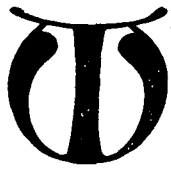


That Clinical Year

By RICHARD C. CABOT M. D.



WITH almost all that has been suggested in comment on my article I am in hearty sympathy. If in addition to and within the experiences of the "clinical year" of theological study the student can be given training in social casework, in probation work, in the placing out of children, in the problems and practice of recreation, of factory work, of department store work, in jails and prisons; if he can get into close touch with labor problems, with the environments that tend to produce tuberculosis and with the other serious defects in our social order, why so much the better minister will he be. Personally I have found that I needed to know *something* about all these matters in order to practise medicine and I should think that *sooner or later* most ministers would need such knowledge too. But I hesitate to suggest the introduction of all these subjects into the short years of the theological course. Must we not look to post graduate study to cover some of these branches?

Moreover some of the more important of these problems such as labor, recreation, tuberculosis, child welfare have already powerful agencies, funds and experts engaged upon them. But the individual suffering of the lonely, the unbalanced, the aged, the institutionalized and especially the religious ministration to these unfortunate people—for this there are not great agencies and wise experts already and publicly pledged. And if the clergy do find time to be trained for dealing with social case work, with labor problems and with health problems like tuberculosis I hope they will not become so soaked in the layman's habits of thought and action that the specific work of religion gets forgotten. There is a religious (and not merely a benevolent, a public spirited or a scientific) way to do social case work, to face a labor problem or chronic infectious disease. I have seen clergymen who seemed to take pride in so merging themselves in these tasks that no one could discover their profession at all.

Mr. Klein and Mr. Muste believe that theological students should have a thorough course in modern psychology including psychoanalysis. To this I agree provided that the students and their teachers are sufficiently alert mentally and sufficiently sceptical to distinguish and reject the great mass of guess work, prejudice, unfounded assertion and dogma that now overshadow what is written, read and taught under the title of "psychology," falsely usurping the sacred name of science. It is well to be in touch with anything so widely fashionable as "modern psychology," so long as one does not take it all seriously or believe any of it on authority. For if there is anyone in the modern world who ought to help free a man from "the degrading slavery of being a child of his age" it is the minister of religion.

In the December Survey Graphic Dr. Cabot made a plea for "a clinical year in the course of theological study." In the January issue a group of physicians, ministers, teachers and others commented on the suggestion. Here Dr. Cabot comments in turn upon his commentators.

When "scientific knowledge" or special skill is called for to treat insidiously difficult ailments in the hospital, the almshouse or the prison, the inexperienced theological student and his experienced teacher should alike be warned off by those in charge of the institution. This I tried in my first article to make clear. But the wisest psychologists and psychiatrists that I have known have been the most emphatic in their desire to assert that their subject had not yet reached the plane of science. Most of medicine has assuredly not reached it.

With Dr. White's belief that the physician should care for more than the body of his patient I am in hearty agreement. The physician ought to care for the whole man. But everyone knows that in fact he usually does not even attempt to do so. In the thirty years that I have been in contact with medical men I have seen no considerable progress away from the bad habit (steadily though unconsciously instilled into him by his teacher's behavior) of ignoring the patient's mind, emotions, interests and endeavors most of the time. We cannot wait for the physicians to reform. So we install social service workers, occupational aides and hospital librarians who work in the wards. All this is bad for the development of the physician as Dr. White so truly says. But it is good for the patients and said patients are still more numerous than physicians and their interest should be preferred when—as in the present case—the two conflict. All hospital social work is bad for the rounded development of the hospital physician, but I am glad to believe nevertheless that hospital social work has come to stay, and glad to hope that the clergyman and his pupils will soon come to supplement on the spiritual side the labors of the social workers, though this too will further narrow the opportunities of the doctor to stretch the mental and spiritual boundaries that now limit him.

As to the abuses that exist in all the great institutions, medical and non-medical, that I have ever known intimately, Dr. White will find that Dr. Goodale and Mr. Johnson (among those who with Dr. White have commented on my article) are just as aware that abuses exist as I am because they have seen the institutions to which I refer from the inside (as I have) and not as Dr. White prefers to believe from the outside only.

I never said, as Dr. White seems to suppose, that the work of the psychiatrist in an institution for mental diseases was "hard, monotonous, thankless and discouraging." I said that the work of *attendants* in such institutions had these drawbacks. I said this because many such attendants have told me so and because I have watched them at work. If Dr. White is familiar with the work of attendants in public institutions for those whom he prefers not to call the insane he knows that what I say is true.



EDITORIALS

AGAIN a mine disaster due to a coal dust explosion—this time at Wilburton, Oklahoma, January 13, and this time killing 91 men. The incident underscores in red the question, when are the states going to meet their responsibility for mine safety?

Legislation to require the rock dusting of mines to prevent coal dust explosions was urged upon the Oklahoma legislature of 1925 by the American Association for Labor Legislation in the course of its nationwide campaign. Within less than twelve months, comes the needless killing of nearly a hundred miners as a reminder to the Oklahoma law makers of the tragic consequences of their failure to act.

It has been amply demonstrated that coal dust explosions need not happen. They can be effectively prevented by spraying the underground mine workings with rock dust. The resulting mixture of coal dust and rock dust is non-explosive. This safety measure costs less than one cent a ton of coal mined. It has recently been endorsed by the American Engineering Standards Committee. It has the approval of the United States Bureau of Mines and the Mine Inspectors' Institute of America, as well as of the miners and progressive coal operators. Within the past three years more than a hundred substantial coal companies have installed the rock dust safeguard and four states have enacted laws providing for its use to prevent coal dust explosions. The urgent need is to make the practice universal. There are, however, twenty-one bituminous-producing states that have not yet acted.

In the past two years twenty "major" mine disasters due to coal dust explosions have taken the lives of 708 men. Most of the states in which the coal dust hazard exists had an opportunity a year ago to enact rock dusting laws. In view of local prejudice against the extension of federal activity and the almost exclusive jurisdiction of the states over mine safety, the legislators in bituminous states cannot escape responsibility for further loss of life in these ever-recurring industrial tragedies.

That responsibility is shared by the citizens of those states, by Survey readers therein. The responsibility is an active one this winter in Kentucky and Virginia, two important bituminous producing states—states whose legislatures are in session. Write now.



BOTH sides are stubborn as hell. Force of public opinion through the press will, I hope, force a change of attitude." This was the terse comment of Alvin Markle, anthracite coal operator of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, when

on January 13 the conference of anthracite operators and miners, over which he had presided as chairman for three weeks, adjourned without having made any progress toward a settlement of the strike. Both sides have proved themselves not only stubborn but shockingly lacking in an adequate sense of responsibility not only to the public but to the great industry for whose conduct they are jointly responsible.

The deadlock, which has persisted since August 9, when the two sides first announced their inability to agree on a contract, reveals a distressingly unhealthy state of mind on the part of each group toward the other. It seems incredible that men who have been in direct working relationship with one another for more than twenty years should so completely distrust one another that they are unable to find even a point of agreement from which to proceed to an adjustment of the issues in dispute between them. One recalls the statement of the United States Coal Commission that "the fundamental fact in the anthracite problem is that the limited and exhaustible natural deposits of this coal have been in the absolute private possession of their legal owners, to be developed or withheld from development at will. . . ."

Because of their absolute control of their properties and their insistence upon their exclusive right to the management of the working force, the burden of proof that they are not primarily responsible for the state of mutual suspicion and distrust would seem to rest upon the operators. But the miners are no longer the under dogs in the industry. In spite of the tradition to the contrary, they exercise a very important influence upon the state of mind not only of the miners but also of the operators. Many friends of the miners have continued to hope that Mr. Lewis and his associates would set an example by demonstrating their superior sense of responsibility for the industry as an actual, if not a legal, public service. But Mr. Lewis has seemed to prefer the attainment of a reputation as "the greatest direct actionist in the American labor movement" rather than a reputation for farsighted industrial statesmanship.

In a letter to Henry R. Seager, one of the signers of a proposal toward the settlement of the strike drafted by a group of some forty economists and engineers (The Survey, Jan. 1, 1926), Mr. Lewis correctly says that "one of the underlying and fundamental reasons for the continuous unrest and periodical suspensions in the anthracite industry is the almost complete destruction of confidence and mutual cooperation between the anthracite coal companies and the mine workers." He then goes on to say that the miners have frequently sought, but have never been given an opportunity, "to present or have considered constructive suggestions to improve the technique or facilitate the disposal of the practical problems of the industry."

No doubt the operators have been resistant to the occasional efforts of the miners to trespass upon their traditional