

HUMAN RESOURCES

ONE reason why Governments and States alone seem capable of greatness, these days, and not individual men, is that both the technology and the psychology of the West have developed tools which seem useful only to man-in-the-mass, or in highly organized societies. What good are mass production facilities to the individual, except as a member of the mass? The modern concepts of utility and efficiency are all geared to elaborate socio-economic organization. They involve concepts of mass consumption—mass supply and demand. It is even difficult to think of the life of the individual, except as shaped by these relationships, which are defined by the necessities of a mass society. This is not to deny the interdependence of human beings, nor to neglect the values of "cooperation," but only to call attention to the fact that we do not have the habit of thinking about men as individuals, but only as units in a larger scheme of organization, and it is this larger scheme alone which has hope of gaining real distinction, according to our standards.

We have no workable concept of individuality in psychology. If William James was the founder of modern psychology in America, then his two principal disciples, John Dewey and Ralph Barton Perry, have left us without clear ideas in respect to the human individual. Perry, for example, practically ridicules the idea of there being any value in introspective psychology—the psychology of individuality—and Dewey implies that a unitary self hardly exists at all:

There is no one ready-made self behind activities. There are complex, unstable, opposing attitudes, habits, impulses which gradually come to terms with one another, and assume a certain consistency of configuration, even though only by means of a distribution of inconsistencies which keeps them in water-tight compartments, giving them

separate turns or tricks in action. (*Human Nature and Conduct.*)

There is value, perhaps, in thinking about this "empirical" self so lucidly described by Dewey, but unless there remains some notion of real *identity*, the individual man has been dissipated into a mist of changing "configurations," with no foundation for effectual self-analysis. Who or what, after all, considers these ephemeral traits exhibited by the self? What makes a man resolve to change or "reform" his character? So far as we know, modern psychology lacks an answer to this question. In the first place, it has no theoretical base for making an answer, and since the question presents obvious moral implications, few psychologists are interested in invading this field.

For this and for other reasons, ours is definitely not a "heroic" age. Externally, our society is so heavily institutionalized, in both war and peace, that the heroic impulse must contend with numerous artificial barriers. Internally, so far as our theories of man are concerned, we have no place for an explanation of heroism. There is no real man to be a hero, but only a kind of crossroads where meet the various stimuli and conditionings which the psychologists study and write reports about.

Thus the totalitarian trend of modern times has ample cause. If man is made by external conditions, then a change for the better can come about only through the transformation of external conditions, *first*.

But in order to arrange such changes, it is necessary to make human beings docilely obedient to the commands of external authority—the authority that is planning the changes. In effect, men must become even less "individual," if their lot is to be improved. There seems to be no escape from this vicious circle except by breaking

away from the primary assumption that man is wholly shaped by circumstances—that he is inadequate unless carefully maintained and nurtured by the all-wise government or State.

Looking for an alternative in philosophy, we returned to Marcus Aurelius, a man who was extraordinarily free from psychic bondage to the institutions of his time. Here was a life rich with self-sufficiency, regardless of its circumstantial environment. Marcus wrote:

Never value anything as profitable to thyself which shall compel thee to break thy promise, to lose thy self-respect, to hate any man, to suspect, to curse, to act the hypocrite, to desire anything which needs walls and curtains; for he who has preferred to everything else his own intelligence and demon and the worship of its excellence, acts no tragic part, does not groan, will not need either solitude or much company; and, what is chief of all, he will live without either pursuing or flying from death; but whether for a longer or a shorter time he shall have the soul enclosed in a body, he cares not at all; for even if he must depart immediately, he will go as readily as if he were going to do anything else which can be done with decency and order; taking care of this only, all through life, that his thoughts turn not away from anything which belongs to an intelligent animal and a member of a civil community.

How few laws would be needed to govern a community peopled by men like Marcus! Or even a community in which there were two or three like him, the rest only aspiring to like ideals! What is difficult for the men of our society to imagine is the transformation that may be worked in any human community by the spread of an ennobling idea of the self—the self as responsible, first, to its own ideal of human dignity and behavior. Marcus says further:

Acquire the contemplative way of seeing how all things change into one another, and constantly attend to it, and exercise thyself about this part of philosophy. For nothing is so much adapted to produce magnanimity. Such a man has put off the body, and, as he sees that he must, no one knows how soon, go away from among men and leave everything here, he gives himself up entirely to just doing in all his actions, and in everything else that happens he resigns to the universal nature. But as to what any

man shall say or think about him, or do against him, he never even thinks of it, being himself contented with these two things, with acting justly in what he now does, and being satisfied with what is now assigned to him. . . .

What need is there of suspicious fear, since it is in thy power to inquire what ought to be done? And if thou seest clear, go by this way content, without turning back: but if thou dost not see clear, stop and take the best advisers. But if any other things oppose thee, go on according to thy powers with due consideration, keeping to that which appears to be just. For it is best to reach this object, and if thou dost fail, let thy failure be in attempting this. He who follows reason in all things is both tranquil and active at the same time, and also cheerful and collected.

Inquire of thyself as soon as thou wakest from sleep whether it will make any difference to thee, if another does what is just and right. It will make no difference.

If it be argued that this sort of thinking is not possible in our society, it may be answered that our society can hardly be altered by anything else. And if it be supposed that Marcus, being a Roman emperor, enjoyed special privileges which permitted him greater freedom, we have only to go back a few years to Epictetus, who was a slave, yet expressed the same philosophy:

Men are not disturbed by things, but by the view which they take of things. Thus death is nothing terrible, else it would have appeared so to Socrates. But the terror consists in our notion of death, that it is terrible. When, therefore, we are hindered, or disturbed, or grieved let us never impute it to others, but to ourselves; that is, to our own views. It is the action of an uninstructed person to reproach others for his own misfortunes; of one entering upon instruction, to reproach himself; and of one perfectly instructed, to reproach neither others nor himself. . . .

You are a distinct portion of the essence of God, and contain a part of him in yourself. Why then are you ignorant of your noble birth? Why do you not consider whence you came? Why do you not remember, when you are eating, who you are who eat, and whom you feed? When you are in the company of women, when you are conversing, when you are exercising, when you are disputing, do you not know that it is the Divine you feed, the Divine you exercise? You carry a God about with you, poor wretch, and know nothing of it. Do you suppose I mean some god

without you of gold or silver? It is within yourself that you carry him; and you do not observe that you profane him by impure thoughts and unclean actions. If the mere external presence of God were present, you would not dare to act as you do; and when God himself is within you, and hears and sees all, are not you ashamed to think and act thus—insensible of your own nature, and at enmity with God?

The burden of our argument, at this point, is that men will do only what they deem themselves capable of, and unless they have profound reasons to live and act like free men, they will not do it. This, as we see it, is the importance of philosophy to the social question. It is no good preaching against what men do, nor indicting culprit after culprit for their crimes against society. They behave as they think themselves to be. And to this, by way of paradox, may be added the counsel of Paul Valéry: "You must live as you think: if not, sooner or later you'll end by thinking as you have lived."

Unless men determine to live as individuals, they will find themselves periodically charged by propagandists, who then will release the charge in great wars which the men must fight. As Arthur Morgan pointed out years ago, two kinds of men have to do with the affairs of society in a large way. There are the builders and the "trigger men." The builders accumulate constructive social energy. They are the shapers of culture. Primarily educators and exemplars of character, their influence pervades the daily life of home and community with guiding ideals and high objectives. They create great traditions of heroism and courage. Then there are the trigger men who exploit the treasure of culture by wasting its substance. They use the values which men have come to hold dear as symbols to control their behavior. The Popes of Catholic Christianity sent countless thousands of Christian knights and yeomen off to the Holy Land to fight in futile "crusades." They used the ideal of chivalry for this purpose. The Marxist revolutionaries were another sort of trigger men. Leon Trotsky maintained that human selfishness was the only means by which great numbers could be aroused

to battle and revolt. And there are now others who pull the triggers of human values. It is common practice, today, in the advertising business, to attempt to build up a conception of value around a particular product or service, and then to pull the trigger in order to make a sale.

Eventually, as this process spreads, a kind of bankruptcy in values ensues. All the triggers have been pulled too many times. The ideals have been too often exploited and then debased. Culture has become pseudo-culture, values, pseudo-values. Then we are back to barbarism, and the totalitarians take over.

How can this decline be arrested, its tendency reversed? So far as we can see, it cannot be stopped at all by either "mass" methods or by governments. The techniques which caused the decline cannot be turned against it. Instead, it must be stopped by individuals—by individuals who believe that it is more important for them to live as individuals than it is for them to be "accepted" by everyone else.

This brings us to the most important question of all: How can modern man develop the sort of faith in his own individuality that was possessed by Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus? What will lead the man in the street to long to be like Socrates? Here, the counsels of Epictetus himself may help:

Whatever rules you have adopted, abide by them as laws, and as if you would be impious to transgress them; and do not regard what anyone says of you, for this, after all, is no concern of yours. . . . Let whatever appears to be the best, be to you an inviolable law. And if by any instance of pain or pleasure, glory or disgrace, be set before you, remember that now is the combat, now the Olympiad comes on, nor can it be put off; and that by one failure and defeat honor may be lost—or won. Thus Socrates became perfect, improving himself by everything, following reason alone. And though you are not yet a Socrates, you ought, however, to live as one seeking to be a Socrates.

If a skeptic points out that the age of experimental science lies between us and Epictetus; that, today, it is difficult to imagine

anyone adopting the notion of an inner "demon" such as the Socratics taught, we shall have to agree. But we shall insist that the idea of a *self* in man as the source of human greatness is absolutely indispensable, and if it be claimed that this makes us metaphysicians, then we confess the crime. It is our observation that every great culture was founded on metaphysical principles, from the Athenian to the American republic.

If metaphysics is involved in formulating a workable and ennobling idea of the self, then let us by all means become metaphysicians. It is just possible that the self is a metaphysical reality, and that in man the metaphysical phase of existence overlaps the physical. And we have, after all, some sort of authority for this project from William James, who was, as we noted, the father of American psychology. In his essay, "The Energies of Men," James wrote:

When I speak of human energizing in general, the reader must . . . understand the sum-total of activities, some outer, some inner, some muscular, some emotional, some moral, some spiritual, of whose waxing and waning in himself he is at all times so well aware. How to keep it at an appreciable maximum? How not to let the level lapse? That is the great problem.

James asks, "What are the limits of human faculty in various directions?", and, "By what diversity of means, in the differing types of human beings, may the faculties be stimulated to their best results? . . . The first point to agree upon in this enterprise is that *as a rule men habitually use only a small part of the powers which they actually possess and which they might use under appropriate conditions.*"

Let us, then, try to answer James' questions, and, in the pragmatic spirit of his inquiry, be ready to acknowledge the merit in a metaphysical or spiritual account of the nature of man.

LETTER FROM MEXICO

OAXACA.—The distance from Mexico City to Oaxaca is about 330 miles. Second class train fare between the two points is hardly \$2.00 U.S. currency. Tourists, particularly North American tourists, should see the remote areas of Mexico by second class rail to view Mexico as she really is, unadorned and unglamorized.

Oaxaca was the seat of powerful prequest races, the Zapotec and the Mixtec, whose cultures flourished in this valley between the first and tenth centuries, approximately. The Zapotecs, from whom Benito Juarez descended, constructed the imposing ceremonial center and fortress of Monte Alban on the summit of a denuded mountain within view of this city, and the ceremonial burial place of Mitla, the grandeur of which even today excites the imagination.

In the village of Coyotepec a few miles from Oaxaca, craftsmen still make pottery using the same techniques as of 800 years ago. While style, method and ingredients remain unchanged, the ware is unsurpassed aesthetically and in the criterion of utility. Fired in outdoor kilns, smoke carbonizes the ware, resulting in a black lustre.

Although racially and culturally *muy indita*—very Indian—the native Oaxacan has not lost his dignity as a result of the hispanic conquest. He is still unacculturated to a large degree.

Provincial and unindustrialized, Oaxaca is yet clean and orderly, unbelievably charming with a quality of quiet dignity about it while still retaining a festiveness—until ten p.m., after which night life is almost nonexistent. There are no cabarets or night clubs—not even for tourists. Drunkenness, begging and thievery are phenomenally uncommon in comparison to the bustling capital city. This is an idyllically warm green valley in which to escape the turmoil and immorality of industrialized urban centers. There are no street cars in Oaxaca. An antiquated Model A Ford without a radiator cap has transported me through

the city, one of the public carriers which provides service for 46,000 inhabitants.

A riot of color, the enormous public market, managed by the government, is housed under several roofs covering an area of more than two square blocks where every conceivable item from *clarines* to *rebozos* can be purchased at a minimum margin of profit to the producer. Sponsored by the government, here is *laissez faire* economy in its most primitive manifestation.

The native of Oaxaca, who by no means represents one linguistic, cultural or racial tradition, is still largely unspoiled by tourists or industrialism. Many surrounding villages remain monolingual. The native is still honest at heart. The federal policy of integration of the monolingual native into the national political consciousness reveals the predominant mestizo influence in every phase of Mexican life today. A Zapotecan primer prepared by the Summer Institute of Linguistics in cooperation with the Department of Indian Affairs, issued by the Secretary of Public Education, states:

For those who speak the Zapotecan language, the first and easiest step toward alphabetization and castellanization is to learn to read the native language. If the teacher achieves this end, he reaches two goals: cultivation of confidence in the student of his own capacity to read, and the inculcation of a desire in him to learn Castellano. . . . For some time the campaign of castellanization prohibited the use of native languages. Today, advanced teachers recognize that indigenous languages serve as an important medium in the learning of the national language.

Certainly this attitude does not express a cultural or national chauvinism. Localism, regionalism, and nationalism are fostered in more paradoxical ways. Nine miles from Oaxaca in a tree-covered flat valley bottom whose quiescence is often pierced by violence lies the village of Zaachila, which, like many other native villages, is divided into *barrios* or districts. The political rivalry between the districts is intense. Her 5734 inhabitants collectively own a fiercely combative

disposition, locally transmitted from generation to generation. Being one of the first capitals of the Zapotecan nation, according to the historian Gay, there may be some grounds for the native's belief that the soil of Zaachila is pregnant with preconquest treasure. At any rate, this belief is sufficient excuse for rival political districts, the outs, who constitute one half of the population, for giving violent resistance to whatever bold archaeologist who, having had the authorization of the prevailing political power of the village, commences to dig for the remains of preconquest sites. He who lifts a shovel in the soil of Zaachila risks his life, for he is a thief as well as a partisan. So ingrained is this traditional hostility between residents of the various districts that the inhabitants have absorbed the attitude as if it were an inseparable part of their individual and collective consciousness. For many decades, violence and hatred will be encountered by those who attempt to change the ways of Zaachila.

CORRESPONDENT IN MEXICO

REVIEW

PSYCHIATRIC QUARTERLY

So far as we know, the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation of Psychiatry is the largest and best known institution in its field. Its quarterly journal *Psychiatry*, has become of special interest to this Department, because of the evidence it offers that psychiatrists are acquiring philosophic attitudes—just as the most effective philosophic writings now reveal an increasingly psychologic orientation. In any case, we are sure that many of our readers would benefit from an occasional look at this quarterly. (Subscription price is \$10.00 per year, but every large library keeps the publication on file.)

The final 1953 issue contains two articles which will interest those who have read Dwight Macdonald's *Root Is Man*. One of these, "Political Character and Political Analysis," by Robert E. Lane, examines the social effects of political attitudes. Drawing on insights provided by David Riesman's *Lonely Crowd*, Mr. Lane shows how easily men may become the victims of the "tyranny of the consensus":

A person's political character may be [and all too often is] defined as his habitual responses to political situations rooted at the personality level. These responses, of course, include a wide range of attitudes and traits—such as apathy or interest, submission or assertiveness towards authority, suspicion or trust of other groups, and so on. Persons having similar responses may be grouped together as a "type"; this is sometimes done on the basis of a single significant response pattern (ethnocentricity) and sometimes on the basis of a cluster of responses which are seen to go together (authoritarian personality).

We may all, Mr. Lane emphasizes, discover traces of hyper-conformity within ourselves. Objectively analyzed, all too many personalities are simply "automatons" in relation to political value judgments. The "automaton" is "a person who 'escapes from freedom' by adopting culturally popular personality patterns, losing his sense of personal identity and responding to political

stimuli without any individual or distinctive orientation." "Escape from freedom" is a phrase properly credited to Erich Fromm's book of that title. A man's "escape from freedom," in Fromm's terms, lulls him into a false sense of security; while identifying himself with a group leads to a rejection of the right to free choice in regard to politics and, thereafter, to a forgetfulness of what "free choice" means in other aspects of living. It is a rare man who is truly "autonomous," for he, as Riesman says, "must be one who is neither dominated by parentally instilled conscientious views of politics nor by concern for the opinions of peer groups; a person, therefore, free to choose his own political opinions."

In another article; Paul Chodoff, a Washington, D.C., psychiatrist, lists his observations of the effect of "loyalty programs" on mental health. Dr. Chodoff has noticed numerous precipitations of mental illness due to "the ever-impending danger of actions as the result of security investigations." These, he adds, "have the effect not only of posing grave threats to economic and social status but have actually brought about an appreciable number of symptomatic mental and emotional illnesses ranging in severity from anxiety and obsessive ruminative states to paranoid psychotic breaks." Dr. Chodoff continues:

There are a number of factors which favor the development of paranoid states in characterologically predisposed people. These include the essentially secret, almost furtive nature of the proceedings, the difficulty in obtaining specific charges, the Kafkaesque feeling of isolation and helplessness of the individual confronted with the vast and impersonal mass of government procedure machinery, the almost inevitable feelings of shame and guilt of even the most innocent, the anxious self-questionings, the doubts about friends and neighbors, and the impossibility of ever being faced with a specific personal accuser.

Dr. Chodoff thus warns us to resist "the demand for excessive conformity," since the temper of a whole culture may otherwise be rapidly worsened:

This effect is less specific than those previously mentioned but more pervasive and possibly more subtly destructive of mental health—an effect which has been an unfortunate byproduct of the investigatory and loyalty-conscious temper of the times. No psychiatrist who is aware of his social role, either as citizen or specialist, can view with equanimity a state of affairs in which intellectual boldness and curiosity become suspect, in which conformity becomes the only safety, in which the generous and healthy impulses of youth become, long afterwards, evidences of treachery. This is the climate of frightened totalitarian states, not of the open democratic society we wish our country to remain. It is not a climate in which the concept of emotional health as set forth by Freud or Sullivan can flourish or even be a meaningful goal.

An interesting side-note on the foregoing is furnished by still another article in the same issue of *Psychiatry*, concerned with the absence of mental disorder in Chinese culture. Dr. Tsung-yi Lin notes that "compulsion neurosis is rare among the Chinese." Even in Formosa, where political pressures are great, the tendency of the oriental to make interpersonal relationships the main concern of his psychologic life reduces the incidence of psychopathic personality, psychoneurosis and alcoholism, as compared with other societies. We thus see that some doubt is raised as to whether the Chinese, even when they go Communist or join with Chiang Kai-shek, are as likely as we are to suffer disruption of interpersonal relations from political causes.

One may perhaps be excused for forwarding here the theory that acquisitive societies run the best chance of acquiring Hitlers and Stalins. Political representatives who are more communally minded are not so anxious to intensify their own sense of importance, while fanatic nationalism often becomes the psychologic repository of frustrated self-seeking. A *national* collectivism is actually not "communist" at all, and perhaps one of the reasons why "Stalinism" and communism are such very different things is because the Russian revolution followed centuries of Czarist rule, during which the struggle for individual preferment among the intelligentsia

encouraged a hunger for power. If this is so, the Chinese will do a lot better with "communism" than the Russians did, possibly molding it into some new form. This hope seems feasible to Nehru and Radhakrishnan in India, and also, apparently, to Justice William O. Douglas.

A point of interesting "characterological" differentiation occurs in another portion of Dr. Lin's *Psychiatry* article, where he describes the use of alcohol in China. Since the Chinese are generally less concerned with ego-advancement, they are less likely to be frustrated, and to drink largely to dull the feeling of frustration. He writes:

Although the use of alcohol is as old as the history of China, and is fairly extensive, alcoholism does not constitute a problem in Chinese communities. This is reflected in the data obtained in this investigation, and in the low admission rate in the Department of Psychiatry of the National Taiwan University Hospital. Cultural differences in the contexts of drinking may account for the differing pictures which alcohol presents in Chinese and Western societies. The Chinese drink alcohol mostly with meals and on ceremonial occasions; food and alcohol symbolize the mutual dependence of family members and friends. La Barre observed that "drinking in China celebrates interpersonal relationships and cements the bonds of social communion, which are indices of mutual dependence; drinking the West relaxes the inhibitions which hold both aggressiveness and passivity in check."

COMMENTARY **WE HAVE A CHOICE**

IN recent weeks we have noticed a growing preoccupation in these pages with the relationship of culture to philosophy. This interest, we think, is entirely justified, for culture is the vehicle by which philosophic attitudes are spread. Culture may also be a barrier to philosophic attitudes, as becomes clear in this week's *Frontiers*, in which the embarrassments of modernist Christians are described. A culture which transmits irrational religious tradition acts as a brake on the refining process of intellectual development, and eventually men must choose between rationalism and religion.

There is a pertinent comparison to be made between a passage quoted from Dr. Chodoff (Review) and the outlook of Marcus Aurelius. It is difficult to imagine people brought up to revere Stoic ideals relapsing into a cultural outlook in which "conformity becomes the only safety, in which the generous and healthy impulses of youth become, long afterwards, evidence of treachery." (This is an obvious reference to present-day loyalty investigations.)

Yet the tendency of modern States is clearly in this direction. Both liberal and psychiatric criticisms point to the rapid development of State-fostered, cultural influences which become increasingly menacing to the very idea of thinking for oneself.

Here, in America, modern man has a peculiar opportunity in connection with this development. Unlike other countries, American culture is not rooted in supernaturalism, but in rationalism and political ideals of equality and freedom. The opportunity lies in the need for self-conscious regeneration of American culture. We are able to choose. It is also a problem and a challenge, for we are unable to find inspiration in ancestral religious tradition. We lack the awesome sanctions of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva and can

expect no guidance from Mount Olympus. *We have to find the inspiration in ourselves.*

It is our editorial contention that nothing less than transcendental philosophical ideas can supply that inspiration. Religion, on the whole, treats of man as a created being. Science, as we have developed it, declares man to be a creature—the creature, that is, of hereditary and environmental conditionings. What we need, however, is a credible account of ourselves as we really are, at least, what we are in our best moments—*creative* beings. Hence the interest shown in these pages for metaphysics. It seems evident enough that the qualities which make for originality and distinction in human life are the most intangible of all, from the viewpoint of scientific analysis and definition. But, surely, we should not ignore them for this reason.

We know all about our shortcomings and limitations. We have been told so much about them that we are on the verge of supposing ourselves to be nothing else. But a few men have always been able to become great, and did so by cherishing great convictions about the nature of man. There is nothing, actually, in the whole of modern learning and science to deny such great convictions. If we are ever to have a culture worth preserving, we had better begin to investigate the secrets of human greatness, along the lines of the proposal by William James.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

FOLLOWING the lines of last week's discussion, it seems to us that it is impossible to stress too often the fact that adults do their best teaching of children when they are not trying to "teach" at all. Parents have often observed, in mild indignation, that their own youngsters, given carefully prepared instruction on a variety of subjects, will retain far more vividly the information and ideas picked up from other children. This is often put down to the theory that children are closer to and more easily impressed by those who belong to their own child-world. But while this is obviously part of the explanation, we doubt that it is the whole story. The day laborer, gardener, or other casual adult acquaintance will often impress the child's mind just as effectively—probably because he is simply living and talking as he feels. Not carrying the ponderous weight of an educator's responsibility, he confines himself to the expression of thoughts which seem to *him* worth expressing, and thus the child feels that whatever conversation proceeds is genuine, not an educational mock-up.

In our neighborhood, we have what seems to be a child prodigy in respect to astronomy. At the tender age of six this youngster knows more about the stars and planets than we do. Upon discovering that one of his parents is a student of the stars, the explanation seemed simple enough—father had "instructed" his offspring. But this turns out to be a misleading assumption. The parent instructed all right, but not so much, initially, with facts as with his own enthusiasm. The facts came later, when the child had developed a desire to live in the starry worlds along with his father. And when the facts did come, they stuck. A high school science instructor, duty bound and duty paid for to get the same "facts" inside an adolescent, would seldom have half this success. The root of education, in this neighborhood situation, is simply a parent's uninhibited normality—normality in this case

consisting of letting oneself think and talk about whatever interests him most. So many parents sweetly strain to be interested in their children, when it seems far more in the natural order of things for the children to be interested in their parents. But how can a child be "interested" in a parent who never lets his own preoccupations come to light, who is so busy trying to instruct, or "do his duty" by the child that he forgets to live his own mental life in the presence of the young?

By the time we become parents we have, or ought to have, something of a distinct individuality. The child is just beginning to develop one. In doing so he will pick and choose his interests from the world around him, especially from the world of thoughts and interests of his parents, with which he is in closest contact. The child prizes this opportunity to pick and choose, and instinctively holds back when adults try to do the job for him. He withdraws attention just because his attention is commanded. The parent who demands the child's attention the least may therefore, we surmise, receive it the most, for if one is not being "taught" something, he may desire to *learn*. We wonder if any parent, upon reflection, will fail to realize that his children gained the most in the way of learning when the least of obvious moralizing and instructing was going on.

All parents tell stories to their children, but perhaps it seldom occurs that, for the child, the most fascinating stories of all involve incidents from one's own childhood. The child wants to get to know us, which takes a lot of doing, since in our greater number of years on earth we have become so many things the child has not yet had the chance to become. But whatever we have become, the beginning of it was in our own days of early youth, and our child really wants to know something of the story from the beginning. If there is any genuine rapport between father and son, for instance, the son will live fully as much in the father's stories of his childhood as the father can live again in the present experiences of his

son. We know of a boy who could never elicit enough information from his father about his own earliest doings. One of the father's first jobs was that of lamplighter, when the streets of Massachusetts managed without electricity, and to this day it seems to the boy as if he had that job and others, himself, and once lived a whole small lifetime near Boston. Such reminiscences bring to mind the thought that by having a sense of participation in a parent's childhood and youth, a child is able to *know* a parent as he never otherwise would, and feels that in a certain important sense the parent is a genuine contemporary. With this comes a readiness for full communication, the greatest of all boons to a parent-child relationship.

Any child in a normally happy home is curious to know about his parents' relationship—about their first meeting, courtship, etc. Whatever is learned of this nature is usually indelibly retained, and leaves the door open for free communication when, later, certain "problems" of courtship arise in an adolescent's life. We have known many parents who, because of a feeling that a great discrepancy exists between their own early relationship and an "ideal" one, have little or nothing to say to a child on the subject. This may easily be a major tragedy. The tragedy does not consist in the fact that the parents' relationship was marred by imperfections, major or minor, for this is more often true than not, but in the fact that such parents have failed to assimilate their mistakes. If such assimilation has taken place, there is no part of our life which we will feel unwilling to let our child enter, if he inquires, or the occasion arises, and, whatever we specifically choose to communicate, the child can feel that he is a participant in our past. He needs that feeling, and needs it badly, for it is a part of that "sense of security" the psychologists are always talking about to know that none of the questions put to parents makes him feel an intruder.

All such things have to do with the sharing of a personal world with our children. There is also

a less personal field of sharing, that of intellect, the world of ideas. Many parents try to share an intellectual life with their children without being willing to share the content of their own personal lives, and, in such instances, are apt to do little better than a public school teacher in gaining interested attention. There is, however, a need for a sharing between parents and children at a level beyond the personal. The difficulty is in knowing how to reach it without straining, so that intellectual communication can bring with it the same sense of participation a child may derive from learning about his parents' lives. The world of art and the world of nature, it seems to us, provide a transition. The feelings which works of art and music generate are "personal," but the source is something beyond. Similarly, the parent who genuinely enjoys time spent on the seacoast or in the mountains, and who finds that a child responds with like enthusiasm, is opening another door of communication. For what each person finds in art or in nature is something distinctively his own; since the source of the experience is something outside one's own life, and also outside the life of everyone else, he is not simply grasping another's feeling, but establishing a basis for independent appreciation.

The development of intellect requires us to get "outside" ourselves, certainly, and, after getting "outside," we are then privileged to get back in again with some new insights. Herbert Read has developed aspects of this theme in his *Education Through Art*, but seldom has it been mentioned that "nature appreciation," when possible for parent and child, is one of the most attractive avenues leading to development of an independent mind.

FRONTIERS

Comparative Religion

SINCE "Christ the Hope of the World" is to be a theme of the Assembly of the World Council of Churches, to be held at Evanston, Ill., in August of this year, it was perhaps natural for the editors of the *Christian Century* to invite an articulate Seventh-Day Adventist minister, Francis D. Nicol, to write on "The Return of Christ." For those to whom this group of Christians is unfamiliar, the Seventh Day Adventists, as a distinct sect, date from the year 1845 in the United States, being formed after the prediction of the immediate return of Jesus by a New York preacher, William Miller, turned out to be premature. A number of other Christian sects hold adventist beliefs, to the effect that Christ will return to reign over a regenerated world for a thousand years of peace. The idea of Christ's second coming is of course not new, being as old, or older, than Christianity itself. The Jewish teaching of the return of their Messiahs is probably the origin of the "second coming" doctrine, while the conception of renewal and regeneration of the world by "avatars" has been known and taught for thousands of years in India.

What is of interest in Dr. Nicol's article, however, is not the form of his claim that Christ will return, but rather the curious dilemma in which his vigorous discussion places more sophisticated Christians. He starts out by showing that, since Darwin, Christianity has withdrawn more and more from supernaturalism and miracles. The modernist wing of Christian opinion, responsive to scientific discovery, successively soft-pedalled miracles, a personal God, the idea of going to Heaven, the dramatic teaching of the end of the world, and the translation of virtuous souls into a state of blessed immortality. He concludes his summary of this development:

By the early twentieth century the eschatology of most churchmen was almost exclusively in terms of the earthly millennium of increasing righteousness

that was to come—and very soon. Thus their view of the world's future was little more than the secular world-progress theory with a halo around it. And the halo had almost vanished, for the advent climax to the millennium was ignored, when not openly repudiated. Religion must be intellectually respectable!

We can sympathize with the moderns who wanted religion to be intellectually respectable, if this means a yearning to be rational in religious thinking. So far as we can see, religion is practically worthless unless it honors the human being, and irrational religion implies something quite different, for it suggests that the longing of the mind to *understand* the truths it accepts is either misleading or positively harmful. Whether the Christians who allowed themselves to water down their faith in the attempt to conform to scientific discoveries and theories followed the best course is another question. It seems fair to say that they were trying to be rational human beings. But now, Dr. Nicol, who is forthrightly a supernaturalist, who believes in a personal God, has all the world's anxieties and insecurities, and even the atom bomb, on his side. He ends his article with this declaration:

In a day when earth's annihilation is easily possible, a complete rethinking of modernist premises is imperative. An immanent God is inadequate to meet the threat of imminent catastrophe. The orderly action of nature's laws is unable to cope with the disorderly action of human nature. Only a transcendent, personal God, only a miracle-working God, can measure up to the world's need. In such a conception of God the biblical doctrine of the second advent makes sense.

The point of Nicol's article, however, is that, today, many modernists are doing their best to be both modern and traditional. Since the "progress" anticipated by science and the secular liberals becomes of more dubious promise with every passing year, there has been a somewhat desperate return to "faith in Christ." Nicol claims that these prodigal sons of the church return to the fold with only vague abstractions as their key to the Kingdom. If they are going to hope for help in the return of Christ, they ought not to be, he

maintains, so mealy-mouthed about it. His argument is impressive:

. . . most Christians, until our modern day, have seen the solution of the problem of a sorry world in terms of the return of Christ. Modernists have seen the solution in terms of a slowly evolving cosmic program that is a mixture of Rousseau, Darwin, and the spirit of God. The proponents of both views have had the candor to face the problem where it exists, on the earth, with right finally triumphing here.

But the view now under discussion casually dismisses both solutions with the observation that Christians are promised life eternal—hardly a late discovery—and that that resolves all problems regarding the future.

Where did these churchmen discover that the Christian can unequivocally claim eternal life? In the Bible! But that same Bible has even more to say about Christ's return. Why let the second advent fade and still hold to the doctrine of eternal life? The source and authority for both is the same; indeed, they are inextricably interlocked in Scripture. . . .

To sum up: The modernist's dilemma is an impossible one. The dark developments of our day have blotted out the rosy picture of an evolving heaven on earth. And the "acids of modernity" have hopelessly defaced the Bible picture of the advent. I do not believe that the innate desire of the human mind for logical consistency will long permit churchmen to hold modernist premises with one hand and second-advent doctrine with the other.

By their giving the advent a ghostly, out-of-focus form its new preachers do not escape the logical problem—except so far as they make the problem too shadowy to grapple with. Neither do they find a solution by vaguely equating the doctrine with that platitude that is the bleakly irreducible minimum of theism: "The will of God will ultimately prevail." The second-advent doctrine has ever stood, not as a vague synonym for God's sovereignty, but as a definite declaration of *how* the will of God will be carried out.

If Dr. Nicol is any prophet, and at the moment he seems a good one, the expression of the Christian hope in Christ that is formulated at Evanston will be a masterpiece of vague generality. Even apart from a breadth of doctrine to include all the sectaries represented, the ghosts

of modernism hovering in the background will require that the hope take a non-specific form.

Yet all this, while opening the Christians to criticism, if not to ridicule, also shows how many ways it is possible for men to be right as well as wrong. Surely the instincts of the modernists were sound in wanting to leave supernaturalism behind, in trying to believe that men, animated by the spirit and inspired by the example of Christ, whether wise teacher or extraordinary visitor to our planet, could work out their own salvation. They attempted to refine Christianity, to make it amenable to the intellectual development of the West. But the articles of their faith were inflexible. They were rather nullified than refined. Instead of subtlety, they gained in vagary—becoming naturalism with a halo, in Nicol's pat description.

And Nicol, too, is right in his strictures—logically sound, that is. But with whom shall we side? With the indefinable feelings of the modernists who wanted a religion which brought greater dignity to man? With the Fundamentalist critics who show how little of authentic Christianity remains, after the modernists have had their way? One could argue, in behalf of the Fundamentalists, that they too cherish an intuition, although of another sort. It is an age-old instinct of the heart that humanity will always have its saviors, its self-sacrificing heroes and teachers. This instinct, perhaps, is as precious as the longing for rational religion, the pity being that, in Christian terms, men cannot have both!

Why must the transcendental be defined as the supernatural, and immortality be rendered as a seat at the right hand of God? Here, we think, is encountered the necessity for a return, not to religion, but to *philosophic* religion—religion, that is, without dogma, and free from the particularism of culture and limited tradition. There have been great and beneficent religions without either a personal God or belief in miracle: Buddhism and Jainism, to name two. The religions of the Orient are set apart from the religion of the West by

another profound distinction—they find the origin of all events in consciousness, in individuality, and by this means escape some of the most difficult problems of Western religion. A Buddhist, for one thing, would never dream of asking someone else to "save" him, or assert that only a "miracle-working God" can "measure up to the world's need." A Buddhist would find it practically impossible to think in such terms, for the reason that his theory of the causation of the "world's need" gives him rigorous direction in what has to be done to meet that need.

Socrates was of similar persuasion. When he averred, in the *Phaedo*, that a good man could not suffer evil, he was asserting that men make their own destiny, that the world is rational in moral as well as in physical operations, and that knowledge is the key to the good life. Socrates was able to be both a transcendentalist and a rationalist at the same time, which was something that the modernist Christians could not accomplish. It is a complex of modern thought that spiritual thinking is somehow opposed to rationalism, that intellectuality is of necessity a foe to intuitive and transcendental perceptions. But only a corrupt spirituality despises the mind, and only an arrogant intellect is deaf to the intuition. It seems as though a release of Western thought from this complex would at once focus all the agility and resourcefulness of Western intelligence on essential problems, with immediate and extraordinary gains in understanding, leaving the false dilemmas of theological and sectarian debate far behind.