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DOES EDUCATION REQUIRE "ADMINISTRATORS"?

THE response to Ronald Bringle's article, "Humanistic Psychology for Education," printed in the May 25 MANAS, has been curiously mixed. From people who are involved in some kind of administration, it brought orders for dozens of extra copies, and considerable praise, such as, "This is exactly what we are trying to do." Our modest store of reserve copies of that issue, to take care of back-number orders, is practically exhausted. There were also, however, letters from working teachers who, on the whole, found Mr. Bringle's focus diffuse and his ardor misplaced. We shall print two such letters, not so much to open a controversy between Mr. Bringle and his critics, but to illustrate the sort of problem—dilemma, impasse, "confrontation," what you will—that seems inevitable in most attempts to change for the better the institutional arrangements of a highly organized industrial society. (Perhaps the obstacles to change ought to be more searchingly identified. The problem is one of altering habit patterns and the attitudes and justifications on which they are based, and quite likely, the question of whether these habit patterns are seated in external arrangements, multiversity style, or are "rained in notions of authority, hierarchy, and status-type delusions of grandeur, or in mixtures of both, is no more than a detail. Opening a stubborn mind is perhaps more difficult than altering a rigid system, or what you have to do to change a rigid system; in any case, the solution is in the long run the same.)

For a view of administration quite different from the one developed by these letters, we suggest a reading of the (Cunningham Press) pamphlet, *How To Make a College,* which presents a dialogue between Alvin Duskin, a founder of the experimental Emerson College (no longer in existence), and Paul Goodman. The pamphlet exposes the hazards of conducting such a school, and explores the opportunities and means for doing it. After some talk about how to start the kind of school (college level) outlined in *The Community of Scholars,* Duskin gets Goodman to make an admission:

> *Goodman:* . . . But then, the one who could start such school is the one who isn't going to.
>
> *Duskin:* Why not?
>
> *Goodman:* I really have other things to do. But now if such a school were formed and were going in New York, unquestionably I would go there. . . . If a school like this were a going concern, if someone else had done the work, I'd go in. . . .

This interchange is not cited as evidence that Goodman *ought* to start a school, but to show that, if such schools are to exist, someone has to be willing to take on some functions of "administration." Among the few courageous souls who have done so, one detects a certain disenchantment with Paul Goodman. The answer, of course, is that Goodman is enormously valuable just the way he is, but people carrying such difficult burdens are likely to feel that they deserve *help.*

Following is one of the letters, set off by dash rules.

The lead article in your May 25 issue contained many excellent statements, even though it sounded a little like a term paper. . . . However, I discern an assumption that administrators can be trained just as engineers can, provided they are subjected to something called "Humanistic Psychology," well illustrated from many fine sources. Further, I sense that the author has had little experience in school administration in, say, a large urban public school system, and that he confines himself to idealistic norms of what an administrator at any level should be. Although he

constantly stresses personal morality and responsibility as key factors, it is interesting to watch him tightrope along the thin line that divides this concept of human nature from the more mechanistic "Social Sciences" without whose vocabulary and concepts Mr. Bringle would not have been able to say very much.

One wonders if the topic of training administrators can be "professionalized" or "scientized" to the extent suggested. It is almost as if a psychologist were to proclaim that "Mothers must be taught to love their children." They either do or they don't. Can an administrator be thought of as a trained scientist?

When Mr. Bringle wishes to say "good" administrator, he uses the word "adequate," but such caution does not add to the objectivity sought by this paper. The attempt to blend "science" with "ethics" has here, in my opinion, led to a host of surface verbalizations which avoid much of the reality of social life. Most of the fine statements in this paper are of uncertain significance unless given the *content* which emerges for one actively involved in teaching. The "confrontation" idea is a step in this direction, but there are many social realities which seem to have been ignored. . . . Finally, a pertinent question would be: If a school of administration were able to train an administrator as well as Mr. Bringle might hope, who would hire him?

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Since Mr. Bringle's paper was concerned with what might be called a humanistic "philosophy" of administration, he may be excused, perhaps, for not dealing with the asphalt jungle sort of problems teachers and school administrators are expected to solve by some sort of pedagogic miracle, thus doing away with festering sores and social inequities that have been in the making for generations. More pertinent is the question of who would hire an "ideal" administrator.

Years ago, when he was president of the University of Chicago, Dr. Hutchins was asked about the administrative qualifications of a man he knew. The question came from the chairman of a committee of trustees seeking a president for an Eastern college. Dr. Hutchins relates:

> In my innocence, thinking he wanted a good administrator as president of his college, I entered upon a glowing description of my friend's administrative abilities. I found that my tribute was received without enthusiasm at the other end of the wire, and asked if I had misunderstood the question. "No," replied the trustee. "You understood the question all right. But you are giving the wrong answer. You see, our retiring president was a very bad administrator. Our faculty likes that, and they are afraid of any successor who will be better."

This is from Dr. Hutchins' lecture, "The Administrator," which appeared in the *Journal of Higher Education* for November, 1946. In it he also said:

> The last question that will be raised about a prospective academic administrator is whether he has any ideas. If it appears that he has, he is unlikely to be appointed, for he will be rightly regarded as a dangerous man. The situation in American education is much the same as that in American politics: the men who are needed most cannot be chosen, the qualifications to do the job disqualify the candidate for the post.

But this is only to say that the sort of administrator Mr. Bringle dreams of will have a tough time getting a job, a tough time doing the job, and a tough time holding it.

One more point on this letter—concerning the need for mothers to love their children. A flat disposition of this matter should not be made. Love can be learned. Trying to love can lead to loving. It's not unnatural. In *Redbook* for December, 1964, Mario Montessori tells this story:

> There was a Dutch doctor, in about 1923 or 1924, who had a nursery for orphans where some working mothers also left their children in the day. But many of the orphans died. . . . By the time they were six months the orphans began to perish, die. They had the most perfect hygienic conditions. The nurses treated each child the same, orphan or not. The children of the working mothers were from poor people, who were dirty, who lived in unfavorable

> conditions, hygienically speaking. Yet these children flourished. The doctor saw that the only difference was that when a mother came she took the child and began to kiss him and fondle him and things like that, and the orphans . . . had nothing of the kind. So the doctor told the nurses, do as the mothers do, start making love to the children. And what happened? The phenomenon of the orphans' dying disappeared.

If nurses can learn, so can mothers. Of course, teaching a *wise* love, as with any virtue, is something else.

Here is a portion of the second letter.

I'm not sure I understand the purpose of this discussion of administration. It's an interesting area to explore, I suppose. . . . But I might take this tack: *There is simply no such study as "administration."*

Why? Because, as Aristotle contended, all human groups take their character from the end they pursue. Therefore there is no understanding any group or helping it achieve its end unless one is *of* that group and deeply committed to its goals and purposes. This is the only way in which one can play any part in shaping the life of the group.

Now "administration" is conceived of as a generalized set of skills (personnel relations, budgeting, time-and-motion efficiency, etc.). Supposedly, these skills can be applied to *any* group for the sake of "administering" it. An administrator possesses (supposedly) a generalized talent that can be as well applied to organizing a prison as to organizing a school. Plainly this is nonsense. The same sort of nonsense that has taken over teacher-training in America and which pretends that "education" means training in generalized methods: one need not *know* anything in order to teach; subject matter is simply something to which one applies abstract teaching techniques.

I submit that you cannot meaningfully train people to manage groups *in general.* A school is not an army; a cooperative is not a bank; etc., etc. But the vice of "administration" is that it influences people to think that all groups are essentially the same. And that is what accounts for the vacuous character of the literature on administration: Quite simply, it is stultifying to be exposed to such literature; to be forced to pretend that one need not worry about the goals and purposes of life or about distinguishing worthwhile groups from worthless groups. And that is what makes the administrator the sort of creature he is: one who is noncommittal, abstracted, unengaged; one whose job is simply to keep the enterprise going, to keep the books balanced, to keep the personnel in line, to keep the boat from rocking. . . . Others determine the ends; the administrator is hired to keep the machine turning over.

At my school the administrators spend all their time worrying about problems of floor space, "plant utilization" (imagine! at a college!), staffing formulas, budgeting, etc. They might as well be running an insurance company. That's why their salaries are so much higher than those of the instructional staff: as we are told over and over, if they aren't well paid, they will go into "industry." To which the reply ought to be: Damn it, let them go! Then we'll be able to teach school around here properly.

Bringle wants to humanize administration. Fine. *The way to do that is to abolish the entire field.* The only good administrator is the man who temporarily arises from actual work in the field itself, to make a few adjustments, here and there, and then goes back to his work in the enterprise itself. All the rest of the busywork (the payroll, ironing out schedule conflicts, and so forth) can be handled—as it presently is in most cases—at a secretarial level. Obviously major decisions about getting and spending money ought to be made by all those who are actively involved in the work of the group.

Administrators are a vice of the times. Much of what they do is time wasted. They distort every enterprise they take over by imposing upon it their soggy, generalized techniques. It is surely

a mistake to call someone like Hutchins an administrator. He is an educator. He knows what he wants—pretty specifically. At Chicago, he had a vision of higher education which reputable intellectuals could understand and report. Thus he could lead—not simply administer.

I think this whole area of administration is pretty barren ground. What does it mean to say: "An administrator should be chosen in part for his ability to release creativity in the adults who work with him and for the ability to utilize the wisdom of others to help him reach judgments." I mean: If the enterprise requires creativity and wisdom, then either you've got it or you have no business in the operation. If others have wisdom, *they don't need you* to "utilize" them—at five times their salary, yet! I find such sentiments utterly distasteful. Imagine being "trained" to release *other* people's creativity and to use *other* people's wisdom!

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One way to temper such criticism without diminishing its force would be to say that Mr. Bringle is contending against exactly the same evils as those this teacher condemns. However, the critic might then say, Well, fine, but how are you going to change all this from an administrative stance? And Mr. Bringle might reply, I can try, can't I?—and one way of trying is to change the meaning of administration. Doubtless the critic would remain skeptical, but the issues are at least made clearer.

Another portion of the pamphlet, *How To Make a College,* bears on these issues. Duskin notes that even so loosely organized a college as Emerson involves administration:

> *Duskin:* I used to think of myself as a teacher but now I tend to think of myself as an administrator. And I find myself completely taken up in the running of the school.
>
> *Goodman:* I'm not terribly impressed by what they call the difficulties of administration. You know, in a present-day European university many of the problems just don't exist. I'll give you an example.
>
> A guy has to take a Ph.D. exam. Not long ago. I think it was at the University of Vienna. He doesn't know the date on which the professors are going to give him the orals. So he goes around to the professors and they say, "We'll set a date and you'll be notified."
>
> But he says, "I gotta know."
>
> "Well," they say, "go ask the rector." So he does, but the rector says, "How the devil would I know? I'm just the rector for one year. How would I know? Ask the beadle."
>
> So he goes to the beadle and the beadle looks in his book and says, "They always have it six weeks from yesterday. They'll send you a notice."
>
> Now the beadle is the janitor and of course he knows everything. Do you see? The janitor is the administrator!

Because, in this instance, the rhetorical cards are so plainly stacked against Mr. Bringle, it seems fair to try to make as much as possible of his proposal, while recognizing, at the same time, that the case for abolition of administration has the same sort of "pure" validity as the case of the anarchists against the pretensions of the State. We have the problem of the dramatic contrast between obvious evils, on the one hand, and hypothetical goods, on the other—goods that are to be achieved through valiant effort against the grain of the *status quo.*

Humanistic psychology is a *general* discipline, in the same sense that Taoism is a general discipline. The *Tao Te King* could be called a treatise on administration, and valuable for its insight into all human relationships. It can also be effectively quoted against very nearly all administrators:

> When the great Tao falls into disuse, benevolence and righteousness come into vogue. When shrewdness and sagacity appear, great hypocrisy prevails. . . . Cast off your holiness, rid yourself of sagacity, and the people will benefit an hundredfold. Discard benevolence and establish righteousness and the people will return to filial piety and paternal love.

Now it is at least conceivable that the ideas of humanistic psychology may act as a dissolving

influence on the excesses of administration in education. One could even say that they ought to be welcomed wherever they appear. Today, for example, they may be found in some very strange places—as in the commercial enterprises spoken of by A. H. Maslow in *Eupsychian Management*, and in the Business Administration departments of several universities, and even in a large and influential federal government bureau which has extensive relations with the public. You could say that these are phenomena of cultural lag—not many humanistic psychologists are in or can get into the psychology departments of the universities and colleges, which are, with few exceptions, in the hands of the mechanists. But are the ideas of humanistic psychology likely to become mere decorations of over-organized administrative functions? Candidly, we don't know. In any event, they should have a better influence than the psychological theory behind the methods of the manipulative schools. Meanwhile, it is a fact of some incidental interest that a great many teachers belong to the Association of Humanistic Psychologists, as lay members with intense interest in the ideas of Rogers, Maslow, and others. How can this help but be constructive for teaching?

Wanting to abolish administration, in our society, is like wanting to abolish politics. It is a great idea, and should never be opposed with the claim that it is "impractical." The question is rather how to work toward that end, which means, among other things, a conscious reduction of the evils of administration. This is Mr. Bringle's idea. Whether or not the institutional rigidity of the educational apparatus will let him get very far remains to be seen. Like some of the subversions of the past, it might make considerable progress before its undermining of the proud sovereignty of administration is recognized for what it is.

REVIEW
STRANGE FRUITS OF WAR

FROM the Crusades, we are told, Europeans learned of the high civilization of Islam, and the culture of the West was immeasurably enriched by the resulting interchange. Following Britain's conquest of India came the scholarly enterprises of Sir William Jones, including his translation of the *Institutes of Manu;* there was Wilkins' rendition of *The Bhagavad-Gita,* followed by many others, and in the nineteenth century there were the enormous labors of Max Mueller in putting into English many of the sacred writings of Indian religion. Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia,* an exquisite poem relating the life of the Buddha, was written because Arnold was sent from Oxford in the 1850's to become principal of the Government Sanscrit College at Poonah, where, no doubt, he grew to love the classics of the East and was moved to translate some of them.

Less than a century later, a great war which began in Europe and spread to the East was the provocative of renewed interest in Eastern thought. The role of India during World War II brought the philosophy of Gandhi to the attention of Americans and all the world, and the emergence of the Republic of India, in 1948, so largely under the ægis of Gandhian influence, led to an unbroken flow of books about Gandhi and his philosophy of nonviolence. At the same time, the Pacific war brought thousands of Americans to Japan, where their intimate contact with Japanese thought contributed in no small part to the sudden popularity of Zen Buddhism in the West.

In the present, hardly a day goes by without a newspaper headline which gives attention to the Buddhists of Vietnam, and the recent visit to this country of Thich Nhat Hanh, a scholarly monk from the Buddhist University of Saigon, has stirred many questions about the Buddhist religion. Apparently, there is little in print about Vietnamese Buddhism, although this lack may be remedied before long, judging from the interest aroused in it among peace-minded Christians in the United States. It will probably be found, however, that there is no great difference between the fundamentals of Buddhism in that war-torn land and the faiths of other Buddhist countries in the Far East.

Meanwhile, another country, for many centuries the home of Mahayana Buddhism, has for the past sixteen years suffered the agony of a military invasion that has been little noticed in the West. This country is Tibet. The claim of China, in 1950, to political authority over Tibet, soon followed by invading troops and the assumption of practical control, eventually caused the Dalai Lama, who is both religious leader and political head of Tibet, to take refuge in India, and eventually to publish his book, *My Land and My People* (McGraw-Hill, 1969). The author gives voice to the Buddhist attitude toward such cruel events. There is anguish, but no anger, in what he says. It is a simple story of hopeful trust and betrayal, and, so far as we can tell, a recital of facts. But the content of this volume is only incidentally a plea to the world for international justice. Above all, it is a statement of a living world-view which has largely died out, save for the beliefs of tiny, fragmented, ethnic groups, in the Western hemisphere. The book gains enduring interest for this reason.

But who is the Dalai Lama? According to Tibetan Buddhism, a man may, through merit earned in past lives, participate in the light of *Buddhic* (perfected) understanding. High lamas of this sort are regarded as in some sense incarnations of Buddha, and are honored for this reason. Their authority, however, is rather traditional than sacerdotal. "The Dalai Lama," remarks Marco Pallis in *Peaks and Lamas* (Knopf), "most famous of them all, is the sovereign ruler of Tibet, but he is no Pope, and has no greater inherent right to define dogma than any of his clergy." The Dalai Lama is selected by means which are regarded as suitable for

recognizing him as a reincarnation of his predecessor. Of such learned lamas, Mr. Pallis also observes:

> Intellectual honesty is one of the traits most noticeable in the better Tibetan clergy, who shine like highlights against the duller surface of kindly mediocrity which characterizes the multitude of ordinary lamas. This sincerity is evinced in their fearless facing of facts and in a readiness to expose their most cherished beliefs to criticism.

The line of Dalai Lamas goes back to the great Buddhist reformer of the fourteenth century, Tsong Kha-pa, founder of the Yellow-Hat or Gelugpa order to which the Dalai Lamas (also the Panchen Lamas, who are held to have a less public role in Tibetan religion) belong.

My Land and My People tells of the upbringing, education, and elevation to heavy responsibilities, when only sixteen, of a Tibetan boy who was born in a small village in the northeastern region of Tibet in 1935. In 1950, when the threat of Chinese invasion had become plain, he was obliged to assume the full responsibilities of the Dalai Lama and to deal with the claims of the Chinese invaders. Pacific in temperament, as are nearly all serious Buddhists, he declared that his policy was that of the non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi, and he attempted to reason with the Chinese, pointing out that their policies could only antagonize the Tibetan people, leading to desperate rebellion. Unable to influence the Chinese generals, and under an apparent threat of kidnapping which drove his faithful followers to hopeless resistance, he left his country by night and found sanctuary in India, where he now lives, making periodic appeals to the U.N. for consideration of the plight of Tibet. On the matter of the Chinese claim of "suzerainty" over Tibetan territory, he quotes the report of the International Commission of Jurists, published in 1959 as *The Question of Tibet and the Rule of Law:*

> Tibet's position on the expulsion of the Chinese in 1912 can fairly be described as one of *de facto* independence and there are, as explained, strong legal grounds for thinking that any form of legal subservience to China had vanished. It is therefore submitted that the events of 1911-12 mark the reemergence of Tibet as a fully sovereign state, independent in fact and in law of Chinese control.

As the spokesman of all Tibetans the author writes with a certain reserve, yet his candor seems beyond doubt. No better guide could be found to an understanding of how Buddhists who are public leaders may attempt to cope with the dilemmas of military invasion and the ruthless policies of war-making states.

Good reading about Tibet is not easy to find. The Tibetan preference for being left alone has meant that, with very few exceptions, travelers have been unwelcome there, and besides the first book about this country, *Travels in Tartary, Tibet, and China,* by the French Abbes Huc and Gabet, published in English in 1857 (Routledge edition, 1998), and the present volume, only a few other books are available. The work already cited, by Marco Pallis, is excellent for its understanding of the life of the people and a discussion of Tibetan religion, culture, arts, and customs. *Tibet and its History* (Oxford University Press, 1962) by Hugh Richardson is recommended, as also the earlier volumes of Charles Bell, *Tibet, Past and Present,* and *The People of Tibet* (1928). A suggestive paper on the moral and historical significance of the confrontation between Tibetan culture and Chinese Communist force of arms was contributed by Raghavan Iyer to the 1962 *Journal* of the Royal Central Asian Society (pp. 255-65).

One way to indicate the importance of such studies would be to say that Tibet is the only remaining country of some size where there is still conscious and deliberate embodiment, in both attitude and practice, of the ancient doctrine or Immanent Justice, or Moral Law. Ages ago, all peoples had this basic view, in which, as Robert Redfield says in one of his books, "the universe is seen as morally significant," in contrast to the outlook of "civilized peoples, in which that significance is doubted or is not conceived at all."

As an inheritance from Gautama Buddha, the Tibetan expression of faith in a moral order is a deep, philosophic conviction, however contradictory may seem some of the superficial aspects of the popular religion. At the conclusion of his book, the Dalai Lama writes:

> I have no regret at all that I followed the policy of nonviolence till the end. From the all-important point of view of our religion, it was the only possible policy, and I still believe if my people had been able to follow it with me, the condition of Tibet would at least have been somewhat better now than it is. One might have compared our situation with that of a man arrested by the police although he has not committed any crime. His instinct may be to struggle, but he cannot escape; he is up against an overwhelming power; and in the end it is better for him if he goes quietly, and puts his faith in the ultimate power of justice. . . .
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> We should not seek revenge on those who have committed crimes against us, or reply to their crimes with other crimes. We should reflect that by the law of Karma, they are in danger of lowly and miserable lives to come, and that our duty to them, as to every being is to help them to rise toward Nirvana rather than let them sink to lower levels of rebirth Chinese communism has lasted twelve years; but our faith has lasted 2,500 years and we have the promise of Lord Buddha that it will last as long again before it is renewed by the coming of another Buddha. . . . My hope rests in the courage of Tibetans and the love of truth and justice which is still in the heart of the human race. . . .

It is at least possible that the long-term fruit of the tragedy of Tibet may be a deepening realization by other peoples of the crucial importance of moral philosophy to human happiness and welfare. Tibet is by all modern standards an extremely backward country; this the Dalai Lama is the first to admit, and during the first years of his rule he began basic reforms in taxation and land distribution. Yet for all the primitive ways of the Tibetans, there had never been famine in their country until after the Chinese invasion. Little "progress" is gained by ruthless imposition, and the anti-human consequences of infecting the people of industrially under-developed countries with sudden technological acquisitiveness are rapidly becoming evident in other parts of the world.

COMMENTARY
AWARENESS OF ENDS

As a way of explaining the work of the Synanon Foundation, a West Coast sociologist told the story of a seminar that had taken place at his university. It concerned penology and present were various graduate students, one of whom had done time, and a psychologist from a state prison. During the course of the discussion, the prison psychologist spoke of his difficulty in "getting through" to the convicts. He told about an interview with one inmate in which there was no communication at all.

At this point, the graduate student who had been in prison spoke up. "I can tell you why you couldn't get through to the prisoner," he said to the psychologist.

" Because, *he* can't be *you*."

This was the point of the story. There was no possibility of exchange of roles in the prison situation. The convict couldn't imagine himself in the position of the psychologist, and it was pretty difficult for the psychologist to imagine himself a convict. So there was no communication.

At Synanon, the sociologist pointed out, there is a genuine possibility of exchange of roles. All positions in the Synanon structure are attainable by any of the residents, in theory and in fact. There are no institutional barriers to communication.

Where, then, does "order" come from? How does Synanon prevent the admittedly delicate structures of growth situations from collapsing into a crude anarchy? These are preserved at Synanon, and wherever real growth situations exist, by an atmosphere of good taste, a sense of fitness, and a general understanding of common objectives—attitudes which are held in solution by educational and therapeutic communities. Sometimes these qualities have particular expression in a statement of purposes and are supported by a few house rules. But the "rules" do not accomplish the order; they give a partial description of the profile of order after it has been achieved. Rules are a way of reminding people of certain basic levels below which people who have a common ideal ought not to go.

When rules become instruments of *control*, the secret of community is lost, and then abuses of authority enter the scene like an invading army. You could almost say that, in an educational society, authority is compromised from the moment that anyone feels that he *needs* it to do his job.

There are endless applications of this principle for administrators. It is obvious, for example, that the breakdown of order at the University of California at Berkeley came when the students could no longer feel that the "rules" established by the University came from intelligence concerned with the common good of the learning process. Instead, they saw the rules as tools of a "control" which opposed the learning process, and the wholeness of the educational community was from that moment gone.

The preservation of wholeness is accomplished in various ways—the most important probably being by the intensification of awareness of its ends. In situations of great institutional complexity, this becomes very difficult, perhaps impossible. When to give up on "reform" and to start all over again, without the complexity, is the critical question.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

TO READ OR NOT TO READ?

THE number of books available on child psychology, and the growth and development of children seems to increase by geometrical progression, their object being to assure general survival of both parent and child throughout the pre-school years. They cover a myriad of subjects, from potty training to peer-group adjustment. One factor generally agreed upon is the incredible amount of learning which takes place in the child from birth to five years of age—an interval of psycho-physical development apparently unequaled at any other period in the life of the individual. It seems logical to many that at this time, when a child is open and acquiring all manner of knowledge and information, he should learn to read along with everything else.

In a book called *How To Teach Your Baby To Read* (Random House, 1964), Glen Doman (of the Doman Institute in Philadelphia) claims that early reading is a logical and natural thing; he feels that "reading language is a brain function exactly as hearing language is a brain function"—it following that reading should develop just as naturally in a child as hearing or speaking. Mr. Doman discusses briefly his years of work and research with brain-damaged children and the discoveries leading to the dramatic improvement in these children. From experience in teaching very small brain-injured children to read, he evolved a method of teaching reading to all young children.

Mr. Doman's book is not scholarly or scientific; in a casual popular style, it discards many of the myths of the "wrongness" of teaching the young child to read. Doman's suggested (although by no means only) way of introducing reading to the child is joyful, logical, and apparently effective. (In a burst of enthusiasm the writer tried the initial steps of "introduction-to-reading" with a not-quite-two-year-old. Sure enough, she found the new game to be just as much fun as Ring-around-the-Rosy. Within a few days, she was reading the words "Mommy" and "Daddy" with ease and delight. This is not to advocate following Mr. Doman's program step by step, and producing a reading genius at two-and-a-half! But the book does open up a wide area of thought on the subject of educating preschoolers.)

How To Teach Your Baby To Read cannot be recommended without reserve to the parent and educator: its light tone and surface coverage of material will hardly satisfy those wanting concrete proof and evidence for every statement made. But the ideas presented are interesting and deserve consideration—and the "happy approach" to teaching children is surely completely sound.

No doubt this book—if it was widely reviewed—stirred something of a furor in the educational world, since its ideas are definitely controversial. One can almost hear the already over-worked primary grade teacher groan as her classes fill with six-year-olds reading sixth grade material, children who can't read at all, and with children of every shade of variation in between. Apart from the problem of having to stimulate the readers and at the same time teach the non-readers, the teacher's chief concern with the child who can read when he enters school grows out of his possible alienation from his peer group and the adjustment problems which may ensue. In an editorial column, "When do they know too much?" in the *Saturday Review* (May 11, 1963), John Ciardi describes the dilemma of a friend who was reproached by a school for "over-accelerating" his daughter's reading ability at home. Mr. Ciardi reacts:

> There can, of course, be dangers, both real and imagined, in letting a child lose touch with others of his own age. The left-out chick may have an unhappy childhood, and such a childhood can damage both the child and the person the child grows into. On the other hand, a manageable amount of social maladjustment can be just the blessing that drives a child into introspection and even into ideas.

> I remain firmly out of sympathy with the theory that says an enshrined peer-group must determine how much it is well for a child to know at what point. I happen to have one happy slowpoke at home, the sweet oaf of my litter, and my fear for him is exactly that he is too disgustingly close to his mindless peer group. The day I catch him being "group disoriented" (if that is the phrase for it), I mean to shower bribes upon him in the hopes of buying his way to suspicion.

One thing that should certainly be discouraged in parents is an administrator's view of "group disorientation." A nice "adjustment" is not the highest good for either parent or child. The offense and trouble lie in over-emphasis on conformity norms, which the children are helped to adopt, instead of being led to appreciate the different, the distinguished, and the exceptional in their contemporaries. Achievement can be recognized as wonderful and exciting, and without encouraging show-offs or stressing the competitive spirit. Other cultures—such as that of the Hopi Indians—have shown the way in this.

Further, the teacher's attitude toward the odd child, the unusually gifted child, or the child who reflects the opinions of unconventional parents, will have a lot to do with the attitudes of all the children in later life, when what is misnamed "adjustment" may turn into a complacent uniformity of opinion, with all that this implies in terms of self-righteousness and cruel indifference to people who have other views and ways.

The Doman book opens up many educational possibilities—on a level which currently is little more than pure idealism but which may eventually be reality; for if a majority of children could read before they arrived in school, what a wealth of time could be saved by the teacher and used for different purposes.

A change in thinking is occurring today as to just what is proper education for kindergarten and primary children. More and more is being added to their curriculum as it is realized that they are ready and eager to learn. An article by Virginia Simmons entitled "Why Waste Our Five-Year-Olds?" (*Harper's,* April, 1960) asked for greater understanding and broader educational possibilities for the very young. Mrs. Simmons denounces many kindergartens as merely "play schools" and points out that five-year-olds are tired of play and eager and ready to learn—to begin serious work. Teachers, she says, are often narrow and do not keep up with the active and thirsty minds of children. In the stimulating atmosphere of her kindergarten classes in the Cincinnati Day School, children learn such things as counting, writing, simple arithmetic, and algebra and geometry. There is observation of nature study outdoors and through the microscope, mythology, music lessons and appreciation, and elementary French!

There is considerably more, here, than a showing of the natural capacities of small children for learning and growing in mind. Child education of this sort, if it could spread, would practically eliminate the problem of drop-outs in later years, since the shame and fear of failure could hardly afflict such children as they grow up.

FRONTIERS

A Knock on the Door

WHEN one lives in a rural area in the United States (or in Canada, as I recently found out), you dread like the plague the annual visits of the Jehovah's Witnesses. No matter how much you'd like to be elsewhere, you simply always get caught. I have never known how to meet them head-on except to open the door to just a crack and immediately tell them I'm not interested and close the door before they start. However, that method makes you feel that you have certainly not treated them as human beings, but simply like a PLAGUE.

We have a neighbor who relishes the annual argument they afford him. He hopes some day to convince them of his point of view. The chances of that are very unlikely.

My husband copes with the situation by telling them he is satisfied that this earth can be a heaven. That he doesn't need to live in a world beyond. His rainbows are here, now.

The other day I got caught again. This time I decided I would try to be "tolerant." The man who knocked at the door wasn't a stereotyped Witness. I was thrown a little off guard. But in the moment I paused, out came the Bible and miraculously it flipped to just the verse he wanted. Since the book was right under my nose, I read what he quoted.

I didn't get a word in edgewise until he asked me to purchase a booklet or magazine. At first I thought . . . the easy way out would be to give him a dime and be rid of him. But I didn't want *Awake.* And I didn't want anyone forcing it on me. When I said no, he told me I was in the majority, as most people refused to buy it.

He asked if I didn't think the world was in a terrible state. I had to admit that. We bantered back and forth and really weren't any farther apart than two railroad tracks, running parallel, but never meeting.

He wanted to convert me and I knew I wasn't going to convince him. He had an amazing packet of answers and he popped one out after each encounter.

It wasn't the words that held us apart, but the idea of his missionizing. He was *right* and somehow I must also think right. I must see his light. It was extremely difficult for me not to be rude. It took effort not to ruffle his feathers . . . mine were beyond repair. Finally he decided to leave. I learned from the neighbor who argued so long with him that the Witness had a young, pretty wife out in his car. I shuddered to think how long she waited during the calls her husband had made.

The light that lit his religious fervor was just bright enough to give him a hopeful view of his next mission. But not bright enough to show him that he was abusing others, taking their time and forcing them either to "tolerate" him or get mad and bounce him out. He was compelled to march forward and if you were in the path . . . you got his glimmer in your eye.

We all act like missionaries now and then, some more than others. We have a point to make and we hope to push it a little farther and reach the land of milk and honey and rainbows. The fact remains that the road to missionary work is cluttered with debris of people trampled on in the process. The missionary isn't always around the next day, week, month, year to continue the educational process he dreams he has started, and the chaos he creates is sometimes worse than letting things be.

I'm one of the worst cases of missionary-itus around. I try to hold it down, but off and on I find myself sweeping ahead for PEACE, Civil Rights, health food, anti-pollution, to the overwhelming disgust of others in the near vicinity. They get caught in the deluge of my current passion.

Maybe the answer is that nowadays one ought to go around with a small lamp showing clearly where he stands. If anybody is interested

he'll come over and stand under the lamp with you. There need to be a few more lamps marking A way, not necessarily THE WAY.

A few nights ago there was a knock on the door and I rose from reading and answered it. A girl about ten years old stood outside the door. I didn't recognize her. The French neighbors up the road from us have seventeen children so I thought maybe this was one I hadn't noticed before. I asked her what I could do for her. She said, "I'd like a loaf of bread, please." I was momentarily at a loss of words. I remembered we had three or four slices of whole wheat bread on the table (it was *brown* bread and would probably be an insult), but what could a few pieces of bread do for a family with seventeen kids? I asked how soon were they going to eat? She said in a half hour. I was still not in any better position to help. The only bread I had was in deep freeze. I told her I'd get a loaf. I brought it out and she tested it . . . it didn't give at all. She shook her head, handed back the frozen loaf, and asked how far it was to the next neighbor's house. Then I knew she wasn't from the French family. I told her they were French and couldn't speak any English. She answered that was okay, she spoke both languages and turned to leave. I saw her walk up the road, but didn't see her return. I don't know where she had come from.

Our next visitor of sorts was the son of a neighbor whom we hadn't seen for sixteen years. The last time I remembered seeing him had been when I was ill and his father and mother had sent him up with a basket of fruit from their garden. After that he went off to college, got his degrees, started teaching in New Brunswick.

Since his interest lies in statistics, cybernetics, etc., and ours in art, we had a bit of a time bridging to where we could talk about something besides weather.

He was attending scientific meetings about thirty miles off and was commuting from his parents' house to the meeting every day. I asked what the meetings were about. He brushed that off quickly. He then said that there was no point in our telling him our children's problems in arithmetic; in other words, we wouldn't understand his work and he didn't want to go into it. I dug around more, however, since he stayed for some time. I asked if he didn't think most factories could almost 100 per cent automate? He agreed to that. Then I asked if he didn't think it would be a terrible problem to cope with the people let out of the automated factories—people who over the years had become accustomed to functioning like human robots. That possibly there would be no solving of the problem for the people of this generation, but maybe their children. . . . He shrugged his shoulders and said, "We scientists don't go much into that kind of problems!"

There was only one difference between this visitor and the first. In neither meeting was there any coming together of the two poles of thought. But in the last meeting there was a human element. We had long been friends of his family. Although this young man and I had not met for sixteen years, we knew of each other and what the other was doing. There was a tie of friendship that made us patient with each other's differences. As the days went by, he visited more than once. We got to know more about him, but learned nothing about how science fitted into the scheme and fabric of our society. Once or twice he mumbled something about academic life and abstract thought, but was silent about our most pressing problem—THE MACHINE. He said nothing about how he might constructively apply his knowledge to the situation. I don't think it had even occurred to him.

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