

CHARACTER TYPES OF CHILDREN

A NEW ANALYSIS

BY CHARLES K. TAYLOR

MANY years ago, more than a couple of thousand, a clever Greek with a sense of humor wrote a perfectly preposterous plan for analyzing character from appearances. Some attribute the paper to Aristotle,¹ but one cannot imagine that serious philosopher using such broad humor to poke fun at what must even then have been a well-known "system." Two of the mocking classifications are as follows:

"The small-minded have small limbs and small, delicate lean bodies, small eyes and small faces—just like a Corinthian."

"Men addicted to gaming and dancing have short arms, like weasels."

And the theory he poked fun at still has its followers and its exponents, many of the latter doing very well, having large followings and believing their theories themselves. So we hear now and then, in magazine articles and in impressive books, that if we do but notice the shapes of foreheads, noses, chins, and heads, and the color of the hair, and the texture of the skin—why, all we have then to do is to add up the various characteristics those things indicate and the character analysis of that individual is complete and unassailable.

After all, this is a most attractive kind of "system." It is so simple, and the reasons seem so plausible, and such brilliant examples are found of folk who seem to show the requisite characteristics to match their physical entities. Only there seems to be a flaw somewhere if you happen to think of the significance of the theory that would make it possible to tell character from fixed physical characteristics.

A little time ago an exponent of this type of analysis was telling a group of interested folk how infallible it was—how the shapes and textures and sizes inevitably proclaimed the character of the man. One hearer then described the workings of a certain "rescue mission," and asked the lecturer if this kind of work were worth while. "Certainly," declared the lecturer, and then described a remarkable case, wherein a regular down-and-out worthless tramp turned over into an aggressive and successful man, a wholly different kind of man. Then the listener had that lecturer.

"Yes," said the listener, "and when that man's character changed his profile changed too, didn't it?" There was a ghastly silence and an irrepressible laugh. The hit was palpable. If character can be told by fixed physical characteristics, like shapes of features, colors, and textures, then character is itself fixed, and cannot change. But if character can change, if whole charac-

teristics by training and environment can be made to change—as we all know they can—then you cannot possibly tell characteristics or character by means of any fixed physical qualities.

Now of course this is not applying to abnormal humans who are malformed, or unformed, in any way that goes with mental under-development or the like. The phenomenally small skull, for instance, generally goes with a poor or worse mental development. But even this is not invariably the case. The writer knows one very brilliant man with a skull fully three inches below the average in circumference. But, in general, an abnormally small skull of this kind would be significant. But we are not discussing abnormal folk. We are talking about every-day responsible humans. Let us make ourselves sure that you will not be able to tell much that is reliable about the individual's character from the fixed physical characteristics—which is a very different thing from recognizing characteristics from the expression of the face. The expression can change immensely, and from this you can tell much, because it reflects the individual within very beautifully, though not invariably.

Well, if you cannot diagnose a character by shapes and sizes of chins, noses, foreheads, and so on, is there any other way of attacking this important problem? For it is important. It would mean much if a teacher had some way of telling the general character type of a child, and suited the training and care of that child to the type.

It seems that there is one element that can be used in such a diagnosis—particularly of a child. And this is "behavior." We all know that different children act differently under the same circumstances. We know that some are quiet, some are noisy, some are apathetic, and so on. Suppose by noticing how a child behaves a teacher or parent could make fairly sure character-judgments. Such a system would be at least reasonable, for one's personality is likely to betray itself by the way it acts under various circumstances. And this would include all kinds of behavior, from self-control to the behavior of the mind under intelligence tests.

The writer for some years observed numbers of children, in class-room, on playground, in camp, and elsewhere, in an effort to see if there were certain kinds of general behavior under which children could be grouped. This, eventually, seemed very possible.

For instance, there were children who were quite active, both in class-room and playground. Their attention in class was alert and businesslike; on the playground they were similarly active and

alert, as well as purposeful. They seemed to have a good control over their activity. This was a fine type. The boys and girls standing near the top of the class were almost always of this type. And, come to think of it, most successful folk of our acquaintance seem to be of this type. What shall we call it? Perhaps the "active-controlled" will be as good a name as any. Does not this at once bring certain people to your mind? Or certain children? Do you not recognize it as a very definite type of character, and one almost unmistakably indicated by "behavior"? Let us call this our first general type, then, the one with the active mind and body well controlled—in other words, the "active-controlled."

There was another large group of children that at first was confused with the one already described. These children were active enough, in all conscience, both in class-room and out of it. But after a while, after a close study of many individuals, a difference began to appear. They were active, mentally and physically, but they did not seem to have a good control over their activity. They were likely to start many things without finishing. They were not steady. Some were full of good-natured mischief, playing pranks both where pranks were appropriate and distinctly where they were not. These were the so-called "harum-scarum" folk—heedless, noisy, good-natured, and seemingly unable to concentrate unless their interest were aroused to a very unusual degree. And there were others who were not so good-natured, who played malicious tricks, whose class-room disorders did not come from thoughtlessness, but purposefully. These, then, make up another kind of active group—a group not having a good control of their activity. Perhaps we could call them the "active-uncontrolled."

And, finally, there was another marked group, not nearly so large as the other two, but conspicuous enough because so different. These children did not seem to take much interest in anything. They were inclined to be stolid, unemotional, too quiet, vacant-minded, and, in brief, apathetic. Do you not know individuals of this very type? Just as with individuals of the two previously described types, once you think of the types they stand out clearly enough.

So here we had a beginning—three rather distinct kinds of behavior, with various intermediate stages, of course. No, you couldn't tell by the shape of a boy's chin or of a girl's nose what type he or she belonged to. You could tell by the manner in which the child behaved under various circumstances. After all, it seems as though it might be a rather fair method for judging

¹ See "Life of Aristotle," by Diogenes Laertes, 420



1 Composite of portraits of 16 boys of low-grade mentality. Note slackness of mouth and smallness of head, as compared with Nos. 3 and 4. They were mostly "apathetic"

2 Composite of portraits of 16 "incorrigibles." Mostly "active-uncontrolled" and of poor mentality. The head is larger than in No. 1

3 Composite of portraits of 16 of the "brightest" boys in a large grammar school in a foreign quarter of an Eastern city

4 Composite of portraits of 16 of the brightest boys in a private academy and a public school predominately Anglo-Saxon. Note, with 2 and 3, the broad head and firmness of expression, as well as the intelligent look

COMPOSITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Expression means much. But fixed physical characteristics are sometimes unreliable. For instance, in the above we have the characteristic small head of the low-grade mentality contrasted with the broad forehead and larger head of the intelligent type. Yet the small head does not necessarily indicate low intelligence, though it does in a majority of cases. It is thus an important "indication" that must be added to others for a fair judgment. Such a matter as cranial capacity, however, is a different matter, for instance, than a profile curve, because the cranial capacity bears a direct relation to the size of the brain, which in turn bears a direct relation to intelligence

character—by noticing how a personality expresses itself through action.

Well, this is but a step. Let us see if we cannot go further.

The "active-controlled" make up what is obviously the most desirable type. It is the type that furnishes leaders. It supplies those who do the work of the world, the physical largely, as well as the mental. Is it not desirable, therefore, to bring into this group as many as possible from the other two groups? Let us study the two less desirable groups a few minutes. Quite a large number of the "active-uncontrolled" were studied, physically and mentally. And perhaps almost half had a physical irritation of some kind that was driving them continuously. Sometimes it was bad teeth, impacted or decayed. Sometimes the unspeakable adenoid was doing its abominable work. Sometimes it was eye-strain—and this was no infrequent cause either—or it might have been a spinal curvature or fallen arches. It took quite a thorough examination, sometimes, to find where the trouble lay. So the "active-uncontrolled" could be subdivided into two groups—the healthy and the unhealthy. In general, too, the unhealthy ones were the less desirable of the two. Their mischief was more likely to be of the malicious kind. They were the more purposely rebellious and disagreeable—which is not to be wondered at! They had a mighty good cause to be acting as they did—and of course were quite unaware of the cause.

So you can see that it is very much worth while if you can tell when a boy or a girl belongs to the "active-uncon-

trolled" group, if such observation only moves you to have the child given a thorough medical examination to see if there is not some remediable physical cause behind the irritability and lack of control.

But suppose you cannot find any physical ill or defect. Suppose the child seems to be in the pink of health, and yet obviously belongs to the "uncontrolled" group. Well, looking up quite a number of this kind, it appeared that there was something lacking in their environment and training. Perhaps they lived in poor districts and were neglected by their parents, who rarely saw them and who paid no attention to their characters, letting them follow their own desires and impulses without much restraint. Or sometimes they came from very wealthy homes, where they were neglected by their parents, who rarely saw them and who paid no attention to their characters, letting them follow their own desires and impulses without restraint! In fact, about the worst types the writer has known have come from families of this latter sort—from highly "Social" folk, spelled with a capital "S," who were far too busy with the inconsequential to have much to do with the character development of their children, and who let this rather important matter, when it was thought of at all, be handed over to the tender mercies of not too careful servants of various sorts.

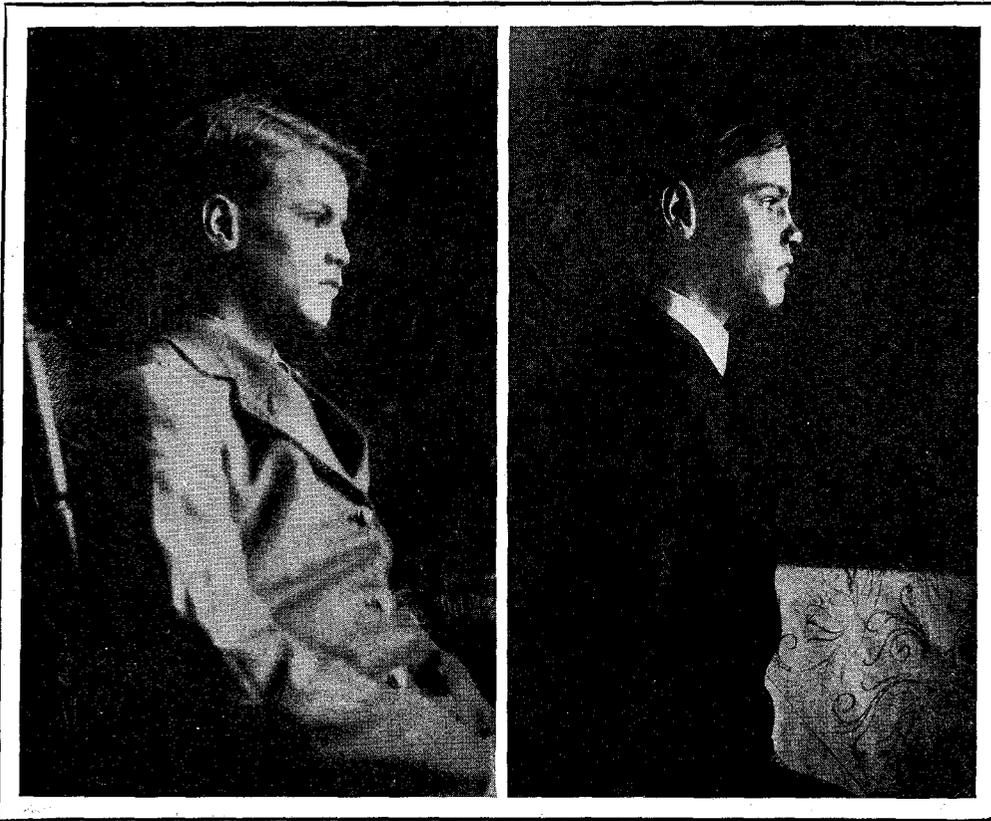
When such a child comes from a home of the poorer sort, there is a hope that something can be done, for these folk generally wish to do the best for their

children and welcome suggestion and aid. But with too many folk of social aspirations one cannot arouse the least interest. And when it is pointed out that Tommy has become badly spoiled, that he has gained willfulness instead of will power, that his character has become weak from easy indulgence, that his artificial summer life in hotels and resorts, and equally artificial winter life, with its preposterous pseudo-adult dancing affairs and so on, have combined to destroy any worth-while characteristics he may have inherited, the supercilious parents are likely to look bored. They may even remark that, after all, it didn't make a lot of difference—for it would all be knocked out of them when they got to St. Somebody-or-other's, where they were entered when they were born! There are few things that actually get on the nerves of thoughtful teachers as does the careless weakening of the possibilities of children of first-class inherited capacity, and our schools are full of them. And you could do wonders with those children, too, if by some merciful but quick means you could get rid of the parents.

So we have a healthy kind of "uncontrolled" child, whose problem concerns environment and training, and when you can gain the sympathetic understanding and co-operation of the parents wonders can often be worked with children of this type. For the "active" quality is a fine asset if it is directed along worthwhile lines!

And here is the summary of this second group:

The "active-uncontrolled," who may be



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NOTE THE MUCH
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healthy or unhealthy. If the former, then you have a problem in environment and training to solve, and if the latter you have the medical examination and proper care to provide for. And when children of this type are treated as they should be, very frequently it is not at all difficult to make it possible for them to change gradually into the "active-controlled" type, to their and to society's great advantage.

This brings us to the third general group—the "apathetic." Now this is not by any means the first time that observers have noticed that some individuals are "apathetic" and others are "active," and the like. In fact, some, like Pauline Malapert, in "Les Éléments Caractère," have made very interesting lists of character types, such as "*Les opathiques, les affectifs, les intellectuels, les tempérés, les volontaires,*" and so on, with their various subdivisions. What we are trying to do here is to single out types of behavior very obvious to an observer and to study their significance in some practical way, with the benefit of the child in view.

The "apathetic" do not need long description. They are the listless or the stolid ones, the continuously "lazy" ones, those who seem physically and mentally inert, unemotional, and unexcitable, and so on. They present different characteristics, but are easily distinguishable as belonging to the general class of apathetics.

Now all this does no good unless we recognize what being in such a class signifies. Many of these children were studied, with a result not unlike that following a study of the "uncontrolled." That is, some were healthy, and others

were unhealthy. The unhealthy ones sometimes had some digestive trouble, or perhaps there was heart or circulatory defect of some kind, or one of other possible causes. And in most cases they were of a remediable variety. This brings us to the same procedure found desirable for the "uncontrolled" child—a medical examination first of all, and when physical conditions are found that might well be at the bottom of the child's lack of energy, then, obviously the thing to do is to remove them as rapidly and as soon as possible.

The writer has in his possession a photograph of an "apathetic" type of boy found to have bad tonsils, large adenoids, and a seriously under-developed chest. That boy was not getting enough oxygen to enable him to do much thinking, let alone running around like other boys. The examination showing these defects, the adenoids and tonsils were removed at once. He was given special daily exercises to improve his breathing capacity. His diet was carefully supervised and he was encouraged to take more and more interest in out-of-door play. A few months made all the difference in the world. The boy went into the "active" group, with a wholly different attitude toward life and, as might have been expected, with much firmer lines of expression on his face. For a slackness of facial muscle seems to go with the weak and unintelligent type, and the firm lines and firm lips with the stronger and more intelligent individual. So much for the "apathetic-unhealthy" kind of child.

When the "apathetic" child was found to be healthy, an intelligence test was frequently illuminating. Now it is true

that you find some who are physically most inert and who have very active minds—just as there seem to be exceptions to all rules. And the last thing we are suggesting is a hard and fast rule, anyway. But, generally speaking, the active mind and body go together. The writer has found a very high coefficient of correlation between mental and physical activity.

Coming back to our healthy "apathetic" child. In general, the child made a second-rate intelligence test, and very often a downright poor one. So that with the "apathetic-healthy" you frequently have a question of mental training to deal with, and too often a very serious one.

And that completes a bare outline of the prominent types of behavior—physical behavior, we might call it. It would be interesting to take up forms of mental behavior, with a discussion of the significance of the modern intelligence tests in their various forms. And these tests are of much greater value than one would always admit, not only as an aid in classifying children, but in finding weak points that can be improved by special training. This is a fascinating field, and one hard to keep away from. But I am not writing a book on child analysis. I started out to give a bare outline of several common types of behavior and what they signify. Possibly their recognition, followed by proper training, may solve some of our worst class-room difficulties—not to speak of the greater individual efficiency and happiness coming to those who free themselves from those character handicaps that so often mean unsuccess, failure, and social disgrace.

MESSAGE FOR A SICK FRIEND

BY HILDA CONKLING

TELL her my love.
Tell her to go to sleep
Thinking of everything in the world;
Colors . . . the wind . . .
Or a fish in a spray of opal seaweed. . . .

A GARDEN WITHOUT LINEAGE

BY E. K. PARKINSON

THE outline, shading, and harmony in the established permanent garden which has been tended and cared for season after season naturally produce most satisfactory effects and show the well-grown plants which careful culture yields. But what about the floriculture in the garden merely hired for a few months in the hot season and those few sickly flowers struggling for a bare existence in beds choked with weeds? It is here that the important fact is too often lost sight of that there are plenty of blossoms and vines to be had for very little, which will greatly increase the beauty of the rented garden, and which may be planted after the first of June with signal effect. The reason too often assigned for the neglect of these small spaces reminds one of the old Scotchwoman who, when asked by her dominie if she had understood the sermon, replied: "Indeed, wad I hae the presumption?" In fact, most people going to the country for only a few months in summer deem they know far too little about gardening of any kind to attempt in the remotest degree the slightest beautifying of the bare space about the house, and will tell you with a shrug of the shoulders: "Oh, I'm no professional; the garden will have to take care of itself."

But how can any one be content without at least a few flowers in the country, the securing of which involves so little labor and less expense? Take nasturtiums, for instance, which during the last few years are to be had in many of the most lovely shades of rose-pink and cream, and will grow in almost any soil. The double forms are particularly charming for borders and beds, while the innumerable climbing kinds can be made to hide many an ugly fence or wall and cover a stiff and ungainly bit of piazza to great advantage. Then there is the dwarf candytuft, which is a good plant for edging, and may be planted late and sown thinly. There is also the mignonette and marigold, both of which may be sown appropriately in June; the former should be planted in series of a few days apart, as it is short-lived, and so will last longer. The French marigolds will produce blooms in plenty if they are

accorded all the sun they crave, and are most decorative and effective during the later summer season. Next, no one should fail to add some of the brilliant salvia to his garden, not only for its brilliancy, but because it is long-lived as well, and when many of the other blossoms are gone the accommodating salvia is still there glorious as ever. The old-fashioned phlox is always admirable, with its many-toned blossoms in an effective range of colors, and where masses of particular kinds are planted in June there will be a charming flower-patch to draw from quite late in the season. If the rented house is to be occupied during the early autumn, the occupant should be sure to set out some of the newer varieties of the beautiful asters; there are many kinds from which to choose, and although there will always exist a diversity of opinion regarding the merits of certain plants, at least the aster may be said to be exempt from adverse criticism, so exquisite are its colors, so charming its effects.

How few people are familiar with the tuberous begonias! And where the hot-house begonia would only partially supply a deficiency of the kind we are discussing, the tuberous variety will make a rapidly maturing, sturdy plant, easy to grow, and with large waxlike blossoms in all the handsome shades of yellow, pink, scarlet, and creamy white. These plants need plenty of water, and do admirably in the shadier parts of the garden, but should be planted in well-raked-over, rich soil. Next, those who are familiar only with the more common forms of geraniums, namely, those varying from the most intense brick-red to the dingy yellow-red, can have no conception of the beauty of those blossoms in their rarer and perfected state. Where carefully chosen as to color and well grown, the newer form of geranium is distinctly decorative and in the shading of its cool green leaves possesses some of the suppleness and charm of the wild-wood flowers. Let the man with the rented garden try, for instance, the lovely salmon-pink variety known as the Beauté Poitevine, or the soft white Mme. Recamier, combined with the S. A. Nutt, which is a deep shade of crimson, or the famous

Marquise de Castellane in two shades of red, all of which are excellent and will prove a great comfort to those who are obliged to plant a late garden.

No one should neglect the many forms of Iceland poppy to be had of late years; or the California poppy, which is a better-known variety, with brilliant blossoms, and makes a gay showing when planted in large masses to cover ugly bare spots in the hired garden. But the Iceland poppy is the more beautiful of the two, and its foliage more delicate; it is also less fugacious than most of the poppy family, there being always a fresh blossom to supply the one which has just gone by. Of course all the poppy tribe revel in sunshine, and it will be found they thrive best in a sandy soil. Occasionally among the seedlings a semi-double form will occur as well as a charming dwarf form, often white or yellow with short stiff stems, sometimes bearing ten or fifteen flower-cups within quite a small diameter. The Alpine poppy, on the other hand, does better in damper soil and is by no means so pretty or so floriferous as its near relative the Iceland poppy.

What shall be planted, however, will depend a great deal upon the size of the space to be filled, how long the rented house is to be occupied, and various other necessary considerations. But experience will teach better what to leave unplanted than two or three volumes of instruction; but at least aim at individuality and an artistic whole and avoid coarse weedy subjects, and as a rule plants that throw out strong creeping rootstalks will be found objectionable. Another point to remember is not to plant your flower-bed in stiff rows, as though it were supposedly on a military review; variety is always the spice of a garden, and, where too much space is not called for, massing is often very desirable with medium-sized plants. The skilled decorator, with a sharp eye to effects, will also arrange his garden (for however short a term it may be actually his) with reference to the effect from the interior of the house, so that the lovely flower space may be rendered beautiful from inside out, as well as from outside in.