

## THE MEN AND THE BOYS

ONE usually talks about *separating* the men from the boys, meaning that something has happened which stiffens the spines and arouses the ingenuity of the men, while the boys fall by the wayside or run for their lives. So we know what it means—this separating out of adults, which includes the women from the girls. But the expression could have a larger meaning, such as the onset of human maturity, the finding of ways to act which meet and deal with the challenges affecting the entire human race, or a large portion of it.

A passage in the second volume of Lincoln Steffens' autobiography, on Tom Johnson, a Cleveland politician, supplies an illustration of this sort of "growing up."

When I arrived in Cleveland to study Ohio, Johnson told me his personal story. He was a poor boy, the son of southern parents ruined by the war. To help out the family he sold newspapers from the city in his small home town. Fat, jolly, and bright, he made friends, and one of them, the conductor on the train that brought in the papers, said to him one day: "See here, Tom, I like you and I'm going to boost your business. Hereafter I'll bring papers only for you. You'll have a monopoly and can charge what you like, twenty-five cents apiece for them."

Tom Johnson not only made some money, he learned the principle of monopoly; and when he grew older and the other boys in his gang used to talk about going to work at a trade or in the grocery or some other store, he wondered at their folly in choosing a competitive line. He meant to start in some monopoly, and he did; he went into the street railway business, and he applied the monopoly principle to it. The street railways were monopolies, each of its route, but they competed with one another for their power, control, domination. He discovered an idea that would bring him control. Most street car lines in his day in all cities started from the center of town and ran out to some city limit and back. Each got thus the heavy traffic, downtown in the morning to work, back home in the evening. If he could unite two such lines and run them clear through a town, his one consolidated road would get, in addition to the up

and down business, the lighter but good midday traffic across town and so have an advantage that would enable him to beat the other companies and force them into one consolidated monopoly.

So he did it. Soon he was giving Mark Hanna, another monopolist, a bad time. But then, as Steffens says, something happened. "Tom Johnson read a book."

A peanut peddler on a train tried to sell him Henry George's *Social Problems*, and the conductor overheard and said, "That's a book you ought to read, Mr. Johnson."

Being fond of conductors, Johnson bought a copy and after reading it said to his attorney:

"I want you to answer that book for me. I can't. And I must. For if that book is right I am all wrong and I'll have to get out of my business." The lawyer answered Henry George, but only as a lawyer, not to his client's satisfaction. Tom Johnson went to New York, called together a group of his rich friends, and put it up to them. They all read Henry George, met one night, and discussed it till daylight. Johnson defended its doctrines; he begged his friends to upset them, and they tried; they were able men, too, but Tom Johnson had seen the light, and his friends not only failed to clear his mind of the single-tax theories; they were themselves convinced. They all saw what Henry George pointed out: that excessive riches came unearned to individuals and companies owning land, natural resources, like water, coal, oil, etc., and franchises, such as steam and street railways, which, being common wealth to start with, became more and more valuable as the growing population increased the need and the value of these natural monopolies. The increased value of them was created by the mere growth of the population, who should have it, and George proposed that government should take it back by taxing nothing but the values of the land, natural resources, and monopolies.

Tom Johnson returned to Cleveland, sold out his monopoly business, gradually, and went into politics as a successful business man with a vision, a plan.

Steffens tells what Johnson accomplished. He ran for Mayor of Cleveland, was elected, and added his powerful intelligence to the honesty he brought to the job. Both he and Steffens saw that "honesty" was not enough. Johnson also saw what was wrong in urban and national politics. "It is privilege," he said, "that causes evil in the world, not wickedness; and not men." After a couple of pages on what Johnson did for Cleveland, Steffens sums up:

Tom Johnson struck at the sources of the evils, not at the individuals and classes usually blamed, with all his fine intelligence and all the powers of an unusually powerful mayor. He explained his acts with patience, care, and eloquence to the whole town; he held the votes of the common people; he was elected again and again.

Well, he changed the city of Cleveland but he couldn't change the state of Ohio. Had there been two or three of him, they might have succeeded, but he was only one man. What sort of man? A man who had grown up. What was special about him? You could say, "He read a book," but lots of people read books. He was the sort of man who had to act when what he read made sense. Does anyone know how to produce such people?

There are other books as strong and as wise as Henry George's: why don't they make more men out of the boys?

A few weeks ago we had an article on Simone Weil and Hannah Arendt, two girls who became women—about as strong as any human gets to be, if you start comparing. Why did they grow up and begin to act "for the love of the world"? Their biographies are well done; they tell what happened, but not why; and why they responded as they did to what they read and saw is what we want to know.

Another example is Feodor Dostoevsky. After his threatened execution as a youthful plotter against the Czar was reprieved at the last minute, he was sent to Siberia, where all the good Russians went and go: the reward of true merit. Drawing on what Dostoevsky wrote about the

penal colony in *The House of the Dead*, Joseph Frank, in the *New York Review of Books* (Jan. 29, 1983), tells how shocked the young writer was by both the conditions and the inmates. "I was terrified," Dostoevsky wrote, "at the awful baseness and degradation into which I had been cast." How could he reconcile his great love of Russia and the Russian people with these depraved prisoners, representatives of the "folk" he had idealized and idolized? After an orgy of peasant drunkenness and debauchery during a celebration of Easter, he lay down on his plank bed and remembered a childhood experience:

One day while taking a walk in the woods on his father's small farm, Dostoevsky was frightened by what he thought was the sound of someone shouting that a wolf was roaming the vicinity. Dashing out of the woods, he rushed to one of his father's peasant serfs, whom he knew only as Marey, plowing in a nearby field. The surprised peasant halted work to comfort the trembling child "like a mother," blessed him with the sign of the cross, and sent him home. The memory of this incident swept over Dostoevsky, at this instant, like a revelation, and made him aware of something he had never grasped before. "The encounter was isolated, in an empty field, and only God, perhaps, saw from above what deep and enlightened human feeling, what delicate almost womanly tenderness, could fill the heart of a coarse, bestially ignorant Russian peasant serf, not yet expecting, or even suspecting, that he might be free." Dostoevsky attributes to this recollection a total transformation in his attitude toward the peasant convicts. "I suddenly felt that I could look at these unfortunates with different eyes, and suddenly, as if by a miracle, all hatred and rancor vanished from my heart." . . . Dostoevsky thus resolved his own moral and spiritual crisis by what can be called, using Kierkegaard's term, "a leap of faith" in the moral beauty of the Russian peasantry; each peasant was a *potential* Marey, and each had managed to preserve in his soul—at least to Dostoevsky's suddenly cleansed vision—the highest and most sublime of the Christian virtues.

A feeling for the peasants which had been based on pity and upper class condescension was changed to brotherly respect and regard. That feeling, linked with extraordinary insight into

human nature, made Dostoevsky the most influential novelist of the age.

What do these "men" have in common? Whatever happens to them, they are unable to think about themselves and their welfare without thinking about the welfare of the entire human race. For them, altruism has become routine. How else can you explain the decision of the Belgian priest, Father Damien, to go to the Pacific islands, join the leper colony at Molokai, and live out his life working for the benefit of these most miserable victims of a wasting disease, until it overtook him, too? What else will make sense of the response of Henry George to the thoughts which flooded into his mind when he saw the suffering of the poor on a winter's day in an American city? What made Eugene Debs declare that so long as there was a criminal class, he was of it? Such questions puzzled Buckminster Fuller when he wondered to himself why no one would hire him to work for mankind.

We have another example—this one a bit more complicated but equally revealing. Nader Khalili, the Iranian architect who decided that houses as well as pots and bricks could be fired and made impervious to rain and strain, tells in his book (*Racing Alone*) of a conversation with a workman who was working with a Hoffman kiln used to bake sun-dried brick.

I touch the hot brick, smile, and apparently talk to myself in laughter, since one of the laborers collecting bricks in a wheel barrow comes close, thinking I am talking to him.

"Look, isn't it stupid to keep baking these walls and ceiling over and over again? Each time to bake brick we can bake a new kiln and keep it as our house," I say. Then I explain to him what I am going to do: I am going to bake houses just the way you are baking this kiln.

"But we are baking bricks, that is all."

"Well, I want to bake the kiln, not the brick. But just for your sake I will fill out the room with brick."

It probably makes no sense to him, since he stops working for a few seconds, looks at me, raises his eyebrows, and gets back to work.

I get out of the kiln and keep going around and look at everything all over again.

Why all this misery?

Why all this nonsense?

Why pull all these poor villagers from their home to here just to make brick to be shipped to faraway places, even to villages where clay is abundant?

Why couldn't every building produce its own brick, at least in the villages? Every building could change from a consumer to a producer. This could affect a great change in the economy of the many villages and could clean out all this misery, too. And for the cities the brick factories could suffice. . . .

As I think of the kilns and their economy, the whole thing appears as a mindless, repetitious human mistake: each time a brick kiln or a ceramic kiln is fired, less than a third of the fuel is used to change the clay vessels into bisque, adobe into brick. The rest of the fuel is wasted in baking the walls the ceiling, the floor, or vented out, in each firing process.

These technical facts show the fuel used to bake this kiln I have just visited could have baked ten thousand houses each of three rooms and a kitchen.

Khalili's jocular aside, "But just for your sake I will fill out the room with brick," calls for attention. What did he mean? He meant, we think—or could have meant—that his home-making firings would also supply baked bricks for those who needed them: everywhere, more bricks would become available.

The workman just raised his eyebrows. What was he thinking? Perhaps nothing at all. "I just work here" might have been one response. Or, "What have the bricks you make, out on the desert somewhere, to do with me, or even my employer?"

Khalili, however, was talking about brick-making as service to human need. He wasn't discussing the brickmaking *business*, or the buying and selling part of it. The workman, it seems fair

to say, couldn't or didn't understand that. What for Khalili was a great spontaneous idea was meaningless to him—to the world in which buying and selling is the real thing, the only thing that matters for people who have to make money for themselves. How could the workman be expected to recognize that the architect was using the language of another world—the language of the common good, with meanings lost and forgotten to the world of private enterprise? No boy entrepreneur—not even a scientific boy Faust—could grasp what Khalili meant when he said "just for your sake," that this included *everybody*, not only brickmakers.

In a book about great women—several of them—the writer took note of the fact that after she sat through a bullfight in Madrid, Jane Addams decided to devote her life to mankind, the part of it that needed help. What did Hull House in Chicago have to do with the cruel slaughter of bulls in a Spanish arena? Well, she couldn't deprive the Latins of their favorite entertainment, but she could make a haven for the poor and deprived humans in an American city. For Jane Addams, that was like putting two and two together.

Why are such sums so difficult for the rest of us? Is this a higher form of math?

The question we began with—What separates the men from the boys?—may be got at by using some preliminaries; for example: How do we think about what we see when we walk down the street? We see things and people. Do we, like the Athenians, divide the people into barbarians and Greeks? The people who live elsewhere, who have other customs and clothing, the Greeks decided, are barbarians—an inferior breed toward whom one has little if any obligation. This, we now say, was itself a barbarous opinion; in theory, strangers are as good as we are. But what if a stranger not only looks barbarous, but *is* barbarous?

In *Gleanings in Buddha Fields*, Lafcadio Hearn considers this question:

. . . we generally confess an interest in physiognomy which by no means speaks to us of inward *moral* perfections, but rather suggests perfections of the reverse order. This fact is manifested even in daily life. When we exclaim, "What force!" on seeing a head with prominent bushy brows, incisive nose, deep-set eyes, and a massive jaw, we are indeed expressing our recognition of force, but only of the sort of force underlying instincts of aggression and brutality. When we commend the character of certain strong aquiline faces, certain so-called Roman profiles, we are really commending the traits that mark a race of prey. It is true that we do not admire faces in which only brutal, or cruel, or cunning traits exist; but it is true also that we admire the indications of obstinacy, aggressiveness, and harshness when united with certain indications of intelligence. It may even be said that we associate the idea of manhood with the idea of aggressive power more than with the idea of any other power. Whether this power be physical or intellectual, we estimate it in our popular preferences, at least, above the really superior powers of the mind, and call intelligent cunning by the euphemism of "shrewdness."

Hearn was speaking—with some delicacy—of the immature people one comes across in the street. For them growing up will take time. Others do not bother to qualify their opinions, but like American businessmen, go right to the point. "They're all consumers" is the verdict for merchants and manufacturers. Then there was the famous line of P. T. Barnum. Thinking of gullible customers (suckers) for his sideshows, he said, "There's one born every minute." For him, no doubt, this was more than a hip joke. And, sharing the fun, we say to each other, "Barnum was right."

Well, there's no harm in humor which, one way or another, says "There's more in this than meets the eye," and when we laugh at what Barnum said, we are partly laughing at ourselves. The men who have stopped being boys are richly endowed with humor—how could they keep going without their sense of proportion, which is also an obscure aspect of hope?

We have asked a lot of questions in this discussion, on the handy ground that good questions are better than answers. Good answers,

or even poor ones, may quiet your mind. So we have one more question:

Why are the grown-up men so few?

Nothing can help us here but uninhibited speculation. The question has little of "science" in it, and science, moreover, gave up using the word "progress" more than a generation ago and now refers to evolution more as a courtesy to Darwin than anything else. Science will speak of change, but rejects the metaphysical overtones of "progress," although it allows usage of "growth," since the passage from acorn to oak needs description.

How can we start with a speculative answer? We might start with where we are, on a man-bearing planet. Reason suggests that of this planet, humans are a major fruit. It is evident that some humans are more backward than others; most, that is, are at the kindergarten stage of planetary progress since they don't get along well with either the earth itself or other humans. But people do learn; they do bad things, suffer bad effects, and sometimes they actually learn. Individuals learn; we know this from biography, history, and experience; and what individuals can do, all humans can do. That, too, is reasonable.

Let us call the inhabitants of the planet a planetary generation. As with the generations we know about, a few wise men and women are mixed in with the immature majority. This is a provision we try to imitate in our schools, but have trouble in agreeing upon and picking the ones who are really wise. Mostly, we choose the mediocre ones for teachers. They don't make trouble. They don't talk back. They don't rock the boat.

But, in spite of everything, there seems to be a little progress. This becomes evident, as things get worse. The little minorities are getting bigger. There is, perhaps, hope, while life continues to separate the women from the girls, the men from the boys.

## *REVIEW* THREE BOOKS

THE Chinese expression, "Cheng min," meaning the "rectification of names," would be a good way to describe the intention and content of *The Philosophical Dictionary* (Philosophical Library, \$24.95), edited by the late Dagobert Runes, now available in a new and expanded edition. The rectification of names, according to this *Dictionary*, "holds that names should correspond to realities, and serve as standards for social organization and personal conduct. The actual must in each case be made to correspond to the name." The MANAS editors have used an old edition of this dictionary for years, with growing confidence in its authority. If you want to know what some thinker thought, taught, or said, the book will tell you, in as few words as possible. Some entries, of course, are formidable, as in the case of Formal Logic, which has twelve pages in about six-point type, filled with symbols and formulas no one but specialists can understand, but if you want to know what Aristotle's four causes are, a short paragraph will tell you.

The vocabulary of technical philosophy is of course academic and conventionalized. It takes a while to get used to it. A simple example is the meaning given for—

*Post hoc, ergo propter hoc*: (Lat. after this, therefore on account of this) A logical fallacy in which it is argued that consequent is caused by an antecedent, simply because of the temporal relationship.

It would be a lot simpler and clearer (immediately clearer, that is) to say that the fallacy claims that what comes after a certain act must be caused by it, only because it comes after. But if you think a little, you realize this is meant by "temporal relationship." The defense made of abstract language is that, by being abstract, it covers all possible cases, leaving no loopholes which shouldn't be there. Philosophers have so many inevitable loopholes in their work that you can hardly blame them for wanting to at least keep

their language from being ambiguous, even if this makes it somewhat obscure for the ordinary reader.

We might say that definitions of Sanskrit terms seem accurate, although perhaps incomplete, and the brief biographies of eminent thinkers are handy. The *Dictionary* is reliable in the sense that it tells you what the consensus now is concerning philosophers and philosophical systems. A dictionary cannot do more than this. The use of conventional language assures that you get the going meaning, which is what your reader or hearer expects of you, unless you explain otherwise. Wendell Berry has given the best justification we know of for adhering to convention in the use of language. In his essay, *Standing by Words* (Lindisfarne Press, R.D. 2, West Stockbridge, Mass. 01266), he says:

My standpoint here is defined by the assumption that no statement is complete or comprehensible in itself, that in order for a statement to be complete and comprehensible three conditions are required.

1. It must designate its object precisely.
2. Its speaker must stand by it: must believe it, be accountable for it, be willing to act on it.
3. This relation of speaker, word, and object must be conventional; the community must know what it is.

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JOHANN KEPLER (1571-1630)—of whom the *Britannica* says, "His demonstration that the planes of all the planetary orbits pass through the center of the sun, coupled with his clear recognition of the sun as the moving power of the system, entitles him to rank as the founder of physical astronomy"—is the subject of a historical novel, *Kepler*, by the Irish writer, John Banville. (The publisher of the American edition is David Godine, in Boston, and the price is \$13.95.) We have some trouble with this book, possibly because of a somewhat idealized conception of Kepler, of whom, again, the *Britannica* (11th ed.) says: "his tendency towards mystical speculation formed a not less fundamental quality of his mind

than its strong grasp of positive scientific truth." While Banville's book is, after all, a novel, he seems to think that Kepler's life was a coarse, rough-and-tumble affair, hardly in key with the sublimity of his thinking and mystical theorizing. While reading it, the scenes of *Lust for Life*, with those two athletic actors gamboling through the story of the relationship between van Gogh and Gauguin, kept intruding: how Kepler, in Banville's characterization, could think his great thoughts was as hard to understand as how those two bustling and bantering characters could paint such wonderful pictures.

But you do learn what a hard time Kepler had, and how assiduously he worked to make his successive visions come true. Kepler's literary remains were extensive, and became available in the nineteenth century, along with "a vast mass of his correspondence" and some "private notes." This reassures the reader of Banville's tale that the chapter made up entirely of letters is likely to be authentic, and also various quotations from his works.

The passage we enjoyed most, coming toward the end, is on the content of Kepler's book, *Harmonia Mundi*, published at Augsburg in 1619. Banville relates:

The *Harmonia mundi* was for him a new kind of labor. Before, he had voyaged into the unknown, and the books he brought back were fragmentary and enigmatic charts apparently unconnected with each other. Now he understood that they were not maps of the islands of an Indies, but of different stretches of the shore of one great world. The *Harmonia* was their synthesis. The net that he was drawing in became the grid-lines of a globe. It seemed to him an apt image, for were not the sphere and the circle the very bases of the laws of world harmony? Years before, he had defined harmony as that which the soul creates by perceiving how certain proportions in the world correspond to prototypes existing in the soul. The proportions everywhere abound, in music and the movements of the planets, in human and vegetable forms, in men's fortunes even, but they are all relation merely, and in-existent without the perceiving soul. How is such perception possible? Peasants and children, barbarians, animals even, feel the harmony

of the tone. Therefore the perceiving must be instinct in the soul, based in a profound and essential geometry, that geometry which is derived from the simple divisioning of circles. All that he had for long held to be the case. Now he took the short step to the fusion of symbol and object. The circle is the bearer of pure harmonies, pure harmonies are innate in the soul and so the soul and the circle are one.

The book tells about Kepler's relations with Tycho Brahe, his meeting with Galileo, and what poor pay are emperors who mean well but lack funds.

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WHEN he was twenty-three years old, an uncomfortable bump appeared on Mark Kramer's hip. His doctor looked at it, decided it might be "serious," and sent him to a surgeon who cut it out and told him he had nothing to worry about. Kramer went off about his business, which was to become a writer and a teacher. He wrote mostly about farming and food production in the United States. His *Three Farms*, published in 1979, was reviewed in *MANAS* (Sept. 14, 1980), with interest and admiration, as a book which gave its readers practical understanding of what was happening to agriculture in the United States.

Then, fifteen years after his annoying bump had been removed, the research of a psychiatrist returned his attention to the practice of surgery. The psychiatrist had found out that patients on the operating table, although in deep anesthesia, can still hear what the doctors say, although they may not remember it clearly. Kramer wondered: "How do you think patients react inside when their surgeons joke about their being old or ugly or fat or crazy, or being disaster cases?"

This idea grew into another book—*Invasive Procedures—A Year in the World of Two Surgeons* (Harper & Row, 1983, \$13.95), in which Kramer reports on the work, the temperaments, the skills, the commitment, and the incomes of two experts with knives and threads; one, a general practitioner who does many kinds of surgery, the other a specialist in vascular ills—

mostly diseases of the blood vessels from and to the heart. They are both pleasant fellows and Kramer couldn't help but like them. The reader gets the impression that the awe people feel in the presence of a surgeon is largely justified. These men work very hard at their profession, maintain high standards, and develop almost unbelievable skill at working inside the human body. They have long hours, sometimes doing two or three operations in a day, and they love their work. They take in more money than they really need—than anybody needs—but they are convinced that they earn and are entitled to it.

Kramer spent hour after hour with each of them in the operating rooms, watching, listening, reflecting, and wondering. He writes about all this, stepping down for the reader the medical language, but using technical terms when there aren't any others, which is a lot of the time. He reports the humor of the doctors and nurses, with a note or two on the problem of administrators. He talks to the mothers and fathers of the doctors about their childhood and growing up, to their school teachers, to the nurses who work with them and the other doctors who send them patients. It is all very informing about the world of the hospital. The reader, however, is likely to become uncomfortable about all the things that can and do go wrong with the human body. Curiously, there is almost nothing about death in the book, but thrilling accounts of some narrow escapes. In general, Kramer is himself uncomfortable about the kind of society to which these doctors have adapted so well; they seem themselves to have extraordinary health in relationships that are natural only in a sick society. This makes the author's distance from what he writes about. He writes well.



## COMMENTARY

### HEALTH CARE

IN one of the books considered in this week's Review, the author, Mark Kramer, takes from a handbook on medical specialties the following information:

Surgeons have been mostly males, and mostly come from families with many brothers. . . . Surgeons have been found to be most firmly set, while in medical school, about their career choice. Studies of surgeons' emotional lives reveal a group with things well in hand: studies find surgeons low in neuroticism, low in anxiety about death, low in depression and nervous tension. They show men able to handle taxing emotional situations without distress, with thick skins, with self-confidence. . . . They don't value rapport with patients highly, nor "the psychosocial aspects of medicine," and feel "less bound by traditional roles of conduct" than other doctors do.

These doctors, judging from Mark Kramer's experience, are professionally responsible practitioners, well rewarded in money and wholly concentrated in their work. There is, however, another sort of responsibility. We have a book from India, *Health Care—Which Way to Go*, edited by two Indian M.D.'s, Abhay Bang and Ashvin J. Patel, and published by the Medico Friend Circle, a group formed about ten years ago by the concern of a young doctor who, working in relief in famine-stricken Maharashtra, realized that his "medical education had failed to equip him to deal with the situation he was facing." He wrote to a friend and before long the Medico Friend Circle was formed, with a monthly bulletin on what could be done for the growing ills of the Indian poor. The book, a compilation of contributions to the newsletter, is available (\$4.00 from the publisher, Anant Phadki, Convenor, Medico Friend Circle, 50, L.I.C. Quarters, University Road, Pune—411 016, India.)

The stark reality which these health workers are up against is put in a sentence: "The real seat of most of the preventable illness lies in malnutrition, a disease which cannot be cured by

drugs, but by adequate food." Meanwhile, medical education, in India as elsewhere, is heavily oriented toward the use of drugs. Without good nutrition, health care becomes impossible. It is worth remembering that this was also the discovery of the famous Canadian surgeon, Norman Bethune—see *The Scalpel and the Sword* (1952).

## CHILDREN

### . . . and Ourselves

#### WORK FOR THE BEST TEACHERS

A LONG (37 pages) article on bilingual education in the United States, by Steven Schlossman (of the Rand Corporation), in the Summer 1983 *Teachers College Record*, brings long thoughts about such problems as forced cultural assimilation, the manifest injustices which they represent, and the constraints imposed by the conditions of a mass society on the heroic efforts of those who work to solve them. Mr. Schlossman's discussion focuses on the views and career of George J. Sanchez (1906-1972), born in Albuquerque, New Mexico, "a direct descendant of early Spanish explorers to the New World." Sanchez managed well his own transition from his Spanish-speaking home to the English-language curriculum of the public schools in Albuquerque, and after high school became a teacher in a one-room elementary school, later a teacher-principal in another rural school. He went to college during summers and graduated from the University of New Mexico in 1930, with major fields in education and Spanish. From these beginnings he went on to a lifetime of service to the cause of justice and help to the education and welfare of Mexican-American children of the United States—an area he understood from personal experience. Schlossman remarks:

Most historians of education know nothing about Sanchez, just as they are largely ignorant of the entire educational history of the Southwest. But Sanchez's place in Hispanic history is as secure as that of Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois in black educational history.

Sanchez spent most of his career puzzling over the effects of the "language handicap" on Hispanic children and on school policies in the Southwest. His intellectual struggles shed important light on a number of vital, ongoing policy debates concerning the future of American education, especially in areas concerning uneven allocation of educational resources to language minority children; the uses and misuses of standardized intelligence tests for such children and, most central to this article, bilingual education and segregation of Spanish-speaking children in public schools. Sanchez's career reminds us just how long these concerns have been salient in the minds of Hispanic-American scholars and parents, however seemingly unprecedented and due to

recent influxes in immigration the larger public may perceive them to be.

It would certainly be a good idea to circulate reprints of Schlossman's article among all the bilingual teachers in the country, as a source of encouragement and for background on the work they are doing. There is great dignity, moral strength, and intellectual penetration in Sanchez's work, papers, and books—best known of which is *Forgotten People: A Study of New Mexicans* (University of New Mexico Press, 1940)—and his continuous labors cannot help but be an inspiration to others.

As for our long thoughts: Mr. Schlossman's detailed account shows why and how the fundamental solution that Sanchez always kept in mind—most of all, good teachers are required—perceptive, understanding, and sympathetic teachers—had to be translated into proposals of "programs" which would be administrative versions of what he wanted to see happen. A program—unlike the moment-to-moment wisdom of a teacher—is open to criticism and aggressive expressions of public prejudice. Sanchez, however, was equal to these obstacles. With the help of the Rockefeller Foundation he had become director of the Division of Information and Statistics in New Mexico's Department of Education, and in this post he was able to speak with authority on how poorly the state schools were adapting to the presence of Spanish-speaking students. Schlossman says:

He boldly challenged the ability, wisdom, and authority of state school officials with whose policies he disagreed, particularly those of the state school auditor, whose legislative mandate gave him tremendous power through control of disbursement of all school funds.

Small wonder, then, that Sanchez's four years in office were turbulent, or that his opponents called him an "educational politico." Sanchez never hid his moral commitment to the well-being of his own people, nor his intent to use statistical data for purposes of criticism and advocacy. To Sanchez, educational measurement provided a tool for bringing state school policies in line with children's learning needs and with the most progressive thinking of the time. Eventually his arguments, effective use of the media, and general reputation exerted significant influence on state policies concerning distribution of school funds to isolated rural, Hispanic-dominated areas like the one he had grown up in and taught.

Here was a talented and committed man who probably understood the needs of Mexican-American children better than anyone else in the country, yet to accomplish his ends he needed to argue with accountants, cope with public racial prejudice, and deal with issues largely shaped by his enemies. What a disgraceful waste of the energies of a man so endowed! That waste, one might think, could have been avoided only by applying—if we knew how!—a Schumacher solution: keep the schools small so that nothing counts so much as the ability of intelligent teachers to deal with each child as an individual, helping him to make, in his own way, the transition from a Spanish speaker to an enriched individual in command of two languages. This method Schlossman identifies as "vernacular instruction," and he, by common sense, sees this informal mode of teaching in both languages as the heart of the matter.

Yet, believe it or not, there was much opposition to this style of teaching, and after detailing its arguments Schlossman says: "In sum, the climate of educational opinion in which George Sanchez came of age as a scholar leaned very heavily against vernacular instruction on both sociopolitical and pedagogical grounds. It remains now to examine the extent to which that mind set shaped and delimited Sanchez's own contributions to the field of language education." Later Schlossman comments:

Given Sanchez's sharp criticism of insensitive educational policies for Hispanic children, his evident readiness to consider use of Spanish in some uncertain way in the classroom, and his well-demonstrated willingness to contravene accepted authority, it is of considerable interest in retrospect that he did not argue forcefully for vernacular instruction. I believe there were two main reasons: first, Sanchez thought that educators had already placed too much stress on language deficiencies per se to explain Hispanic children's inferior school performance; and second, he viewed language training as merely incidental to the public school's major task, which was to modernize Hispanic-Americans' culture and bring it within the American cultural mainstream. In advancing both arguments, Sanchez developed a unique point of view on the schooling of Hispanic-Americans that distinguished him from other language educators, while leaving the consensus against vernacular instruction fundamentally intact.

While in his later life Sanchez inclined to increasing emphasis on vernacular instruction, he never gave it the importance it seems to deserve, although it is implied by one of his recommendations:

The single-best remedy for educational failure among Hispanic students, and the only one attainable in the present, Sanchez contended, was the superbly trained and sensitive teacher. Whether the teacher even knew Spanish was not critical. "It would help for such a good teacher to know Spanish (to have casual conversation with the child, to talk with the parents, to appreciate the problems and virtues of bilingualism), but the important thing is that she be a good teacher and that she be given an opportunity to do her job (reasonable class size, at least average help from her superior, and the like). If the teacher does not know Spanish, she should at least understand why some of her Spanish-speaking pupils have particular difficulties." Thus, Sanchez concluded, substantial provision of educational opportunity for Hispanics did not await introduction of dramatic new pedagogies, but only reassignment of the best teachers to the children who needed them most.

Finally, he wanted to extend "reading-readiness" "for *both* native Spanish and native English speaking children within the same classroom."

This arrangement would not hurt the English-speaking child but it would help those who spoke Spanish "to get a good start in the catching up process that should be virtually complete by the end of the third grade." Language development in the Spanish-speaking child, Sanchez argued, was "essentially the same as that of his English-speaking fellow students. But he does need extra time, before beginning to read, to acquire facility in the recognition and use of the new linguistic labels." Sanchez felt it would be relatively simple to develop new standards of grade promotion that, while keeping the goals of integrated schooling foremost, enabled Hispanics to enjoy school and to advance with their non-Hispanic classmates while gradually catching up in their mastery of English.

By such means Sanchez adapted his conceptions of good teaching to classroom procedure. The important thing is to keep these conceptions more in mind than any implementing procedure.

## FRONTIERS

### The Re-education of Experts

IN 1970, in the village of Tilonia, in the Indian state of Rajasthan—formerly Rajputana under the British—some young social workers formed the Social Work and Research Center. One of their number, Sanjit Roy, tells of this undertaking in the British *Listener* for July 7.

We felt that there was a need to professionalize rural development. This inevitably meant, on our side, a complete change in perspectives and attitudes to the problem of the 350 million people living below the poverty line in 600,000 Indian villages. . . . we believed that if young professionals—doctors, teachers, engineers, geologists, geophysicists, social workers, anthropologists, sociologists and economists—could be attracted to live and work together in *one village*, this would serve many purposes. For one thing, it would lead to the integration of professional skills with the traditional skills of the village and, hopefully, this would lead to the demystification of both, a process which we thought was long overdue. It would result in the professionals looking at the problems of rural development more as a professional challenge and less as "social service," a view which has destroyed many organizations which still follow a charity approach and call it development. In other words, consistency perseverance, staying power, and the ability to improvise would be valued more than the "missionary spirit" which emphasizes dedication and sacrifice. It would also lead to an exchange of skills and ideas, a learning and unlearning process for both the professional and the farmer that would hopefully lead to the human development of both. This meant that the professionals had to recognize that some well-established traditional skills might be more appropriate than modern technology and that, if some new techniques were to be found helpful, then new ways would also have to be found to teach the farmers how to use them effectively. As a consequence, many established ideas about the sophisticated technical resources necessary for development and about the level of education needed to deploy them, might have to be radically revised.

The writer, Sanjit Roy, now Director of the Tilonia Social Work and Research Center, says that by putting these ideas into practice the Center has grown into a work which "promotes groups of

rural women, artisans like leather workers, small and marginal farmers and members of scheduled castes to organize themselves and realize their own strength." He gives the spirit of the undertaking:

All along, we have felt that we needed to set an example, not just to show the vast potential which existed for the use of village resources, but also in sharing the simple lifestyle of the village. Tilonia—deliberately—has no electricity or running water. If millions of the rural poor can live and work without it, so can we. I am told that this was the reason why Mahatma Gandhi refused to have his ashram electrified. But there are other compelling reasons for our decision. Power is needed in the village for agricultural development, and for increasing food production, but no one seems to have considered the social cost of this development.

For every electric pump which is installed in a rich farmer's well a leather worker (who makes leather buckets for traditional irrigation systems) and a ropemaker, both members of lower castes who depend on the richer farmers for their livelihood, are put out of a job. Power looms threaten the village weavers; plastic mugs, plates and shoes mean that the village potters and leather workers are deprived of work. The result is that with the coming of power to the villages, there has been large-scale unemployment among the poorest of the poor, and for want of employment in the villages they are migrating in increasing numbers to the cities. But Indian experts, who have never lived in a village, refuse to accept this.

Interestingly, the same sort of problem afflicts labor in the United States, although at another level. A three-part article in recent issues of *democracy*—"Present Tense Technology"—speaks of the displacement of workers from their jobs: "longshoremens facing containerization, the printers facing teletypesetting and computers, and refinery workers confronting computer-based centralized process-control." The writer, David Noble, describes at some length the efforts of the unions to diminish the resulting unemployment, but without notable success. As he says:

The existing technologies reflect centuries of continuous development along a particular path, and the development of alternatives will similarly require

years of reflection, research, and practical experimentation. It will not be possible to turn around the legacy of the Industrial and Scientific Revolution overnight. . . . what is to be done *now*? What good is a strategy for the future without a strategy for survival in the present? Even if the unions devoted all available resources to the development of alternatives, it would still be years before anything emerged reflecting labor's interests. Moreover, at present, no unions have sufficient power at the bargaining table or anywhere else to demand and enforce a fundamental redirection of technological development and, thus far, organizing efforts reflecting this approach have aroused little interest among workers.

Is there a sense, one wonders, in which the Tilonia social workers have an easier job than reformers in the United States? Here an established system centuries in the making needs somehow to be turned around, against powerful economic forces. In India those forces, while present, are not yet all-powerful. Perhaps Indians will learn something from our mistakes. And perhaps we can learn something from India. Sanjit Roy writes:

As a result of our rural experience in Tilonia, we found that what was preventing the participation of the poor in their own development was the whole business of degrees and qualifications, which was giving them a massive inferiority complex. We like to think that the secret of our success has been to uncouple degrees and qualifications from knowledge, skills, and job responsibilities. We have proved that it is possible to run a community health program without doctors and trained nurses, to use the traditional health system of midwives and semi-literate but trained health workers to organize family planning camps, eye camps, the immunization of children, and to bring down the rate of infant mortality. We have used the village's own communication medium—puppets to motivate people, to get feedback on government development schemes and to raise money for the village community. . . . we have been able to show that a village boy who left school at 14 or 15 can repair and maintain hand pumps more effectively, and at less expense, than the UNICEF-sponsored system which uses jeeps and trucks and a battery of high-powered engineers, and which ignores the skills which already exist in the community. . . . The fact that we have given so much importance to village resources, to the way the rural

poor think, to giving financial and administrative responsibilities to the rural people themselves, has, needless to say, baffled a lot of people. But this is the first step in educating the urban-trained, urban-educated expert on rural development whose preconceived ideas have never taken this vital factor into account.

Ivan Illich, if he sees this report, will be delighted.