

over-all understanding because it has not been systematically thought about. Such individuals

... see all sights from pole to pole,
And glance, and nod, and bustle by,
And never once possess (their) soul
Before (they) die.

To possess one's soul in an intellectual sense means to have found some answer, or partial answer, to the questions: What is the nature of this world in which I find myself, what is my place in it, and what must be my attitude toward it? The problem is one of intellectual and spiritual orientation.

A Disorganized Mind

The benefits of such intellectual and spiritual adaption have been extolled by the wise men of all ages and all countries. A "view of life" prepares us for what life brings us, for what happens to us in our physical environment, and most important of all, for what people turn out to be and for what they do. To be spiritually and intellectually lost in the world, on the contrary, is to be unarmed and helpless.

A disorganized mind is unprepared for reality and easily frustrated. The fate that awaits the individual so afflicted is to be always a stranger and a wanderer in the world. The "lost soul" of

literature, the ultimate in tragic creation, suffers from this great spiritual illness.

It may be unfortunate, but it is a fact that the sharper and livelier the intelligence and the more sensitive the spirit, the more serious the danger of disorientation. The simple-minded find life simple. Plants find themselves easy to live with, no doubt; for it cannot be difficult to vegetate successfully. It is not likely that the cow's ruminations are philosophical.

Man, for better or worse, is a rational animal. The more he thinks, the greater the need of organization among his ideas. The more subjects a student studies in college, the more extensive the potential disorder of his mind. It is not surprising that the scholarly mind, lost in a Babel of learning, seeks escape into a clearly defined specialty, and the practical mind, as soon as its owner has permission, into the comforts of a business, a profession, or domesticity. To be sure, we must integrate the curriculum. But what good is this if the professor's mind remains perched on its gaunt pinnacle or secluded in the laboratory?

The systematic way to the attainment of the organization of ideas is through philosophy and religion. It is true that the great intellectual constructions of the metaphysicians are not available

to all men, and that even to the initiated they sometimes offer but poor comfort. Moreover, all of us have known individuals of great simplicity and humbleness of mind, quite untutored in dialectic, who somehow and in the simplest terms have securely located themselves in the cosmos.

Especially in the realm of religious experience do we find examples of this. The spirit seems to have found peace in terms of some all-embracing conviction or great renunciation. But this is not often possible for the inquisitive and analytical mind.

Need for Philosophy

To cast all burdens upon the Lord in one grand resolve sometimes implies ignorance of the nature of those burdens. There is only consciousness of their oppressive weight, but no understanding of their nature or causes. To be sure, the critical intelligence may also come ultimately to make this renunciation; but it will not feel justified in doing so until it has reflected upon causes and relationships and seen the problem of human trouble and sorrow *whole*. The solution must be a conquest, not an escape.

For this, the mind certainly needs philosophy, sacred or secular. No learned profession, however, can offer the inquiring mind

an official formula which every man need only apply in order to be permanently on understanding terms with the world. To be sure, there are systems of metaphysics, sacred and secular, from which the troubled spirit can choose a ready-made synthesis. But this does not make the chosen system of ideas an integral part of the inner personality. Intellectual orientation to the world must be something more than an acquisition; it must be an organic growth. The student should by all means seek out the great religious and philosophical thinkers, study their systems, and add their insights to his own. But in the last analysis he must work out his own solution, for such a solution must be the end product of his *own* reflection in the context of his *own* experience. Only through the alchemy of private reflection do philosophical ideas become private resources. Only then will they be available in time of crisis. When the normal course of existence is interrupted by conflict and frustration, it is a bit late to begin developing fundamental guiding ideas; that is the time to apply them.

Admiral Byrd Alone

A dramatic example of the saving grace of such resources is related by Admiral Byrd in his book on his expedition to the South

Pole, entitled *Alone*. He had been left behind by the expedition in a dugout located several feet below the surface of the icecap. From this he periodically emerged through a vertical tunnel to make scientific observations. It happened that the heater in his subterranean shelter developed a leak of which he was not aware. Before he realized it, he had been dangerously poisoned, and he became seriously ill.

During his convalescence he found himself struggling to overcome not only the physical damage done to his body, but also a deep spiritual depression, an obstinate conviction of the meaninglessness of life, which threatened to overwhelm him. There was no physician or psychoanalyst or cleric available. His fellow-explorers would not return for months. He was absolutely *alone*. He had to guide himself out of this slough of despair. This he did, after many agonizing days, by steady thinking, by "digging down into" his intellectual resources. And it was then, to use his own homely but vivid phrase, that he "uncovered the pay-dirt of philosophy." He did not then collect the materials of his readjustment; he used them to recover his sanity. In this crisis, what would he have done without these resources?

But periods of crisis are not the

only time when man needs an orderly mind. If a ship is to hold its course, it needs a steady helm in good weather as well as in bad. I hasten to remark that this figure of speech has serious limitations, for a navigator has his chart prepared when he begins his voyage. Man, on the contrary, is faced with the problem of making a chart as he goes along. As a matter of fact, the plan of life is, for every man to some extent, an unconscious precipitate of his experience. We are not completely free agents; compulsion and fate, in the form of the physical world, our fellow men and social institutions, push the individual this way and that. What happens to him and what he becomes are clearly the result of a complex of inner and outer compulsions, over many of which he has no control.

The Greek Chorus

We are not here primarily concerned with action, however, but with interpretation. In philosophical reflection, the individual to some extent plays the part of the Greek chorus. He observes himself as actor in a cosmic setting. If he does so systematically, he will gradually discern not only his own role, but the direction of the whole drama. Only when he understands the meaning of the play can he orient himself in it. Such

an understanding, vague and incomplete though it may be, will enable him to achieve his own view of life. If he is so fortunate as to see (what seems to him) the truth and to see it whole, he will thenceforth have a vision of the future as well as an understanding of the present and the past. If a rational man does not do that, why should he consider himself the crown of creation? If he does accomplish this, he can exult with the poet Dyer:

My mind to me a kingdom is;
Such present joys therein I find
As far exceeds all earthly bliss

* * *

Look, what I lack my mind supplies.
Lo, thus I triumph like a king,
Content with that my mind
doth bring.

The Uneasy Conscience

In education for privacy, however, more is involved than philosophical orientation to the cosmos. There is equally urgent need for education in the establishment and maintenance of moral harmony. From the days of primitive religion, through Greek tragedy, the Christian epic of sin and salvation, and modern psychology, Freudian and non-Freudian, to contemporary existentialism, there runs the theme of the uneasy conscience. The dramatic specter of moral guilt is the principal character in

many of the greatest creations of literary genius.

No matter what the learned explanation, the psychological state is one of inner moral disharmony. Though it may have outer causes, it is a private affliction and must be cured privately. In moments of despair or periods of cynicism we may doubt the existence or discernibility of moral meaning in the universe; but such a conclusion does not relieve the individual of the necessity for solving his personal moral problem. Even complete moral negativism, if not itself a moral philosophy, leaves the individual no recourse but to establish a private moral order in his life of action and reflection.

Moral Resources

Here again, the more sensitive the individual, the greater the potentiality for disorganization. It is the sensitive who are the most deeply wounded by moral indifference, disorder, and brutality. The predisposing causes of moral disorganization may be in the people and the things we love, in the institutions which demand that we conform to their customs and taboos, in the great world which so often mocks our need for moral significance and order. But a vision of the good life, the spirit must have; for devoid of it, the imagination is without moral per-

spective, conduct without guiding principles, and action without trustworthy habits.

For an individual so unprepared for life, confusion will efface meaning and create frustration, with the onset in the case of the unusually sensitive spirit of pathological disturbances which may for a period or for a lifetime destroy happiness. Education for privacy must therefore include the education of the moral personality, the gradual acquisition by the self of moral resources. Here, too, there are available to the student in generous measure the works of the great philosophical and religious thinkers; for probably no one of the persistent problems of life has had more of their systematic and concentrated attention. It is relevant here to note that the previously discussed philosophical orientation to the world is sometimes the foundation for moral orientation.

Emotional Stability

A third requirement in the education of the personality is the development of emotional stability. Of all the immediate causes of unhappiness, emotional disorder is unquestionably the most serious and the most common. Currently there is a feeling that under the pressures of modern life its incidence is steadily increas-

ing. Unfortunately, emotions are the component of the personality about which we know the least, as modern science has come to realize. Our ignorance is largely a consequence of the fact that traditionally the emotions have been considered to be effects rather than causes.

Preoccupation with the flattering conviction that man is a rational animal has been attended with the assumption that therefore our emotions are under the domination of the reason. This assumption has been one of the basic tenets of formal education, though puzzled parents and self-conscious adults no doubt have all along had their suspicions. In our day, educators are being enlightened by psychology and the medical sciences on the subject of the devastating power of the emotions. Moreover, the modern conception of the integrated personality has redirected our approach to this subject, so that now we hypothesize and investigate in terms of interrelations and interactions. The simple classical vision of the reason enthroned in the psyche, making judgments, issuing commands, and directing the conscious life of the individual, is difficult to maintain in the face of the past record and the current spectacle of human behavior.

Let us grant that the contem-

porary individual lives in an age in which, as Goethe put it, "humanity twists and turns like a person on a sickbed trying to find a comfortable position." To offset this, however, he has the advantage of a better understanding of the compulsive and disruptive power of the emotions. He is aware of their insidious tendency to direct his thinking and affect his judgment. He knows that they feed on themselves and that, if they are of the destructive kind, they can bring him to the verge of despair. He knows that they can completely disorient him, isolating him from the friendship and sympathy of his fellow men, and estranging him from the beauty and utility of the world. He must learn that there is little he can do to remove the external causes, the irritants in his social and physical environment. In order to maintain or restore emotional stability *within* himself, he must learn to control the effects of these irritants *on* himself. Education of the emotions is education in self-control, in equanimity and serenity.

Live with Yourself

To these three objectives of education for privacy—the attainment of a philosophical point of view, a steady vision of the good life, and serenity of spirit—I should like to add one more: the

individual should be able to live entertainingly with himself. He should accumulate resources on which he can draw when he is at leisure. The universal symptom of the absence of such resources is the homely but hapless state of boredom. It is an anomalous condition of the spirit, a state of indifference lying between pain and pleasure. Neither the mind nor the hands can find anything interesting to do. In contrast with the other troubles of the spirit which have been mentioned, there is little excuse for this great emptiness. For there is a marvelous cure for boredom, universally available, readily tapped, and virtually inexhaustible: the fine arts.

This claim hardly needs defense. Nor is it necessary to enumerate the arts and to identify their respective potentialities for beguiling the mind and the heart. For illustrative purposes, however, let us consider one form of art enjoyment which is available to virtually every normal human being, young or old, learned or simple, saint or sinner—reading. Its great virtue for education for privacy is that it is a strictly private experience. No other human being is necessary to the reader at the moment of reading. He can take his book with him to the jungle or the desert, on the ocean, or the mountaintop. He can select his

company at will, and rid himself of it by a turn of the hand. It is potentially an inexhaustible resource: all ages of history; all countries; all varieties of human beings, and even of animals and plants and physical things; the entire range of human thoughts and feelings, hopes and fears, conquests and failures, victories and defeats; the real and the ideal—all are available at the turn of a page for the reader's contemplation and understanding.

The Arts

When we measure the impoverishment of him to whom this world is literally and figuratively a closed book, whose ear is deaf to music and whose eye blind to the glories of painting and sculpture, we come to realize the responsibility of liberal education for instruction in the arts. I say instruction purposely, because I believe that the presentation of opportunities for enjoyment and training in appreciation are not enough: there should also be instruction and encouragement in the production of art. As even the bungling amateur knows, there is no greater source of pleasure than creative activity.

The training of the most modest talent is an enrichment of a personality and develops another private resource for leisure hours.

Even the unsuccessful attempt to create art, moreover, clarifies the understanding of art. To be sure, just as it is not necessary to trouble our friends with our thoughts, so it is not necessary to bore our friends with our productions. It is, after all, not the improvement of the neighbor but the improvement of oneself that is the immediate object of education for privacy.

An understanding of the world, a vision of the good life, serenity of spirit, appreciation and practice of the fine arts—these, then, are the elements of the integrated personality, the development of which is the immediate object of liberal education. These are the resources which are accumulated in the course of education for privacy. Why, now, is it so important for every individual to possess these resources? In the first place, simply because he is going to need them. We never know when we are going to lose our external resources, our public possessions.

Without private resources the individual has nothing to turn to when disappointment, frustration, or misfortune become his lot. In the great depression which is still vivid in our memories, there were many individuals who possessed only external resources. When they lost these, life was over for them. They could not go on living