

WHY MEN STRIKE

HAVING read "Men without Land" in MANAS for May 12—an article dealing with California agriculture and in particular with the strike of the farm workers of the Di Giorgio Farms in the San Joaquin Valley—a subscriber comments wonderingly on the fact that the strike broke out against an employer with a better record than most of the other large California growers. This question is worth examination, and provides occasion, also, for mention of other matters bearing on the problem of agricultural labor.

First, then, regarding the reason for the strike against Di Giorgio: While we have no authority to speak for the strikers nor for the Farm Labor union, certain facts of social history and of the technique of labor organization may be pointed out. It is well known that an utterly depressed population seldom revolts or resorts to some form of social action. They have neither the physical nor moral energy needed for the struggle. The Di Giorgio workers, however, had attained a certain permanence of livelihood and sense of security. Most of them had year-round jobs. Several of the strikers are not ragged, desperate people like some of the characters in Mr. Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*. They possess the conscious dignity of people who have—or had—steady jobs. By the fall of 1947, when the strike began, they had gained strength, the individual stamina and group solidarity to make a stand on certain issues of working conditions. The strikers want, for example, some recognition of their right to be paid, when they report for work early in the morning, for the hours they stand around waiting to be assigned to their duties. There are times when they may be given no work at all, but if they do not respond to the call in the morning, they may never be hired again. They want juster treatment during the busy season, when, after working until late on a Saturday night (overtime rates are not the rule in California agriculture, nor

at Di Giorgio's), they may be told to report for work early Sunday morning, with the implied threat of no more work if they do not arrive.

This is not so much a question of the emergency character of harvest-time, but of the methods used to assure an adequate labor-force—the method of fear-inspired coercion. Mr. Di Giorgio's various philanthropies fade into dim abstractions for people whose daily contacts with foremen amount to attacks on their personal dignity and self-respect. A strike against a "good" employer, when the strike is just, is almost always a protest against the paternalism implicit in company policies. It is hard for many employers to understand this, especially for those who fancy themselves as benefactors of their workmen and contributors to the welfare of the community. Good working conditions are not "privileges" to be allowed or withheld by employers, but rights which *belong* to workers as part of their dignity as human beings. The denial of those rights generates the mood which makes a strike seem more desirable than anything else. One picket was more aroused in feeling by his memory of working in the fields without cool water than by any other inequity. "They put a milk can out there, full of water," he said, "and by noon it's almost boiling." Some other arrangement was repeatedly requested, but consistently refused by the Farm management. "You drink that stuff," the picket said, "and you swell up like a toad." (Finally in some instances, the workers purchased ice themselves and put it in the cans to cool the water. The ice was sold to them, incidentally, by the Di Giorgio Farms from a large supply kept on hand to ice shipments of fruit in refrigerator cars.)

Then, from the point of view of a union, it is always easier to organize the workers of a large company, where the relationship between workers and employers is impersonal and company policies

are embodied in "rules" administered by men without imagination. When one big company is organized, the others often follow without much resistance. A victory for the Farm Labor Union at Di Giorgio could mean the beginning of the successful organization of farm labor throughout the Central Valley. The Farm Labor Union, however, did not set out to "engineer" a strike at the Di Giorgio Farms. The Union had established a local in Arvin and was gaining members throughout the area. In time, it became evident that the members were preponderantly Di Giorgio workers and that they wanted to strike for better working conditions and for union recognition to assure those conditions.

One other fact should be noted. Field workers in agriculture are without the protection of the National Labor Relations Act. (Under certain specified conditions, shed workers, such as packers, have the security provided by law, but the man or the woman who labors out in the sun is only a "farm worker" to whom the old theory that farm labor is different from industrial labor is made to apply.)

We have not the space, here, to examine or to evaluate the ideas and ideals of the labor movement. It is a fact that honest and fair employers are frequently harassed and discouraged by the tradition, built up over a century, that they are the enemies of the men who work for them; or, at least, that they belong to the "class" that has proved itself to be the exploiter of labor. But it is also fact, as any impartial study of the labor movement will show, that labor has had good historical grounds for distrusting many if not most employers. The result of both these facts has been the accumulation of stereotyped and progressively institutionalized partisanship on both sides, until, finally, by the common acceptance of a conflict psychology, the ethical problems of labor-employer relationships have become enormously complicated. Both sides have developed strategy and method—"techniques" of meeting their problems; and as in politics,

international affairs, or in any situation in which habitual conflict between large groups plays a part, the technical means used to gain ends are often amoral and even violent and destructive. When century-old institutionalized attitudes are opposed to one another, there is no simple ethical analysis, no plain side-taking possible, no easy way out. Generalizations become dangerous, and when made with emotionalism, they produce vicious consequences.

For example, on the evening of May 18, in a small house near Arvin, California—not far from the Di Giorgio Farms—a committee of several of the strikers sat discussing their problems. A car drew up outside and five shots were fired. One bullet entered the face and came out the ear of James Price, chairman of the Strike Committee of the workers from Di Giorgio. Other bullets, it is said, were intended for Hank Hasiwar, West Coast representative of the National Farm Labor Union, but Price was the only one hit. Price was taken to the hospital in serious condition. After two or three weeks, he was said to be out of danger. Meanwhile Governor Warren demanded a determined search for the attackers and the American Federation of Labor offered a substantial reward for information that would lead to some arrests. As yet, no success in finding the assailants has been announced by the authorities.

It is impossible to say who fired those shots, or why, but the attack was obviously a result of antipathies growing out of the strike. The event is of a piece with the long record of violence in California agriculture labor relations. It seems just to say that the objectives of the Farm Labor Union represents a primitive level of elementary decency, such as were being contended for by other union organizations in other fields many years ago, and that in this case, as in so many others, the violence and shooting simply reflect the arrogant and vindictive attitudes with which ladles agricultural workers are regarded by their employers.

The problem of farm labor in California leads naturally to larger considerations of basic

economic and political philosophy. We shall return to these questions from time to time in MANAS, in the attempt to illustrate the difficulties in any short-term solution of the problem, and also, to show how superficial any snap or abstract judgment is bound to be. Meanwhile, as reading on the subject, we suggest Walter R. Goldschmidt's book, *As You Sow*, for a discussion of the sociological aspects of the present scheme of land ownership in California agriculture. Dr. Goldschmidt is a professor of anthropology and sociology at the University of California in Los Angeles. Then, for a forceful presentation of the viewpoint of the large farmers, there is Senator Sheridan Downey's *They Would Rule the Valley*, a volume which contains much valuable information, although its purpose is to discredit and ridicule the United States Reclamation Bureau's attempt to apply the 160-acre limitation clause of the Reclamation Act of 1902 to the beneficiaries of the vast irrigation system that will result from the completion of the Central Valley Project. Senator Downey explores what he believes to be the injustice and folly of seeking to "divide up" large California farms.

At this point, we can only say that no "formula" of either land ownership, government control or labor relations seems at all adequate to deal with the far-reaching questions raised by a study of Central Valley agriculture. Whether the farms are large or small, the need for extra labor at harvest-time will remain for most specialty crops raised in quantity, and successful farming in California seems destined to remain specialty farming. Conceivably, large holdings might be farmed cooperatively by a number of people, and the size of the unit made to vary with local conditions. It is worth noting the Di Giorgio has come closest to solving the problem of providing his workers with employment the year round. This was accomplished by a careful selection of early and late crops which are spaced to spread the harvest over a period of about ten months. The same for small land-owners to work out such arrangements together would seem to involve an

extraordinary amount of cooperation and practical expertness in farming ability.

However, there are one or two areas in California where socially-minded individuals have begun to farm together on a small scale in the attempt to build a constructive community life. We shall endeavor to make a report on such enterprises at some future time.

Letter from **FRANCE**

A COLLEGE TOWN.—The college and town have a middle-class point of view. There are some local communists, including one of the most religious persons I have ever met. He joined the party for its social message and still hopes it can be carried out. But though refugees and others attend the school on scholarships, the bulk are—obviously—from middle- and upper-class families. A spirit of camaraderie pervades the place, however, and class distinctions are doubtless as nearly non-existent here as anywhere in France. For class-consciousness in Europe is traditional; the boss's son becomes the boss, and social position is hereditary as well as economic.

Recently a group of older students—16 to 20 years old—met to discuss minority problems in America. After America's lack of democracy was deplored, it was brought out that neither France nor any other country is perfect in social attitudes—"perfect" as regards the ideals of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*. France has its social classes, its colonies, and its mistrust of other national groups (Spanish refugees, for example, have been exploited economically ever since they came here to escape France; an Arab living almost in the shadow of a sanitarium may die of tuberculosis because so many non-aliens await entrance; and anti-semitic voices are far from silent).

As to student attitudes, here are some extracts from papers written in an English composition class. They reflect the typical views of middle-class French youth:

It will seem to you when you are in France, all things are like before the war, but you will be undeceived. Although we are better and better every day, nothing is yet perfect. But I understand this first impression; in shops there are all things which you want, except a few goods which are still deficient like soap, sugar, rubber, leather. But what you see in shop-fronts is very dear Our labour brings us in a livelihood and we can also enjoy little pleasures but life is not easy; and if you do not save, you are soon in want of money

* * *

Dear friend, if I had to give you a counsel, it would be preferable for you to stay in your so admired country. If I had the possibility to cross the ocean I should not hesitate an instant. That doesn't mean that I dislike living in France . . . the situation in this before so pretty a

country is still bad. The people who have no an important employment are poor, very poor. Per contra, the rich, have a good life. People of the town are generally richer than people of the village, but in town the people are badly nourished . . . I think that after this brief description you can make your own idea. Reflect well!

* * *

If you come to France don't take the train and don't travel across the country from one town to another Take your bag on your back, a good pair of shoes, a strong stick and go across fields and woods; don't follow any road and run away far from noisy cities. You will find all the enjoyments are hidden in this country. You will be lodged by good old farmers and you will sleep in fragrant hay. Sometimes you'll arrive in a little village with only a few houses grouped around a church and where upright people live. They still represent old France sung by the poets; it is the earthly paradise.

Oh, surely you will find neither movies nor orchestra but you will hear the powerful symphony of Nature. You will have not exquisite dishes to eat, but you'll taste the bread gained by the perspiration of the brow. . . . The France that you will see is not the France of the guides. We have restrictions also and we don't eat what we want. Many towns are half destroyed. But in spite of this France is still beautiful country

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In France, since the war, the revictualling is a great problem to resolve. The parents are running all the day to find something to eat. We cannot easily have wool to knit or stuff to sew clothes for the children. Mother looks, seeks, and sometimes finds nothing. She has lost all hope in these moments. Without this exists also the question of money. Many people are poor in France and can buy nothing. . . . But forgetting these material things, the life in France is full of pleasures. . . . In summer we go on picnics and so we can breathe all day long the good air. The weather is not warlike and the summer is generally long and warm. . . . There is everywhere the sea or river or a spring, or a forest, or flowers or fruits. . . . and in the evening we can go to the theater or to the cinema. If it were not for the political and economic life, it would be very interesting to live in France.

FRENCH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

SOUTH AFRICAN STORY

ONLY a few of our readers, perhaps, will have noticed the outcome of the recent elections in South Africa, and fewer still have realized its implications for the native inhabitants of that country, who outnumber the ruling white by four to one. The new Prime Minister, Dr. Daniel Francois Malan, defeated Jan Christian Smuts on a "white supremacy" program, and liberal observers anticipate that the new government will institute a series of constitutional measures imposing further discriminations against the native population. The *Manchester Guardian* attributes the fall of the Smuts government to—

A change from hostility to fear on the Smuts-Hofmeyr progressive colour policy, which is too conservative for the United Nations and world opinion and too advanced for the mass of rural opinion in South Africa. This is the main cause of the United [Smuts'] Party's defeat.

The familiar criticism of General Smuts has been that while he has been known to the outside world as a liberal and humanitarian statesman, at home in South Africa his policy has been reactionary and oppressive to the native Africans. But now we find that even the moderate reforms attempted by Smuts are regarded as too "radical" by the whites of South Africa, and that he has been replaced by a man who may take steps to slow down the tempo of native education and even eliminate native representation in the Assembly.

How closely the policies of the white minority in South Africa parallel the history of the American South may be discovered by reading *African Journey* by Mrs. Paul Robeson. The occasion for Mrs. Robeson's visit to South Africa and the writing of her book was a course in anthropology she was taking in London. Having a natural sympathy for African peoples, Mrs. Robeson soon tired of the refrain of her professors that she couldn't possibly understand the problems of colonial administration in South Africa because

she had never been there. Accordingly, she went to South Africa to see for herself, and *African Journey* was the result. The book is delightful, as a result of Mrs. Robeson's fine sense of proportion and capacity to reproduce the humor implicit in many of her experiences; and it is appalling in the undoubted facts of injustice and suffering which it reports. "I felt at home," Mrs. Robeson said. "It was just like the deep South." No brief summary can in any way communicate the tragic struggle for economic and social survival of the black peoples of South Africa. The story is unbelievable unless read in its entirety. It should be added that Mrs. Robeson went inland to visit and live with tribes in circumstances more or less free of white influence. To read of the efforts of black patriots to provide the beginnings of education for their countrymen, as described by Mrs. Robeson, is to thrill to an account of devotion and sacrifice that seems almost without equal in the twentieth century.

Another unusual book about South Africa, appropriately published in the year of the defeat of the Smuts government, is Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* (Scribner's, 1948). This book, we suppose, is "fiction," and yet it seems to contain more social truth and vision than a score of texts on sociology. Somewhat approaching it in quality is Howard Fast's *Freedom Road*, dealing with the tragedy of the American Negroes at a time soon after the Civil War, but Mr. Paton's story of an old African preacher seems more finely drawn and more deeply rooted in understanding. It is, fundamentally, a study of the interrelation between the white and black cultures—the interpretation of the *mores* of the European city of Johannesburg and the *mores* of the African *kraal*. The white invaders and their civilization have "broken" the tribal pattern of African life and have refused the natives any real participation in the life of the European community. The result has been degradation compounded with tragedy for the blacks, and increasing brutalization for the whites.

And yet, there is a solution. *Cry, the Beloved Country*, tells of the union of two human hearts, two bereaved old men, one white, one black, both of them stricken by the social clash of the two races, and both of them finding deep compassion and patience in their sorrow. Few books written today are capable of evoking and absorbing the moral feelings of the reader as this one. We should like to think that *Cry, the Beloved Country* marks the beginning of a new sort of literature for the West. We ask, then, that MANAS readers obtain and read this book, for it represents an appeal to the heart and mind that should be carried forward and spread by all those who are truly concerned with the cause of human brotherhood.

BOOK-OF-THE-MONTH

Due to a late publication date, our commentary on the Book-of-the-Month Club's June selection has been unavoidably delayed. After reading the advance notices on *The Foolish Gentlewoman* by Margery Sharp (who wrote *Cluny Brown*), we had the impression that the book would simply afford another occasion for disparaging the BoM selection. Readers of this feature may recall that we have formed a habit of doing this. Also, we have been less interested in the literary merits of any of the BoM books than in the reasons for their selection and in the philosophy of the author. However, having read *The Foolish Gentlewoman*, we are impressed with what seems a complete departure from the psychological stereotypes which are present in nine out of ten modern novels.

The book deals with the emotional problems of three extraordinarily ordinary middle-aged people. Sex never rears its box-office head. The three characters are somewhat weak, two of them are reasonably objectionable as personalities and none of them is interpreted as a character of majesty or importance. The plot revolves around an apparently illogical and feather-brained scheme

on the part of the "foolish gentlewoman" to redress a wrong she had committed many years earlier, against a girl of her acquaintance. She now feels that her action may have so altered the course of her acquaintance's life from pleasant to unpleasant that nothing less than a donation of her complete fortune will be adequate way of doing her part in making things up. Since the object of this belated attempt has become a most unlikeable personality and since the foolish gentlewoman's contemplated action is so unlike what is expected in our society, all of her friends offer copious arguments against the completion of the scheme. But she is adamant. And the course of the story indicates that her sincerity of purpose, and her integrity, bring a kind of meaning and fruition otherwise impossible to either the donor or the recipient.

The most interesting part is the gradual transformation of the deceitful and mean old maid (the recipient) into a reasonably normal human being. Somehow, Miss Sharp's method of developing this theme leads the reader to wonder if just such transformations might not occur in the lives of some other people *he* doesn't like. Tilly Cuff, perhaps like one's mother-in-law or one's wife's second cousin, does not become a noble or great person, but she does get to be someone able to deal fairly with other human beings because one human being has shown a willingness to deal fairly with her.

This is not a great book, nor has it pretense to greatness, but it does help us to understand some of the hidden, psychological complexes which make people impatient.

COMMENTARY
MR. JEFFERSON'S EXAMPLE

RECALLING statements that Thomas Jefferson's agrarianism was not simply a devotion to the dirt farmer, but rather a sociologic apprehension of the evils of industrialization and urbanization, we picked up Albert Jay Nock's life of Jefferson to locate some thoughtful expression that might be appropriately considered in connection with the problems of California agriculture. We had in mind Walter Goldschmidt's comparison of the social and economic life of two California towns, Dinuba and Arvin, Dinuba being a community of medium-size owner-operated farms, and Arvin a town that developed in the surroundings of great industrialized agricultural enterprises such as Di Giorgio Farms. Mr. Jefferson, we thought, might have expressed ideas that are pertinent to this comparison.

But instead, we were attracted to Mr. Nock's lucid account of Mr. Jefferson's behavior during and election year. In 1804, we are informed, the President "remained as usual inactive in his own behalf, and silent under worse partisan defamation, if any could be worse, that was visited on him in 1800." Further, he insisted upon the complete political neutrality of all office-holders. A month before election, he wrote to Albert Gallatin that "the officers of the Federal Government are meddling too much with the public elections."

Unlike some other Presidents, Jefferson served his country by halving the number of Federal offices during his first term. The remaining resources of patronage were never used, except in a single instance, for partisan purposes. Although well aware of the possibilities of patronage for building a political machine, Jefferson deliberately avoided this course. "The elective principle becomes nothing," he said, "if it may be smothered by the enormous patronage of the General Government." During his second term, when admirers in Boston wanted to make a

holiday of his birthday, he refused to reveal the date. He also declined to make personal appearances, saying, "I had rather acquire silent good will by a faithful discharge of my duties than owe expressions of it to my putting myself in the way of receiving them."

Despite these curious methods of endearing himself to the public, Mr. Jefferson carried every State but two in 1804. This being also an election year, we are watching for a candidate—Democrat or Republican—who will follow his example. We want to vote for the winning man.

CHILDREN AND OURSELVES

"Daddy, why is Communism bad?"

"Well, son, under Communism people don't have free time to do what they want to do."

"You mean they don't have Saturday afternoon like from one-thirty when you get home?"

"Well—yes. But you see the main thing is that a bunch of cruel people tell everybody else what to do and don't even let anyone own anything. Now in Russia we wouldn't really own our house because the government might decide to take it away."

"You mean like Freddie's house they moved to build a new speedway? But Daddy, when we went by the Janss Investment Co. you said they were the people who owned our house."

"Well that's different, son. I borrowed the money for the house from Mr. Janss and when I pay it all back to him no one can take the house away."

"Daddy, it was such a long time ago that you said Mr. Janss owned the house. Why haven't you paid him back?"

"Well, son, you see, when you borrow money you have to pay back more than you borrowed and that makes it take longer, but the *real* difference between America and Russia is that the Russians just go and capture other countries and kill a lot of people."

"But Daddy, didn't you kill a lot of people in Germany?"

"Well, I couldn't possibly have killed more than two or three and I didn't like to do it."

"Why did you, then?"

"Well, when there is a war you have to fight it, son."

"Daddy, didn't the Indians own this country before we came here and didn't we kill them and take it away from them?"

"The Indians really weren't using this country, son. They probably wouldn't ever have developed it and built all the fine cities and had automobiles and trains."

"But Daddy, maybe the Russians think they can develop the countries they take better than the people who are there. In our history it says that a lot of states belonged to Mexico before we had a war and took it away from them and the teacher said we also took the Philippines away from somebody, I forgot who. It doesn't sound to me as if we have been so good about those things, either."

"Son, when you are older and can understand more you will see how it makes all the difference in the world to be free to have money of your own and property of your own and that some people have a better right to property than other people because they work harder and are more *friendly* to others."

"But Daddy, how can you be friendly to people and then kill them or take land away from them?"

"We are Christians, son, and we only do things to other people when they deserve it. We always try to be just. Of course, we may make a few mistakes but we always *try* to be fair."

"Daddy, why did we help Russia fight against the Germans?"

"Russia was behaving better then, son."

"Daddy, when I grow up and have to go to war how can I really tell when Russia is behaving bad or good?"

"Well, son, that's what we have a government for—to decide these things and tell us what to do."

"But can't I make up my own mind?"

"You can if you are president. Every American boy has a chance to grow up to be president."

"But Daddy, by the time I got to be president I would be too old to fight against Russia anyway and it wouldn't do any good to be able to make up my own mind then. Daddy, there is a Negro boy at our school who says he likes Russia because being a Negro is much easier there. Is that true? He says that in the South Negro people have to go to different schools and live in different places and ride on different streetcars and don't get paid as much as white people."

"Well, son, that is mostly Russian propaganda, the way he makes it sound. Of course, it is true that Negro people aren't really as smart as white people and so naturally they don't get paid as much money."

"But the boy at school says they do in Russia."

"Propaganda."

"Daddy, tell me more about 'Propaganda'."

"Well, son, a Government uses it to make you believe things that are not true so that you will agree to do things it wants you to do."

"Does our Government do that, too?"

"Well, ah, when you are at war I guess sometimes the Government has to make things seem a certain way a little more than they are, so the people will get mad enough to fight. But of course, in our country this is only when someone like President Roosevelt sees that we are really going to *have* to fight, sometime, to protect Free Enterprise—which means everybody having a chance to make as much money as he is smart enough to make."

"Daddy, what is money?"

"Well you dig gold out of the ground and everybody recognizes that it is valuable, but because the gold is so heavy and wears out, you give out paper money to represent what the gold

is worth and then you put away the gold in the Federal Bank and use the paper money."

"It sounds foolish to me to take a lot of time digging a lot of gold out of the ground and then hiding it somewhere else. Why do they do it that way, Daddy?"

"Son, don't bother me about questions like that. You'll learn all about it at High School and College."

"Daddy, could we live on an island all by ourselves with just a few people, so we wouldn't have to have Mr. Janss own our house and spend a lot of time digging gold out of the ground and have wars and have to kill people? I think I should like that ever so much better than living either in Russia or here. I think it would be better, too, if there weren't any money and there weren't any guns."

"Son, to tell the truth, I would like that better too."

FRONTIERS

A PSYCHIATRIC CONTRIBUTION

WHATEVER may be said in valid criticism of the anti-moralist position of modern psychiatry, it remains a fact that the observations of psychiatrists, regardless of explanatory theory or therapeutic proposals, afford unusual insights into the complexities of human nature. Some of the findings of clinical studies are so uniformly experienced as to be virtual axioms of human behavior. Take for example the psychiatric proposition that a man's idea of himself predetermines what he thinks of other people and how he behaves toward them.

In the volume quoted some weeks ago, *Conceptions of Modern Psychiatry*, by Harry Stack Sullivan, the author remarks that the impressions gained of his own value by a child are incorporated into his functioning idea of himself, or "self-dynamism."

If these [writes Dr. Sullivan] were chiefly derogatory as in the case of an unwanted child who was never loved, of a child who has fallen into the hands of foster parents who have no real interest in him as a child; as I say, if the self dynamism is made up of experience which is chiefly derogatory, then the self dynamism will itself be chiefly derogatory. It will facilitate hostile, disparaging appraisals of other people and it will entertain disparaging and hostile appraisals of itself . . . *one can find in others only that which is in the self* . . . (Our italics.)

The difference, of course, between the psychiatric idea of "self" and all metaphysical and ethical conceptions is that for the psychiatrist, the self is *only* a collection of self-"appraisals" adopted by the individual, whereas philosophical teachers and educators believing in the reality of the soul assert that the self is a genuine spiritual being with both a personal and transcendental existence and destiny. The psychiatrist is able to observe that fact that the idea of the self is all-important, but he has little of significance to say on what ideas of self-reverence and self-respect—not to mention self-knowledge—should be fostered in the child. Accordingly, while implicit in the psychiatric view is the conclusion that the individual is nothing more than a subtle complex

of psychological impressions—a kind of organic focus, that is, for psychological conditionings—the believer in the soul may take the position that the individual can find within himself the true corrective of false or derogatory judgments, and thus become increasingly free of external influences.

The soul-idea of the self, therefore, has the advantage of admitting all the facts described by the psychiatrist, and offering in addition a reliance on the inward integrity of human beings for building better lives and societies in the future. Nevertheless, the psychiatrist's judgments are of great value as practical criticism of educational method, and are also a stringent indictment of cultural and institutional patterns.

That modern psychiatry produces effective social criticism become evident in the work of Dr. Charles B. Thompson, for years the senior psychiatrist in the Psychiatric Clinic, Court of General Sessions, New York City. His paper, "A Psychiatric Study of Recidivists," which appeared in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* for November, 1937, presents an analysis of the idea of self which holds the basic cultural pattern of modern life responsible for criminal behavior. A recidivist is a "repeater" criminal, one who seems incapable of reform, and Dr. Thompson's conclusions derive from a study of 1,380 such offenders. He sets the problem with this definition:

. . . a repetition of crime proceeds from a certain automatic behavior-pattern or set-up in the individual organism which will react whenever the appropriate and familiar stimuli are encountered. This pattern is apparently not altered by imprisonment or punishment, no matter how often imposed or how long, nor do our present methods of re-education influence it. The individual seems unable to take up new ways of livelihood.

Then follows a discussion of the influences to which all members of society are more or less exposed, under which the individual gains an exaggerated sense of personal importance. From childhood, "each of us as an individual is conditioned to react with a special affective content to the stimulus word 'you' or, as he himself feels it, 'I,' and the picture or image denoted by this word comes to

have more importance than everything and everyone else in the world." At the same time, by a parallel process, the individual is made to adopt the habit of thinking and feeling in response to rigid categories of "good" things and "bad" things. Although Dr. Thompson does not suggest it, this systematic classification of objects, actions, and events of daily experience is a faithful reflection of the codified morality of the Christian churches, pre-eminently of the Catholic Church, which grades "sins" according to the degree of their offense against "God." Although, with some faint memory of philosophical approach to human behavior, the psychological attitude of the "sinner" is held to be of some importance, the Church retains power over judgment and classification of sins, gaining knowledge of the "inner condition" of the individual through his act of confession to a priest. The sinner, therefore, delegates his right of personal judgment to an outside authority and accepts the rulings of that authority on what is "good" and what is "bad."

It is Dr. Thompson's view that these two forms of conditioning, (1) the obsessive egocentricity developed in a competitive society, and (2) the spurious morality of "good" and "bad" categories, become merged in the individual with the following effect:

That which is "good" is to the advantage of this "I" and is to be sought, and that which is "bad" is to the disadvantage of the "I" and is to be avoided Each one becomes so conditioned that his thought automatically is "how will what is going on in this moment cause *me* gain or loss?" Normal individuals then are conditioned to a self-preoccupation—egocentricity—and to self-acquisitiveness.

The criminal, then, and especially the recidivist or repeater-criminal, is one on whom these conditionings have had an extreme effect, or one who was unusually vulnerable to their influence. As Dr. Thompson says:

. . . when we are confronted with a prisoner in our examining room, we are studying an individual who, like ourselves, is the resultant of this same continual conditioning process, for the criminal and the neurotic and the law-abiding citizens are all members of the same social structure or society, which, as we have described, automatically conditions

all of its members to react affectively and disproportionately to this "I" image. However prevalent throughout society, man's affective response to this image or stimulus word "I" does not represent health or wholeness, for this "I" is a secondarily acquired image which has been inculcated in the individual Though held in common by everyone, this image contrasts each individual with all others. It is the basis of man's self-preoccupation, of his oppositeness, his self-acquisitiveness or competitiveness; in other words, it is the basis of the personality traits which in their extreme form characterize the recidivist this conditioned, separative "I" image represents a common denominator for the compulsive, egocentric, acquisitiveness of man throughout the species, including the reaction of the non-criminals as well as the criminals. Civilization's outstanding characteristic as well as its fundamental anomaly is its systematic training of each individual to get for himself at the expense of others.

Of particular interest are Dr. Thompson's citations from the literature of criminology, showing the inconclusiveness of modern knowledge of the causes of crime. The Wickersham Commission, for example, simply noted the impossibility of discussing the causes of crime and remarked, "the social sciences are in transition, and the foundations of behavior are in dispute." An authority of juvenile delinquency, Sheldon Glueck, suggests that "the fiber of criminality is much tougher than we have thus far believed and that its tangled roots lie deeper than we have over-optimistically assumed," calling for "great humility" and more "thorough-going research." Dr. Thompson himself observes: "*We find the repeater reaction fully established at 18 as well as at 38.*" But not only "criminal" tendencies solidify in early youth. It is the general experience of educators to find that the roots of character and moral attitude lie deep in the individual and are only slightly affected by the educational process. A book by a Scandinavian psychologist reports the results of a study showing that students in their teens have already formed the basic opinions and attitudes that will dominate the rest of their lives. Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, formerly of Antioch, gave up his work in education at the college level to undertake his present activities on behalf of better community life because of his conviction that the most important character-

shaping influences have done their work before the student arrives at college age.

The enormous importance assigned by psychologists to the conditionings of early childhood and even infancy, in this respect, is well known. In fact, it sometimes appears that the individual comes to birth with definite moral tendencies, and that to explain them wholly by means of the conditionings of a few short years amounts to claiming something of a psychological "miracle." For those persuaded of the reality of moral freedom, the heresy of the old Christian father, Origen, may be more acceptable than such predestination by "conditioning," whether it has the sanction of science or not. Arguing for the doctrine of pre-existence, against the theory that God (or "conditionings," in modern times) is responsible for human moral defects, Origen said:

But if we once admit that there were certain older causes [at work] in the forming of a vessel unto honour, and of one unto dishonour, what absurdity is there in going back to the subject of the soul, and [in supposing] that a more ancient cause for Jacob being loved and for Esau being hated existed with respect to Jacob before his assumption of a body, and with regard to Esau before he was conceived in the womb of Rebecca?

This theory, at least, takes the strain off the conditioning process, and places moral responsibility on the shoulders of the individual, just as Plato, some five hundred years before Origen, had suggested in the tenth book of the Republic. It is a theory, also, which offers some possibility of a reconciliation between the forces of heredity and environment, by the introduction of a third factor or force in human life—the pre-existing and surviving moral agent, the immortal soul. But with or without such a solution of the metaphysical side of the problem, the psychiatric analysis of society in terms of conditionings is still to be reckoned with. Dr. Thompson tells us, without equivocation, what society does *to* the individual, after nature and nurture have placed their stamp upon him. We know of no defense that any admirer of the status quo can offer to the following description of the modern world:

In our superficial angers and hatreds or in our agreements, in our wars and in our equally superficial and evanescent arrangements called peace, "normal" man, like the criminal, is himself a repeater of pathological reactions. Naturally, then, if we are all involved automatically in repeated reflex actions that have to do with oppositeness, self-acquisitiveness and competition, the nature of the behavior of the recidivist is but the problem of man's behavior generally.

We might as well keep in mind that society has its own crimes which, however, are not recognized as such because they are committed on so large a scale. Society has its mass-homicides called wars, its mass-robberies called invasions, its wholesale larcenies called empire-building. As long as the individual's behavior fits in with the mass-reaction it is considered "good" behavior. As long as he does not question by word or deed the validity of the mass behavior he may be called a "good citizen."

So, there are two sorts of "bad" citizens. There are the men who rebel against the prevailing order because their idea of the self is a revolutionary idea—the idea of a Socrates, a Jesus, a Bruno or a Francisco Ferrer; and there are the men of whom it has been said by another modern psychiatrist:

Clinical experience with such individuals makes it appear that the psychopath is a rebel without a cause, an agitator without a slogan, a revolutionary without a program: in other words, his rebelliousness is aimed to achieve goals satisfactory to himself alone; he is incapable of exertions for the sake of others. All his efforts, hidden under no matter what guise, represent investments to satisfy his immediate wishes and desires.

We come back, then, to the one paramount idea in human behavior—the idea of the self. This idea is the subjective architect of character, the arbiter of morals and the dictator of behavior. It is the heart of effective religion and the key-principle of moral psychology. Without a clear and ennobling concept of self, there can be little if any conscious ethical behavior at all.