

## THE SHAVING PROCESS

IT was a cherished memory of Gatti-Casazza, colorful director of the Metropolitan Opera House for a generation or more, that he gained assent from Dr. Einstein for his personal explanation of the General Theory of Relativity—"There are no hitching posts in the universe." Whatever the technical shortcomings of this account of the meaning of the new physics, it serves admirably to sum, in psychological terms, the condition of man in the twentieth century.

While it would be vast over-simplification to suggest that the radical change in the assumptions of physical science have been responsible for all the other departures of certainty from the intellectual and moral environment of human beings, there is a sense in which it has been the most important of these changes, mainly because it took away the "solid foundation" from what modern man assumed to be the only really "real" knowledge he had about the external world. Actually, there was an impressive romantic extravagance in the popular reception of the Einstein Theory. With only the fuzziest of ideas of what he meant by it, people everywhere gave Einstein the kind of affectionate regard usually reserved for movie stars and war heroes. It was as though they *felt*, rather than knew, that a great, new explanatory myth had been vouchsafed to them by a good, grey prophet of (international—that was good, too) Science.

Yet there was little grasp of the subversion accomplished by turning people loose in a universe made up of energy patterns called "fields," where all was relationships—no final units, no discrete "particles" of reality to be found anywhere. Meanwhile, in other fields of science, although without much popular recognition, similar dissolutions of an earlier simplicity were going on. The evolutionists, having won their battle in the courts of public opinion, were

confessing grave indecision as to *how* evolution proceeds. By the time the polemics with the Christian Fundamentalists were over, biologists were admitting that, getting down to the specifics of evolution, they had problems and mysteries to deal with, rather than explanations to make. Embryology gave evidence of endless complexity, classical genetics ended with a Scotch verdict—"not proven"—in respect to theories of stockyard methods of improvement of the human species, and the application of big-physical methods to studies of the cell and organisms added more *mystique* than everyday science to the understanding of morphogenesis.

Starting in the late forties, the restless inquiries of the *Zeitgeist* came into focus in the ill-defined specialties and preserves of Psychology. Like the medieval doctors who climbed and climbed—on, over, and under the dogmas of the Church, until they had reduced this intellectually recalcitrant material to the impersonal Prime Mover of Aquinas, and otherwise prepared the way for the Great Awakening of the European mind—Western psychologists did all they could with the assumptions of physics and biology, until, startled by holistic theories developed by the Emergent Evolutionists, and finding themselves seriously outdistanced by the Freudians and other psychoanalysts in practical understanding of human beings, they began turning first into Gestaltists, then into Phenomenologists, Existentialists, and Humanistic psychologists, and the end is not yet. The psychologists have been subjecting themselves—and their subject, Man—to something like the "shaving process" described in one of the Upanishads: "not this, not that," the pursuit for identity goes, laying back one after another layer of conditioning and other equipment of the external man, trying to reveal what is really at the center. In general, you could say that

already they have reached a consensus acceptably expressed by Paul Tillich: "Man becomes really human at the time of decision." Only the psychologists themselves realize what a complete revolution they have on their hands in reaching this conclusion, for only they are fully aware that the earlier theories of man afforded by their science allowed no place at all for human decision, and were, therefore, aimed at a precisely opposite view.

A handy way to get at the (still developing) change in psychology is provided by one of the participants in an *American Scholar* (Summer, 1965) symposium on Morality, Daniel Bell, who quotes from Henry Murray:

He [Dr. Murray] said that we are all in some respects like *all* other persons, in some respects like *some* other persons and in some respects like no other person. And he tried to establish three levels, so to speak, of human behavior.

It happens that Dr. Murray is one of the pioneers of the new psychology (see his article, "What Should Psychologists Do about Psychoanalysis?" in the April, 1940, *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*), so it is not surprising that he should supply so useful a generalization. You could, for example, use these differentiations in the nature of man as a basis for classifying the dynamics of both religious and political systems. Authoritarian religions and totalitarian political structures obviously take account only of the way in which people are alike; congregational religion and political democracy relate naturally to people who acknowledge both differences and similarities; while individual, intuitive religion and the anarchist ideal in politics fit those in whom both wholeness and uniqueness are the major sources of life and behavior.

What is of interest, here, is the manifest relation between Dr. Murray's triple definition of man's nature and a loose, historical analysis of human progress. The passage from one kind of consciousness to another—as the predominating factor in motivation—is marked by great

uncertainty, unrest, daring innovation, heady inspiration, and revolutionary struggle. The problem of democracy, which operates on the middle definition, is two-ended. At its base is the need for some kind of practical compromise between the needs of the human uniformities (law, regulation for the common good and the common interest) and the need of freedom for the exercise of human differences. Martin Luther was the spokesman for the differences in the religious area, and in politics they are represented by the Bill of Rights. The religion and the politics of whole men—men, that is, who need no *mores*, no nationalist tradition, no reassurance by religious orthodoxy, to give them a sense of identity and of meaning in life as historical phenomena are still in the future. Yet you could argue that the premonitory symptoms of their appearance are very much with us, today. The signs, of course, are confused by the overlapping of these attitudes, both in social organizations and in their interplay in individuals. It takes a particular kind of daring to be oneself and no other—to stand, as Ibsen said, entirely alone. Frightened pioneers are known to run for cover and take refuge in some engulfing bosom of totalitarian security, whether of religion or state. Would-be Thoreaus betray their propensity for imitation when they seek converts to their "side" or argue that their utopian dream will have safety only in sectarian numbers. Yet the yearning for an *independent* identity is none the less the contemporary version of the Quest for the Holy Grail. You can hardly get a serious book published, today, unless it has the word "self" in the title, or some variant thereof.

The reason why we find so much clarity in Dr. Murray's definition is that it represents a bold metaphysical statement about the nature of man. He may not call it that, but there is no mistake about the fact that he gives three views of the nature of man, each of which can be made into a basic premise from which flow entire systems of philosophy, politics, religion, literature, art, and everyday moral decision. Indeed, you could work his definition back, using it as a touchstone for

classifying all past practices of moral judgment. The Holy Inquisition's requirements of the faithful, for example, are plainly the mandate of a claim that all men are the product of the same creaturely mold, and that It—the Inquisition—has indisputable knowledge as to what is good for them. The Eugenicist's reading of evolutionary law is a similar authority, and in the hands of a fanatic like Hitler such doctrines become proof texts of a ruthless genocide in the name of racial purity.

But the chief lesson to be learned from history, in terms of Dr. Murray's definition, is that any system of social control, however sagaciously conceived, cannot hope for anything more than unstable equilibrium. The balance of what people are, and what they think they are, is subject to small increments' of continual change, and these changes generate the forces of revolution. In such circumstances, the only stable system is one that allows for continual readjustment in the thinking of human beings about themselves, and for considerable redressing of the institutional balances within society, to prevent these irrepressible changes from becoming violent and destructive. The American people thought they had in the Constitution of the United States a political instrument that would take care of all such changes, and maybe they did, in principle, but they reposed too much faith in organization, which put the curse of mechanical similarity on variously grouped "differences" and created a system of competitive interest groups instead of room for increasing individuality. In time, the competitive furor took up all the space and authentic differences were very nearly crowded off the scene.

It now becomes necessary to complicate this discussion even more, by taking note of the fact that, by reason of the human capacity to embrace any one of these three ideas of the self, it is also quite possible to embrace only one of them, yet *pretend* to champion another. People can talk about the "inviolable essence" of the human

individual, yet demand that certain "essences" who live in another country change their ways, give up their own view of their identity and try to become like "us." (Even though we know they can't really do it, because they *aren't* us, we still say that they ought to try.) Then there are rites of religion which become psychological substitutes for individuation. It takes some doing to grow from being a boy to being a man. No doubt the rites were once only *symbols* of the transition, but since being the same as everybody else is easy, while being uniquely yourself is probably the most difficult thing in the world, the symbols, by an application of Gresham's Law, finally replace the achievement—and *then* you get a historical situation in which men are quite willing to cut one another's throats to decide whether or not the body of Christ is really *in* the Communion wafer, and you get fathers who have no hesitation in shooting young men who get their unwed daughters with child. Goodness and virtue, obviously, are the sole, unadulterated product of the marriage ceremony, and can be stolen away much as you would rob a bank.

We are living in the death-throes of an age in which men have been heartily sickened by doctrines about their sinfulness and the need to save their precious souls. Accordingly, this was an age which had only an expedient, political interest in theology, and—what was the real misfortune—a practical man's disregard for metaphysics. For this reason it has been an age of incredible confusion and indifference toward what men thought themselves to be. That is why, today, Henry Murray's formula sheds such an unexpected light. The formula has an obvious verity, and the sudden ease with which it orders our understanding of ourselves is itself a measure of the darkness in which we have been brought up.

It is why, again, you read the *American Scholar* symposium on "Morality" with a growing embarrassment. You know that these intelligent people, talking things over, are making a great

deal of sense to themselves, and to one another, yet you can't get out of all this impressive discussion anything you can really take home. Is this comment unjust? Does it amount to asking for final instruction in "Morality" in one easy lesson from the American Scholars? That isn't, at any rate, what we mean. The trouble is that these exceedingly perceptive people skip around from one great or small moral tradition to another, arguing in one mode, then in another, extracting some useful juice from each, but never, or seldom, relating what they say to some over-arching metaphysical frame, and for this reason never, or seldom, giving what they say the clarity of Dr. Murray's formula. They have dozens of "insights" and their intuitions are plainly working overtime, but the discussion is really controlled by some kind of higher pragmatism which ends only with an agreement on Unamuno's "tragic sense of life." Well, what might a man with a metaphysic come up with, instead? The answer is simple enough. He might come up with a "Death of Socrates," which breathes an entirely different air. This dialogue has its tragic sense, but something else is there, too.

Now why, it must be asked, should the conscious use of metaphysical clarity be so objectionable to us? No doubt there is a good reason as well as a bad one for this distaste. The good reason would be that the rebel in us has learned suspicion of the confinement to systems which metaphysics almost invariably brings. And so, since it is impossible to do without, we continually use the clots of meaning which remain from abandoned metaphysical systems, but are careful not to look closely at their origins. This way we keep our freedom, finding melancholic comfort in the realization that the human situation has more dark corners in it than we are able to set to rights, even in theory.

But are the closures of metaphysics to be overcome only by refusing to enter the maze? This was not the decision of Theseus. The bad reason for avoiding metaphysics is our lack of a

heroic ideal. Let us note the fact that all our heroes—the heroes of the Western cycle of civilization, since the Greeks (excepting only Galahad)—are secular figures. Spiritual heroes we shut out of our consciousness, threatening with condign punishment any interlopers who would disturb the smooth path of compromise and adjustment to the environment where all the "facts of life" are found and defined. The Grand Inquisitor was wise in the necessities of his rule. While Dante's Hell was the place made ready for people who had lost all hope, the earth would accommodate only those who destroyed in themselves the vision of the heroic ideal. And the Grand Inquisitor is *still* the stage manager of our pretensions to progress. We are still trying to fit ourselves into the world as we find it. This makes for a crowning self-deception, since our failures have a different meaning from the Promethean downfall. *Ignorabimus* was never the Titan's battlecry. He knew his enemy and remained glorious in defeat.

Yet since we are men—which means we are lost Prometheans, twice-fallen gods—the faint voice of an inward inspiration keeps whispering doubts of every bland and compromised solution. If spiritual daring is too far-flung for our timid hearts, we find a substitute grace in the moral equivocations of the arts (in their cultural role, more than as the work of individuals). We can practice literature and painting without falling into metaphysical traps. The secrets of ancient mysticisms are at least silhouetted by artistic intuition; and if we do not know how to reach beyond good and evil, we may find ways of celebrating the vigor of cosmic energies which flowed before cloying moral dilemmas overtook mankind.

In a deeply suggestive study of the teaching of English literature as a vehicle of moral instruction, Lionel Trilling (in *Encounter* for July) examines what has happened in his profession since the time of Henry Sidgwick, whose volume on ethics was a milepost in thinking about the

problems of moral education. Here, with a paragraph or two, Mr. Trilling sketches for us the enormous difference between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in all such questions:

For a considerable time he [Sidgewick] saw no incoherence between the two elements of Mill's system, the impulse of a man to seek his own happiness and the less manifest impulse he has to seek the happiness of all. Sidgewick was attracted to both elements, to the former because of its "frank naturalism," to the latter because of its inspiring dictate of readiness for "absolute self-sacrifice." Eventually he saw that the two impulses, so far from being in harmony, made a dilemma. He thereupon set himself to "examine methodically the relation of Interest and Duty." How he resolved the dilemma to his own satisfaction need not concern us: I recall the episode only to suggest how alien to us is what was so natural to Sidgewick the perception of an ethical dilemma and the methodical examination of it.

This old way of conceiving the moral life still has a degree of meaning for us. We *understand* it. We can, for example, still take pleasure in the novelist who, perhaps more fully than any other, represents the old ethical mode, and we consider that Henry James is indeed being praised when he is called "the historian of fine consciences." But what novelist of our day might we celebrate with that phrase? Mr. Raymond Williams has said that in our time a "civilized and especially a literate man" is overtaken by hysterical anxiety when he is spoken to in moral terms. This is certainly not to say that the civilized literate man of our time has no moral consciousness. But his—our—moral consciousness is very different from that exemplified by Sidgewick. So far from taking explicit account of ethical dilemmas, it expressed itself by saying these do not—because they should not, because they need not—exist.

Well, if we neglect "ethical dilemmas," what engages us instead? Mr. Trilling makes direct answer:

The negation does not leave the modern morality without positive intention. Far from it, its intention is very positive indeed. As it is to be discerned in the relation of people to modern literature and in that literature itself, it may be defined in the phrase that Yeats once used to explain the intention of magic.

"The ultimate object of magic in all ages," Yeats said, "was and is to obtain control of the sources of life." By "the sources of life" Yeats meant, we may suppose, not only what supports existence but what yields to man the fullness, freedom, and potency of life he desires. The intention of obtaining control of the sources of life has always been part of the purpose of both literature and religion. And it has not been alien from the purpose of morality, even when morality has proposed itself in its least "positive" form. But the intention has never so fully possessed the literary enterprise as it does today. And most certainly it has never been in such command of morality as it now is. If Sidgewick's particular dilemma, the contradiction between Interest and Duty, no longer engages us, I think we can say that this is because modern morality, in its powerful imagination of the sources of life and the need to obtain control over them, denies the contradiction between Interest and Duty. Typically in our culture, when a person of goodwill thinks of the control of the sources of life, he conceives of it as assuring the happiness of both the individual and the generality of mankind. He assumes that there is a community between what he desires for himself and what he desires for others—what he wants for himself in the way of fullness, freedom, and potency is the paradigm of what he wants for others; what he wants for others he thinks of as the guarantee of the fullness, freedom, and potency he wants for himself. . . . A true relation to the sources of life does not refer to rational criteria; it is expressed not in doctrines, not in systems, ethics creeds, but in manner and style. We know whether a person is in touch with the sources of life not by what he says, but by the way he says it, by the tone of his voice, the look in his eyes, by his manner and style.

What shall we say about this fine, free-wheeling return to "the sources of life"? One thing to be said is that its freedom from rational (metaphysical) criteria has an element of irresponsibility in it. It is like Kropotkin's fine fervor for the ethical inspiration he found in the beasts of the field. Kropotkin reported at length in *Mutual Aid* on the lessons in cooperation of animal behavior, but studiously neglected the Nature that is red in tooth and claw. In fact, Mr. Trilling has criticism of this sort in mind, for he ends his article with a quotation from John Keats, remarking, just before it, that "this was not the only occasion on which Keats reminded us that

there is something more important than poetry; in fact, his ability to say this would seem to have an essential part of his genius as a poet." The quotation, then, is this:

Though a quarrel in the streets is a thing to be hated, the energies displayed in it are fine; the commonest Man shows a grace in his quarrel—By a superior being our reasonings may take the same tone—though erroneous they may be fine—This is the very thing in which consists poetry, and if so it is not so fine a thing as philosophy—For the same reason that an eagle is not so fine a thing as a truth.

Now it is true enough that the "style" of which Mr. Trilling speaks will sometimes have the quality of a fluid moral medium in which the work of a man may float with an enlivening buoyance. Such individuals seem to us to be possessors of a charismatic mystery and we are drawn to return to them again and again. We wish only that they would speak out a little more clearly, yet if they did—or if they could and did—the result might not be to our liking. There is always this problem of wanting to be told, but being unwilling, perhaps basically unable, to accept the truth we need from anybody else. It is here, perhaps, in this almost completely subjective dilemma, that we find the keynote to the problem of identity as it is presented to us, or wells up within us, in our time. In some cases, it well may be, "style" has unintentionally the same role as the Zen master's shock techniques and apparently "nonsense" responses to a disciple's prosy inquiries. It gives a proper brush-off to the kind of questioning that can have only the finite answers of closed systems of thought.

When the problem of identity is conceived in its own terms—when we have learned better than to hope that our mothers and fathers, our political leaders, our scientists and other experts, even our psychologists, can tell us who we are—we are getting around to those final questions that come to people who can no longer ignore that they are "in some respects like no other person," and this means learning to live in limbo until they have at least the germinal beginnings of some answers. It

is like being born once again, and again feeling helpless as babies. For here, too, the hitching posts are gone.

Is there a tradition which might help us past this nontraditional ordeal? Could anyone devise a metaphysic for comprehending a change in the polarity of human consciousness? Plotinus? Or Pico della Mirandola? If it could be done at all, it would be something like a treasure hunt, we suspect. You would have to test personally each proposition by reflective experience of subtle states of consciousness, before you could go on to the next. Another part of the project would involve recognizing the historical process as a destiny which shapes our course in this direction, giving us little enough time to regain our balance before removing one more external source of security, as though to make sure we get no leisurely holidays from the tasks of self-recognition.

## REVIEW

### "THE FRATERNAL SOCIETY"

THIS above-titled volume by Richard and Hephzibah Hauser (Bodley Head, London, 1962), to which attention was directed by a subscriber, at first glance appeared to be but one more creditable pacifist document. It involves a history of authoritarianism and the means by which the authoritarian or paternalistic approach to regulation of human affairs can be replaced—guided by the awakening of an intuitive sense of universal human brotherhood in small communities. But the authors have also woven into the context of traditional idealist argument the subtle threads of contemporary psychological and sociological knowledge. In the preface, the contrast between the "paternal" and "fraternal" society is pointed up in a lucid paragraph:

The different attitudes of the two societies are well illustrated by the important distinction between guilt and shame. The decay of paternalism is a sign of society's growth towards maturity. It is the child in each of us that demands the security which a father authority gives. Only an adult can do without this authority and certainty and live in a free democratic group. Guilt is the feeling which results from a misdemeanour towards a superior authoritarian figure. It has an element of fear about it and is often engendered by anxiety at being found out rather than by the crime itself. Guilt is not a feeling towards the victim of the crime or misdemeanour, but towards the power who may ultimately punish one, and to whom one owes expiation. Shame, however, does not spring from fear of retribution at the hands of a father, but from the adult's ability to identify himself with the victim of the crime. Thus whereas guilt is felt towards a superior figure with power to punish, shame is felt towards an equal. As children demand authority so does society in its infant stages, as an adolescent begins to resent authority and "being pushed around," so does society in the adolescent stage. We believe that it has now reached the stage of wishing to throw off its authoritarian rulers. The adult society does not need authority, but can rule itself, if it can make the necessary effort. Adolescence can be a difficult and unruly period in the development of an individual. It is also a critical one by which the individual may pass on to adulthood

and maturity, or abandon the struggle and sink back into a "second childhood." We believe that society has reached adolescence, and that its present disorders if rightly understood, are the difficulties of adolescence, through which it must pass if it is to mature.

The first portion of *The Fraternal Society* deals with the power-structured thinking of the mainstream of European history, from the days of Constantine to the time of Hitler and Stalin. But it is possible to view the recurrent and inevitable failures of paternalism as simply "scourges of adolescence" in the evolution of human relationships. The second half of the book portrays various establishments of groups of individuals, within the larger context, which point the way to a truer human fulfillment. We are here reminded of remarks prefacing Arthur Morgan's historical account of the utopian ideal (*Nowhere Was Somewhere*, Chapel Hill, 1946). Commenting on the psychological significance of Utopia, Dr. Morgan wrote:

Only a Utopia! How often have pictures of a possible government and society been dismissed with those words! Yet, if we could follow the threads of influence of the world's great utopias as they have entered into the fabric of government and public policy, we should come to have a high regard for the influence of these designs of a good society which have appeared so persistently through the ages.

"Human nature" has not the rigidly fixed character that commonly has been assumed. Rather, it has an almost unhampered teachableness, ready to learn and to adopt any pattern, whether good, bad, or indifferent, that is most effectively presented to it. The limitation is not with human nature.

We find a constant interaction between the ideas and dreams of men, and their actual achievements. Utopian dreams have vastly influenced practical plans for government, while the best that men have done in government and society has entered into the making of utopias.

If the deeply-implanted paternalistic syndrome is to be ultimately eliminated by counter-action, there must be, of course, not only utopian enthusiasm but foci for ever-expanding methods of re-educating the mass psyche. The

Hausers endeavor to show that paternalism is inevitably related to violence, and they recognize that a willingness to externalize unresolved personal and national problems in armed conflict cannot be corrected by emotional aversion to warfare:

The problem of peace must be humanized so that it is brought within the orbit of every man and woman, each of whom would be helped to find something immediate which they can tackle in their own situation. We do not believe it is enough to aim for technical disarmament alone. Unless we are attempting to deal with the roots of violence any work done may be ultimately useless. War is simply the greatest expression of a general condition of social inadequacy; growth towards social identification on all levels is the only sure and realistic way of attacking violence from the root upwards.

Social inadequacy shows itself in the cruelty of organised violence, just as it does in the petty misery caused by the constant daily neglect of individuals. Only by the development of greater social understanding by constantly stimulating people to identify themselves with one another at all levels, personal and communal, national and international, and activating groups so that they will endeavour to dispel social ignorance wherever they find it, can progress be made.

Closely related is a discussion of "psychological disarmament" which is certainly more basic than *technical* disarmament. For instance: "Even if actual stocks of nuclear weapons were destroyed, these weapons could be produced again very quickly; to disarm without getting rid of anxiety may simply lead to more tension than ever." So the problems of crime and punishment, the problems incident to competitive communism or capitalism, must indeed be grasped "holistically." *The Fraternal Society* reports on the methods employed by a hundred or so group centers working for the things that make for peace by generalizing on both current situations and the vision needed to improve them:

Ordinary people feel, rightly or wrongly, that there is little they can do concerning technical disarmament since it rests entirely in the hands of statesmen, military leaders and scientists. But once they have become aware of the process of

psychological disarmament as something for which every citizen could be personally responsible, they will be willing to work together to achieve it, combining theoretical research with practical action on a national and international scale.

This is working to change the "social climate." Every evil and brutality adds to the psychological "fall-out"; everything which exacerbates tensions should be deliberately countered. Environmental influences, propaganda, those things which in our society induce attitudes of violence, need to be dealt with to make the social climate more hopeful.



## COMMENTARY

### THE ESTRANGEMENT OF LITERATURE

ANOTHER portion of Lionel Trilling's *Encounter* discussion of the teaching of literature (see lead article) deserves attention. Speaking of the literary preoccupation with "alienation," Mr. Trilling notes that Saul Bellow, in an acceptance speech for an award to his latest novel, *Herzog*, questioned the tendency to measure the excellence of a writer by the extent of his own alienation.

Mr. Bellow [says Mr. Trilling] dissociated himself from the company of those writers who accept the belief that modern society is frightful, brutal, hostile to whatever is pure in the human spirit, a waste land and a horror." He did not quite say that this view of the modern condition is false, only that "it is one of the traditions on which literature has lived uncritically." . . . Mr. Bellow went on to say that the modern novel is losing its force, that it is on the point of becoming "truly irrelevant" and will indeed become so unless the novelists begin to *think* and "make a clear estimate of our situation."

According to Bellow, the critics have a part in this "trivialization of its own existence that literature has brought about." His speech has this statement in it:

. . . The critics must share the blame. They too have failed to describe the situation. Literature has for several generations been its own source, its own province, has lived upon its own traditions, and accepted a romantic separation or estrangement from the common world. This estrangement, though it has produced some masterpieces, has by now enfeebled literature.

Mr. Trilling turns this point into a comment on the *teaching* of literature. The English teacher, he suggests, devotes so much energy to getting his students to accept and understand a work of modern literature, that he may lack the heart to "put it to the question." And, pressing the criticism of Saul Bellow, he observes:

The theory of literary education as it was first formulated conceived of literature as a means of carrying the self beyond the culture, as inducing or allowing the self to detach itself from its bondage to

the Idols of the Marketplace, the Tribe the Theatre, and even of the Cave.

Perhaps literature was once able to do this, or something near enough to it to satisfy the theory. But now we must ask whether, in its new circumstances of public acceptance, the old intention is not inverted, and whether literature does not help to set up the old idols in new forms of its own invention.

# CHILDREN

## ... and Ourselves

### PROPOSAL FOR "JUNIOR HIGH" RE-ORIENTATION

A PAPER by Michigan State University's professor of education, Elizabeth M. Drews, seems to us the highlight of an Ohio conference on the problems of junior high school "guidance." Dr. Drews explains why research begun five years ago in Michigan, under an NDEA Grant, to outline a program for "career training," has culminated in a scrapping of conventional notions of how such work should proceed. The results, and the reasons for the gradual development of an entirely new approach, appear now in a 300-page report under what Dr. Drews calls "the improbable title" of *The Creative Intellectual Style in Gifted Adolescents: Being and Becoming: A Cosmic Approach to Counseling and Curriculum*. The expectation of "raised eyebrows," so far as the authorities who issued the original NDEA Grant are concerned, is likely to have been fulfilled. "Cosmic" indeed!

"Being and Becoming" in the title indicate that the authors have not been able to withstand the influence of such third force psychologists as Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. This trend of thinking in education is given some interesting reference points by Dr. Drews by reference to a well-known Rockefeller Report, *The Pursuit of Excellence, Education and the Future of America*, which prophesied that the "array" of careers open to young people by 1969 could not possibly be anticipated several years ahead, when junior high students would be finishing their courses at city colleges or universities. Moreover, such works as James Coleman's *The Adolescent Society*, Phillip Jacob's *Changing Values in College*, and Jules Henry's *Culture Against Man*, describe—sometimes in shocking detail—the "materialistic" and "hedonistic" attitudes of youths who see no point in career training or learning of any other kind. Dr. Drews and her associates, however, felt that it was high time to look at the other side of the coin—at the promisingly independent pre-college students who are "striving to develop critical thinking and open-

mindedness, creative concerns and interests in the broader society." Dr. Drews continues:

Fortunately, in our studies in the last five or six years, we have been able to find some personality scales that have allowed us to look at and to measure such attitudes as motivation to learn, openness to psychological growth and social concern. It is only recently that personality theorists have made extensive efforts to measure psychological health or positive mental health.

So the Drews group found itself involved in "efforts to understand the effective personality—self actualization, as Dr. Maslow calls it." At this juncture, Dr. Drews remarks:

Just a year ago the writer, Samuel Grafton, in a similar survey reported that he had interviewed a book seller in Chicago and found that teen-agers were buying books on psychology and philosophy and existentialism. There was a great interest in mysticism. He went to a youth meeting in a New York suburb and found that many students said they would take jobs paying one-third less salary if they could feel useful in what they were doing. Many of them wanted to be teachers and counselors. Almost all wanted their jobs to be emotionally satisfying. Our own observations, over a long period of time, agreed. Not only was the ninth grade too early to make a firm career decision if you were going to college, but these students wanted to discuss philosophy—their destinies—as it were.

From many sources we got the idea that our above average students wanted philosophy seminars. On our survey, over half of them said that this was what they wanted the schools to offer. They wanted to talk about such things as what is life all about, what kind of a world are we living in and how can we live better lives in it. In addition they wanted opportunities for independent study and creative projects. How could we improve our critical thinking seminars so that students would be able to discuss more philosophy and make more discoveries? Could we do this in the semester when we usually taught careers?

As for the deliberately challenging use of the words, "cosmic approach," Dr. Drews explains that potentially superior youths must have every encouragement in believing that the essential orientations of their lives to come must be self-discovered—that they need not rely upon the

conventional formulations of any ideology, science or religion. How to get beyond classifications of people, subjects, and careers? By any means available for demonstrating that there is only one ultimate "career," that of self-actualization in the Maslow sense. The fostering of this point of view, in turn, depends on recognition that a "search for meaning" should be continual, with no comfortable termination-point of thought accepted as an adequate goal. Dr. Drews continues:

How does anyone make sense out of his world? Perhaps no man is master of his time. Some of you may have read Robert White's book, *Lives in Progress*, and appreciate his point of view. He feels there is a need for young people to see healthy human development, to know that there are competent adults who make wise choices and have a "sense of destiny." In contrast, there are other people who think they are victims, that life is a plot, and that there is nothing they can do that will make a difference in the whole course of their lives.

Charlotte Buchler, who has written extensively on total life style, says that there are some people who lead lives of creative expansion and they become more original and more creative the longer that they live. There are others, the fatalists, who think that there is not a chance that they could steer the course of their own lives. They live as victims, buffeted by outside forces. It seemed clear to us which course was desirable. We agreed with the psychologists who feel autonomy and a sense of personal potency are closely related to psychological health. It is the sort of thing that Frank Barron discusses in his new book, *Creativity and Psychological Health*. To achieve this feeling of well-being, a sense of purpose, time perspective and a vision of the future are necessary. Students must have an idea of what they can become and how they might proceed. We introduced the idea of the self-fulfilling prophecy. We said that the kind of things that you do in the world and the kind of choices that you make do make a very great difference in your life. We communicated our translation of excellence to the students, saying, in effect, "Everyone should develop as fully as possible his intellectual potential his creative potential and his social conscience." We presented C. P. Snow's statement that for the first time in the history of man there is a great concern for human kindness. Today people try to help the mentally retarded, the physically disabled and the disturbed. Perhaps you

think we over-institutionalize human kindness, but at least we are concerned.

We also quoted Arnold Toynbee, the historian, who isn't exactly known for his optimistic views of the world, from a statement he recently made in a Peace Corps publication to the effect that if we survive the Twentieth Century it will be known as the Age of Altruism. To round out the presentation we used a quotation from Joe Shoeben, the psychologist at Columbia University, that at last it's respectable to be responsible. One of our students, definitely not a square one, rose to the challenge saying, "I catch on. It's cool to care." Well, I'm not saying they all caught on or that they all cared, but many began to sort out their beliefs. As a result of these efforts to understand, we have forty hours of tape recorded class sessions that we have studied for two years. Beyond this we have 127 textbooks which we have attempted to analyze, one for each student in our experiment.

Dr. Drews concludes:

A basic point of the project was that we wanted to give the students the idea that they had a long way to go but that a shining future of "being and becoming" was possible if they could conjure up the right dreams. Dr. Maslow helped us to refine our ideas of "being and becoming." You must read his book, *Toward a Psychology of Being*. We have used "being" in the sense of being fully open to the world around you, being receptive to everything in it, and being aware.

This relates to self-discovery. Finding an identity, you know, isn't just discovering who you are. This can be dangerous because you might confirm yourself that way. It is becoming all you can be by trying to see what your potentialities are, and moving in that direction rather than just standing still.

At the end of the program and after ten years of effort we finally obtained the kind of results we had been working for so long. Students seemed to have changed attitudes and outlooks to the point that we could say they were more open to growth, i.e., more creative, and more interested in ideas. There were many who adopted what we have called the creative intellectual style.

A copy of this discussion may be obtained from the Division of Guidance and Testing, Ohio Department of Education, published as "The Junior High School Guidance Program Meets the Challenge."

## *FRONTIERS*

### What Kind of Education?

[This article is made from a portion of an address by W. H. Ferry, of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, Santa Barbara, Calif., before the California Junior College Association, last May.]

THE world to come will first of all be a warless world or no world at all. There will be limited conflict, and firearms, and blood and carnage and unhumanity. But it will be a world in which the threat of international war will either gradually subside because of the meaninglessness of the threat, or one in which the final fireworks will go off with a roar. My associate Walter Millis thinks the former is likely, I think the latter is where we are heading. The problem of relative velocities is ferocious in this context. War technology, already exquisitely inhumane beyond the dreams of history's bloodiest barbarians, can readily be expanded into outer space. The *Wall Street Journal* recently carried an amazing catalogue of the ways we Americans now know how to kill, burn, maim, puncture, hypnotize, infect, hallucinate, fry, shred, and blind our enemies. It shows how ingenious and demoralized we are. There is no comparable catalogue of advances in statecraft, wisdom, diplomacy, compassion, or other healing arts. Perhaps this has something to do with the vast attention and cash we devote to the killing arts.

Next year we are going to buy 8 billion dollars worth of weapons to add to the arsenal of over-kill. We are going to spend another 7 billions on research into new weapons systems. Meanwhile we will spend less than 100 million on all non-military efforts at peace put together—the UN, the Disarmament Agency and the few others. Perhaps this also indicates some of the directions that the new education must take.

The "ultimate" quality in the new arms, in any event, was what we had in mind when we wrote briefly of the weaponry revolution in the Triple Revolution. We have developed, in Father Daniel

Berrigan's words, "the simple power to end man, to end history, to bring down the world." But we have developed no capacity in our political institutions surely to avert such results, so we must rely mainly on the great arms themselves for the fragile peace that trembles with each fresh confrontation. This development in turn is closely related to the human rights revolution, the second of the major developments described in the Triple Revolution. I do not mean in this context primarily the civil rights struggle in the United States. I mean mainly the connection between great weaponry and great injustices around the world.

In the absence of a formula for equalizing matters between the rich and poor parts of the globe, tensions between them will continue to increase. The line between the two is mainly a color line, with the white team possessing self-esteem, a horror of disorder, great wealth and the determination to hang on to and enlarge it; and the dark team possessing great numbers, leaping ambitions, and a more and more sophisticated capacity for revolution.

It is hard for me to see how the white side can prevail for very long. Fortified by the rich broth of white superiority, the white team looks on the situation as a continuing race, with the light side always comfortably outstripping the dark. This notion was once known as manifest destiny, that heady compound of missionary Christianity, democratic institutions, and good luck, which white Westerners came to see as an eternal standard that all others should, as a matter of course, be content to emulate. And because whites bear the standard, they would as a matter of course always be in charge. But the situation is a good deal more shaky. Our claim of superiority is, alas, coming to rest far more in our armaments than on our wisdom, as we see in Viet Nam and now in the Dominican Republic. And other nations have their own claims upon history and the future.

It is difficult to believe that we are entitled to continue our leadership, as we call it, in those lands. We have been so vulcanized with self-righteousness as to fail to see our colonialism for what it is, the systematic exploitation of hot lands and black people. It is argued that great power confers great responsibility, and so it does. But it is not the responsibility to kill and burn, it is the responsibility to lead with reason and compassion.

Stated another way, we are not worthy, on the record, to continue the dominant role we have been playing in these hungry, confused areas.

Apart from these sad and humiliating matters, consider the other issues raised by the new international society. There can be no doubt, it seems to me, that we are moving irrevocably into some kind of world organization. Keeping the peace will be only one of its objects, though one formidably complicated by disarmament, inspection and the necessity for yet undreamed-of ways of preventing national delinquency. At this point we say farewell to sovereignty, at least as we have understood it up to this point. The practical necessities of interdependence will overwhelm the old-time religion of nationalism. How will the world govern itself? On what constitutional principles? One man, one vote is not a very pleasing prospect for the white and outnumbered West. What is an equally just formula?

Compulsory adjudication, mediation, negotiation will have to replace the daggers-point diplomacy now being practiced in Viet Nam, Berlin, and the other perilous fuse-points for the next and last world war. These situations are daily reminders that no international jurisprudence has been evolved, no philosophy of law for an interdependent globe.

There will have to be international economic planning. The paradox of the rich getting richer while the poor get poorer will not be tolerated forever. This paradox is at the heart of the popular revolutions already in motion or visibly fermenting, in Asia, Africa, South America. The

idea that the world's wealth is somehow to be disposed of by the grace of the Caucasian part of the globe will have to be discarded. New ways of apportioning resources will have to be devised.

The world, in short, is becoming a community before our eyes, a single polls. Plato said that virtue was comprised of four qualities: justice, courage, temperance, and wisdom. The quest will be for an international community ruled by these qualities, as it is the quest of the United States, however inadequately carried out in practice. I know that these words have a soft-center fudgy unreality about them. But that is just the problem; for if these are not the principles of a workable global polls, what are?

We have got to restore the essential old ideas. We cannot do without them. The ideas have not lost their utility. They have just gone a bit out of style. In a brusque, pragmatic time we are a little ashamed of the big general notions that have been guiding men throughout history. But as Nicholas Mosley observes, "We cannot go on forever not being able to say anything about love, hope, truth, freedom, except in terms that we find embarrassing. We have got to say something to our children."\*

Some of the deep implications of the weaponry and human rights revolution for self government reside here, in the question, *What kind of education will prepare a self-governing citizenry to deal with these ideas and with the life-and-death issues?*

W. H. FERRY

Santa Barbara, Calif.

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\* Quoted in *The Listener*, March 18, 1965.