be avoided.

REVIEW
EINSTEIN AND SCIENCE

IT is a mark of sophistication among the better critics of our time that they point out that simple "mechanism" and Science have been incorrectly identified in the minds of the public. Religionists, taking heart, then become effusive in generalizations about the willful blindness in arguments that events and circumstances interpret themselves, and that man has no need of inspiration beyond that provided by the slide rule. We, however, who have made criticisms of "science" in somewhat similar terms, feel that the most instructive approach to revaluation of scientific hyper-certainty is by way of books and articles which deal, in detail, with specific misunderstandings. The growing popularity of the generalization that science has been "too materialistic" is not sufficient to teach us what we need to know about ourselves, and the errors of the scientist are, after all, no more than the errors of any man who gravitates to a simple solution because he fears the uncertainties of complexity.

A present case in point for the theory that criticism of science is best when specific is provided by an article, "From Copernicus to Einstein," in the September issue of the British monthly, *Encounter*. Prof. Michael Polanyi, professor of social studies at Manchester University, begins this brief and provocative piece with a close look at the term "objective"—pointing out that, in one very important sense, theoretical knowledge is *more* objective than immediate experience. A theory is something about which we have a better chance, for instance, to be impartial and impersonal. The Copernican theory was more "objective" than the Ptolemaic because, being more theoretical, it allowed its originator to separate himself from the bombardment of his senses—and after all, Prof. Polanyi points out, the anthropocentrism of the senses is the crudest variety.

To illustrate, Prof. Polanyi refers to the story of relativity as found in the elementary physics textbooks of the English-speaking world. There we are informed that the relativity theory was conceived by Einstein in the year 1905, *because* Einstein was trying to account for the results of the Michelson-Morley experiment. Michelson and Morley are commonly thought to have found out that the speed of light turns out to be the same no matter what the direction of the light signal. Until then it had been expected that the man sending the signal would in some degree "catch up" with the signal sent out in the direction corresponding with the movement of earth, so that the speed of light would appear slower in this direction, faster in the opposite direction.

The textbook implication that experiments come *first* and comprehensive theories only later is in this instance entirely controverted by the fact. As a school boy Einstein had speculated on the likelihood of the results "demonstrated" by Michelson and Morley. Einstein's autobiography reveals, in his own words, that he discovered relativity after "ten years' reflection . . . from a paradox upon which I had already hit at the age of sixteen: If I pursue a beam of light with the velocity *c* (velocity of light in a vacuum), I should observe such a beam of light as a spatially oscillatory electromagnetic field at rest. However, there seems to be no such thing, whether on the basis of experience or according to Maxwell's equations. From the very beginning it appeared to me intuitively clear that, judged from the standpoint of such an observer, everything would have to happen according to the same laws as for an observer who, relative to the earth, was at rest."

So Dr. Einstein's discovery was not—and there is no evidence to the contrary—based upon the Michelson-Morley experiment at all, but upon his largely unaided intuitions. After establishing this fact, Professor Polanyi goes on:

> The usual textbook account of relativity as a theoretical response to the Michelson-Morley

> experiment is an invention. It is the product of prejudice, exactly on a par, for example, with the notion customary among primitive people, that hostile witchcraft may be assumed to account for someone's violent death. Even as the native refuses to accept the possibility of accidental death, the modern positivist refuses to acknowledge man's inherent power to discover rationality in nature, and when his prejudices come in conflict with experience, the positivist—like the savage—automatically supplements experience from the resources of his imagination. So when Einstein discovered rationality in nature, unaided by any observation that had not been available for at least fifty years before, our textbooks promptly covered up the scandal by an appropriately embellished account of his discovery.

The main import of "From Copernicus to Einstein" is that we are now moving, in a slow circle, to recognition of a philosophical position assumed by many of the ancients—that man, made of thought, transcends the implications of sensory experience by his capacity for rational disciplines, and that experimentation is and always must be secondary to analysis and intuition. As Polanyi puts it:

> Modern man has set up as the ideal of knowledge the conception of natural science as a set of statements which are "objective" in the sense that their substance is entirely determined by observation, even while their presentation may be shaped by convention. This conception, stemming from a craving rooted in the very core of our culture, would be shattered if the assessment of rationality in nature had to be acknowledged as a justifiable and indeed quite essential part of scientific theory. That is why scientific theory is represented as a mere economical description of facts; or as embodying a conventional policy for drawing empirical inferences; or as a working hypothesis, suited to man's practical convenience: interpretations which all deliberately overlook the rational core of science.
>
> That is why also, if the existence of this rational core yet reasserts itself, its offensiveness is covered up by a set of euphemisms, a kind of recent understatement like that used in Victorian times when legs were called limbs, a bowdlerisation we may observe, for example, in the attempts to replace "rationality" by "simplicity." It is legitimate, of course, to regard simplicity *as a mark* of rationality, and to pay tribute to any theory as a triumph of simplicity. But great theories are rarely simple in the ordinary sense of the term—both quantum-mechanics and relativity are very difficult to understand: it takes only a few minutes to memorise the facts accounted for by relativity, but years of study may not suffice to master the theory and see these facts in its context.

"Slide-rule science," then, does not initiate or discover; it can only verify or substantiate. As Prof. Polanyi says in his closing paragraph, we need again to "endorse personal knowledge" in reassessing man's responsibility for scientific knowledge, and we must also recognize the need for impassioned devotion to theory—an entirely original and individual matter—as the creative act which makes scientific progress possible.

Turning from the textbook accounts which imply that Einstein's discovery of relativity *depended* upon the Michelson-Morley experiment, Prof. Polanyi continues:

> There are other sections of science which illustrate even more effectively the part played by what might be called personal knowledge in our understanding of nature. Inexact sciences rely heavily on skills and connoisseurship, as does also the appreciation of probability and order in the exact sciences. At all these points science relies on human *appraisal.* The personal appraisal which enters into knowledge denies in a sense disjunction between subjectivity and objectivity, for it claims that man can transcend his own subjectivity by passionately striving to fulfil his own personal obligations to universal standards. Our endorsement of personal knowledge re-establishes man's responsibility for scientific knowledge on the grounds that our passionate participation in the act of knowing is intrinsic to it, and that it can yet fulfil universal demands.

COMMENTARY
THE FORTIFYING CURRICULUM

BEING uncontent with the decision of the writer of this week's lead article to leave the source of the "Nock theory of education" in doubt, we searched unsuccessfully for a copy of *The Theory of Education in the United States*, but did, unfortunately, unearth a copy of *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man.* We say "unfortunately," for this fascinating book beguiled away nearly two hours without disclosing the passage sought, and our editorial did not even get begun.

It would not be difficult, however, for the educators at St. John's to call Mr. Nock as a witness. He says in one place:

> Nine-tenths of the value of classical studies lies in their power to establish a clear common-sense, matter-of-fact view of human nature and its activities over a continuous stretch of some twenty centuries.

Again, championing the merits of his own education, obtained at a small college which he believed was the last in the United States to relinquish "the grand old fortifying classical curriculum," he wrote:

> The literatures of Greece and Rome comprise the longest, most complete and most nearly continuous record we have of what the strange creature known as *Homo sapiens* has been busy about in virtually every department of spiritual, intellectual and social activity. That record covers nearly twenty-five hundred years in an unbroken stretch of this animated oddity's operations in poetry, drama, law, agriculture, philosophy, architecture, natural history, philology, rhetoric, astronomy, logic, politics, botany, zoology, medicine, geography, theology,—everything, I believe, that lies in the range of human knowledge or speculation. Hence the mind that has attentively canvassed this record is much more than a disciplined mind, it is an *experienced* mind. It has come, as Emerson says, into a feeling of immense longevity, and it instinctively views contemporary man and his doings in the perspective set by this profound and weighty experience. Our studies were properly called formative, because beyond all others their effect was powerfully maturing. Cicero told the unvarnished truth on saying that those who have no knowledge of what has gone before them must forever remain children; and if one wished to characterize the collective mind of this present period, or indeed of any period,—the use it makes of its powers of observation, reflection, logical inference,—one would best do it by the word *immaturity*.

It is not, of course, only the classics of antiquity which have this power. Every great age produces its modicum of "formative studies," and while the St. John's Program includes those of the later West, it does not, so far as we know, allow the classics of Eastern thought—the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, the *Tao Te King*, to name the very greatest—a place beside Plato and Aristotle. Even the Great Books Foundation Seminars around the country delay such volumes to the *ninth* year of reading and discussion, which seems an unwonted restriction of the "meeting of East and West."

But that is an aside. The principle of employing formative studies for true education is what Nock affirms, and what St. John's practices.

At the end of his life, Mr. Nock wrote as a somewhat disenchanted man. It would be difficult for anyone who saw as clearly as he did to be anything else. Yet if we can find springs of hope, and the enthusiasm which grows from hoping, we shall do well if we achieve at the same time the inviolable intellectual honesty that he gained, or thought he gained—doubtless there were more mysterious sources—from his classical education.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

WE here welcome another "guest contribution" from the curriculum supervisor who, a few months ago, began the discussion of various ways of reporting to parents on their children's progress in school. The present subject is camping expeditions sponsored by the public schools—part of a new movement blessed with surprising vitality.

* * *

Editor, Children . . . and Ourselves: Judging from previous articles, I thought you might be interested in the trend of school camping, with its accompanying philosophy. School camping is a phase of Outdoor Education, which term has come to stand for both a point of view toward camping activities and an evaluation of its function. *School* camping, specifically, is to be distinguished from the camping programs sponsored by city recreational departments, Y.M.C.A., Boy Scouts, and the like, since it really serves a different purpose. It is not primarily intended to be a recreational experience, though it may serve that purpose also. What school camping really provides is the opportunity for children to live through experiences in conservation, endurance of a more primitive situation, and close association with others in a closely knit work-group. It provides for the child some elements of the experience known to pioneer children as members of large families during the frontier days of our nation. Children in camp do not study "science," "music," "health and safety," "social living," and "language" from textbooks, but all these nevertheless become integral to their daily experience.

A general view of the program is offered in *School Camp*ing, published by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (a Department of the National Education Association):

> Outdoor education includes those school directed experiences conducted outside the classroom. It may include field trips, camping and other purposeful activities which provide for participation in actual life situations. School camping is that part of outdoor education which involves living in the out-of-doors. As such, it is a part of the total instructional program and should, by no means, be considered as the whole. A program of education may be developed, and a very valuable one at that, with or without camping experiences. The camping environment, however, goes further in providing firsthand learning opportunities than is possible through other kinds of outdoor experiences. It follows, then, that a thoroughgoing program of outdoor education should logically include a camping situation.
>
> Educators, as well as members of professional and lay organizations, are supporting the school camping movement as an educationally sound activity. Groups are urging that the school camp be included as an integral part of the school program. Many skills and attitudes needed by young people today apparently can be taught more effectively out-of-doors than indoors. Educators do not claim that the school camp is a panacea for all the ills of society. They do contend, however that some of the direct experiences needed by young people are best found in a school camping environment.

There are no competitive sports or games during the camping week, because, first of all, there is no time, and because such sports are a part of the school curriculum, as well as the after-school and summer recreation programs.

The author of *School Camping,* John W. Gilliland, continues—supplying information which should interest many teachers:

> Only in recent years has camping been proposed and projected as a public function. School people and other citizens are realizing more and more the educational significance of camping. Since the camping program is largely one of learning through direct experience, it undoubtedly will play an increasingly important role in the future development of the schools.
>
> School camping programs vary considerably. Some are carried on throughout the regular school year, others for only a part of the school year, either in late spring or early fall or for shorter periods of time. Schools are exploring the possibilities of

> extending education into the out-of-doors with the idea of finally moving to a year-around program of outdoor education. In some instances, the climatic conditions do not seem to make it feasible to operate such a program during the whole year; in other localities either a shortage of facilities or lack of finances may limit a long-term project. Because the school camping movement is in its infancy, when considered from the standpoint of the number of pupils who have an opportunity to attend such camps, it is quite natural that many of these camping projects are only at the beginning stage of development.
>
> Most of the schools find, at the beginning, that it is best to start school camping on a small scale. Experiences of many groups indicate that there are numerous ways to establish school camping programs. In every situation the particular resources available, such as camp sites, funds, personnel, groups to be served and community interest, shape the nature and type of camping program.
>
> Organized camping has been in existence since Civil War days. Camping programs for which schools are directly responsible, however, extend only over a period of approximately 25 years. The schools' contribution to these programs has been largely in the form of time, ideas, staff, facilities, and equipment. Camp staffs have been made up largely of teachers. Camp sites have been leased, borrowed or purchased, while common practice has been that of using existing facilities. . . .
>
> Growth of the movement . . . has not been confined to any one area of the United States. Neither has location or size of the school district seemed to be a determining factor. . . . Probably the most important factors in the spread of the movement have been the interest and concern of leaders both at the state and local levels.

A typical week's camping experience for all sixth-grade boys and girls of a Southern California school district goes like this: On Monday morning counselors arrive in the classrooms to explain to the children some of the interesting features of the ride to camp, and acquaint them with simple camp rules and procedures—all this while a final check is made by the school nurse of each child's health. Then school buses transport the children to camp. Soon after their arrival the groups get together with their counselors to plan their week's activities. They (the *children*) decide upon and set up a schedule for such activities as conservation projects (building a retaining wall, wattling, or clearing of inflammable debris), tree and shrub planting, hikes to nearby peaks (all trail activities include science a study of plants and animals seen on the way), star study, cookouts, handcrafts, square dancing. The children have responsibilities such as camp clean-up, serving of meals, acting as hosts and hostesses in the dining room, washing and drying dishes, and care of their own quarters. The amazing part of all this is that, after only five days, a purposeful, energetic, courteous attitude often emerges. The children are busy every moment carrying out the projects which they themselves determined—and like to "work" at. Their manners in the dining room and about camp, incidentally, are superior to many adults'. After an evening sing around the campfire, the children also seem to find it quite natural to discuss what was interesting and important to them in the day's activities.

We who are in education feel that such an experience, while brief, gives children the opportunity to contribute directly to the conservation movement; it enables them to realize, by the immediate presence of nature, the harmony and majesty of the natural world; it gives them the opportunity to measure their own resourcefulness and self-reliance under primitive conditions.

Those interested may procure a copy of *School Camping* from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, branch of the N.E.A. Address is 1201 60th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. (Price, 75 cents.)

Note: In a previous discussion of school camping (MANAS, July 15, 1953) I noted a sentence from a reader's communication which does not check with my experience. Your correspondent said: "If the child's first introduction to nature is through the school, I think he gets the idea that this is a hostile force that must be dominated, that superiority over his fellows in woodsmanship is the desired goal

instead of understanding and fitting in with a larger reality."

I have held this theoretical criticism in mind while I reviewed all the things I saw and heard at various sessions of school camp. Even if this particular camp is unusual (I do know that the director and his staff are utterly dedicated to this work, and attain remarkable results with the children), I could neither remember any experience the children had, either direct or implied, which would give them any idea of a "hostile force," nor see how even a relatively inferior camp could produce this result. For children cannot help but realize, as they work and sweat to rehabilitate their surroundings, that man, the great agent of erosion, is the only hostile force. The campers are not lectured to along certain lines of thought. Even ideas of science are taught by the Socratic method. Somehow, the conviction does grow within each child, one way or another, that cooperation is the keynote at camp—with nature and with each other.

FRONTIERS

Moral Society and . . .

DURING World War II, the *Christian Century,* that excellent organ of unconfined Christian opinion, took an editorial position on the war which satisfied nothing except the tortured consciences of its editors, yet, looking back on those agonizing days, one wonders what else men who were both Christian and believers in the modern national form of political organization could have done. The *Century* defined the war as a true "tragedy"—a situation in which the evil course of war was the only alternative to the greater evil of submission to the overriding forces of the Axis powers.

Naturally, as earnest Christians, the editors were inclined toward the pacifist outlook. It is a very half-baked and selectively devised exegesis of Christian teaching which can lead to anything else. The *Christian Century,* on the other hand, had the rather solemn responsibility of shaping the opinion of the Protestant clergy of the United States, and the responsibilities of citizenship have never sat lightly on the shoulders of the Protestant clergy. It is a somewhat fearsome thing to pursue the implications of the pacifist position to their full political conclusions. You arrive, eventually, at something like the anarchist position, vis a vis the State. A modern State without an army would be no State at all. (A nation without an army could not get into the old League of Nations, since part of the League's definition of a nation was that it had to have an army. Iceland, having no army, could not join the League.)

The *Christian Century* opposed American entry into the war until almost the last minute. Then, after Pearl Harbor, it accepted the terrible necessity as the tragic fate of the United States, regarding the war as a wage of sin which could not be rejected. The *Century* maintained this position throughout the war, to the sorrow of the Christian pacifists, but a pacifist writer could always get a hearing in the *Century's* pages and the editors never charged them with anything worse than a lack of "realism." The *Century,* therefore, has always been a forum where the dilemma of war could obtain a measure of honest discussion.

These thoughts and recollections are provoked by the appearance in the *Christian Century* for Oct. 12 of an article by the dean of a Japanese junior college in Yokohama. The writer, Takaaki Aikawa, is a noted Japanese scholar and a Christian who has spent time in graduate study in America. The point of his article is that white Westerners, including white Western Christian missionaries, no longer have the advantage of being ostensibly a "superior breed" who come to the backward East to save heathen souls. The war has changed all that. All that a Westerner can use, now, to prove the truth of his religion to Asians is the naked humanity he brings with him. Mr. Aikawa says:

> So long as your mission work is to "save savage Asia" you will meet with aggravating resistance from intelligent Japanese. They no longer believe that they are essentially inferior to Americans in morals. They know from their experience that any country has moral men and immoral men and that the state has a tendency to be immoral, as Reinhold Niebuhr says in his *Moral Man and Immoral Society* and *The Nature and Destiny of Man.*

This theme of Dean Aikawa's article, however, does not especially concern us, since the object of converting Japanese youth, or any youth, to Christianity, is not one we wish to further. What is of interest is the response of Japanese youth to the post-war policies of the United States. Dean Aikawa tells the story of the son of a Christian university professor, an intelligent boy who two years ago entirely left off speaking to his parents. His silence remained a mystery until an explanation was obtained from a friend whom he told how he felt. This is the boy's explanation:

> I was in primary school when the Pacific war began. In the primary school I received ultranationalistic education. They taught me that the emperor was a god, Americans were devils, in a war alone our noble character could be developed, and so

> on. But when Japan was defeated, everything changed overnight. The emperor was no more god, America was an ideal country, and a war was disgusting. I tried to adapt myself to this new teaching and had almost succeeded when the situation again changed. Rearmament began, and the word "peace," which was the noblest word for these few years, became taboo, being called "red," and the soldiers began to become the flower of the people.
>
> I can never forget the fine speech the president of my high school made on the day of promulgation of the new constitution. He said: "Japan is the first country which abolished armament by constitution. We are standing nearest the human ideal in this point. The Bible says, 'They that take the sword shall perish with the sword.' We here solemnly swear that we shall never take arms and if some country should be so inhuman as to invade us who have no arms, we shall be willing to be killed. Through the death of a righteous nation the world will learn the meaning of peace better." The address was closed with another passage from the Bible. It said, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called sons of God." I was greatly impressed by this speech, but now I know that the president no longer talks about peace. Liars, every one of them. Three times we were betrayed by adults. I hate them from the bottom of my heart.

You may say that there is no place in this world for a youth so naïve as not to be able to adjust to the semiconscious hypocrisy of changing national lines—that an American boy would not be so tender in his susceptibility to betrayal—but is this really an "answer"? Do we want a younger generation that refuses to take its elders seriously—a generation which carefully chooses its allegiances to avoid betrayal and ends, perhaps, by not having any?

Japanese policy, of course, has been made in Washington in recent years, so that contradictions which result are not alleviated by a local feeling of emergency. This boy might not have felt so badly if the changes he experienced had originated in Japan, with corresponding alternations in popular feeling among his immediate associates in the community. He would at least have sensed the cause behind a change of principles. But the "principles" now reflected by his elders have been *dictated* to them, and the boy has a sense of intolerable degradation. His highest loyalties have been "manipulated."

Well, what can anyone do about it? It seems likely that in every country which is obliged by political considerations to conform to a policy elsewhere determined, there will be young and old who feel that they are being "used," and decide to do *anything* to get away from that feeling.

Dean Aikawa has another capsule lesson for the West:

> Asia is awakening. Asia has been under the exploitation of the white race for more than two hundred years. Most of the Asian countries were colonies of powerful European nations. Recently my brother came back from Burma where he attended the Conference on Freedom and Culture in Asia as one of Japan's representatives. He said, "I learned for the first time what colonialism truly means." He told us that Burma has only three factories in its capital, Rangoon. The biggest is an electric light company belonging to Englishmen, the second a match company belonging to Chinese, and the third a spinning company belonging to Indians. The Burmese have no factory of their own. They must buy every article from England, even a pencil or a piece of chalk. . . . Sixty per cent of all land in Burma formerly belonged to Indians who were British officials (after independence this decreased to thirty per cent) and one-third of the biggest shops belonged to Chinese abroad. Such economic conditions forced on most Burmese the lowest possible standard of living.

This is the background of experience which inclines so many of the youth of Asia to Communism. Nationalism and anti-white racialism are natural allies of communist propaganda. "The Japanese," Dean Aikawa explains, "can understand the psychology and the necessity of this racial movement, though their government, paying too much attention to its patron, America, feigns blindness on this point." But what he might have also remarked is that Burma, when it did become free, successfully resisted a Communist move for power and established a government which maintains genuine independence.

The basic inquiry for Americans, however, relates to the scarcity of information of this sort at a popular level. Why doesn't *Life*, for example, print the kind of articles that appear in the *Christian Century?* Omitting jibes against the "capitalist press," it may be pointed out that such articles can only confirm the thesis of Reinhold Niebuhr, "that the state has a tendency to be immoral." *Life* is too important a part of our national existence to want to subvert the confidence of its readers in the righteousness of State policies. Honest Christians like the wartime editors of the *Christian Century* can afford to speak of "tragedy" and the bitter necessity of submitting to the "sinful" constraint of war, but not the editors of *Life.* The ordering of the destinies of a nation of 170,000,000 people cannot be subjected to the oscillations of "soul-searching." And since soul-searching is dangerous, no mass circulation magazine which takes a proprietary and profitable interest in those destinies can be expected to add to the confusion by supplying facts which compel soul-searching.

"Society," in short, is *moral;* man, too, so long as he conforms to society's decisions.

You don't have to be an astute Machiavellian to go along with this policy. What else can you do, except leap into the abyss of anarcho-pacifism, or join the small minority of earnest Christians who seem to feel that a hellish compromise is the normal situation for us "sinners"?

This problem, it seems clear, must continue to exist so long as men cling to a military solution for the differences among the nations. Morale is the back-bone of all military efforts, and to have morale, human beings seem to need to feel that they are "in the right." Thorough education in what is really happening around the world, and in the attitudes of other peoples, would probably produce a somewhat different feeling. From this it follows that the person who tries to spread the truth about other peoples—and therefore the truth about the effects of American foreign policy abroad—is likely to be regarded as a dangerous man, a man who, allowed to influence many people, might produce a generation of young Americans who would stop talking to their parents!

This article (ours, not Dean Aikawa's) doubtless has many imperfections, but its most obvious defect is a bad case of either-or-ism. It is easy enough to place the troubles of the world in a frame of crucial moral decision—almost as easy as it is to lean back and do nothing, while saying, "Things will work out; they always do." One can think of various ways in which the dilemma might be resolved, through some new focus of attention which will distract the attention of people from their obsessing fears and anxieties. The ravage of some terrible disease might make us all forget national barriers in the desperate need to rely upon our common humanity. Some extraordinary advance in technology might ease the economic situation of all the nations, allowing them to become very busy supporting themselves in a manner which would leave no room for envy of each other.

Such ideas come to mind, although we put little faith in them. Rather, it seems likely that the fundamental change, if it is to come at all, will arrive in some slowly transforming influence which will somehow reduce the importance of "nations." Conceivably, technology might set the stage for such a change, through a pattern of relationships which is so dominating in character that politics itself will seem almost unimportant. But even if we have these adventitious aids from technology, there will still be the need for honest self-appraisal, and this can take place only in the light supplied from our understanding of others.