The psychology of the adolescent / by Leta S. Hollingworth.

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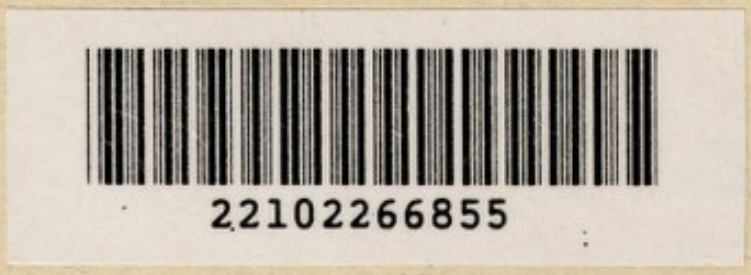
LETA S. HOLLINGWORTH, Ph. D.



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Will ye say, O foolish men! that the skill of ordering one's life well is not to be taught, but to come of its own accord, without reason and without art?—PLUTARCH

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ADOLESCENT

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Preface

A discussion of the problems of adolescence should be useful for various reasons. In the first place, it may be helpful to adolescents themselves. Each year, for more than ten years past, students in the later years of adolescence have been among those in attendance upon the lectures out of which this book has grown. None have been more eager in pursuit of the study than they. The intelligent youth who is actually in the midst of the adjustments here considered may profit from the definite impersonal formulation of the persistent problems of youth everywhere. Too often the struggles of an adolescent are made harder by the idea that he or she alone is being called upon to pass through these experiences. To realize that these are universal problems about which generalizations may be offered is in itself helpful.

For the guardians of youth, especially for parents and teachers, such a book should be of use. To have been an adolescent years ago is not necessarily, or even probably, to remember what an adolescent is like. To have been an infant is not to know what an infant's problems really are. Each of the developmental periods of life brings its own characteristic problems, minimizing and obscuring those that preceded. Therefore parents of adolescents, being themselves engrossed with the special problems of maturity—reproduction, the building of economic security, competition for reputation, the conservation of health, care of the young, care of the old, and so forth—realize but dimly the adjustments through which the boy or girl in the "teens" is passing. The problems of the latter may seem trivial, unnecessary, incomprehensible to the mature person, who has either forgotten his own early youth or has thought of his vaguely understood experience as unique.

Parents and teachers need to keep before themselves the persistent, universal problems of adolescence, in order that they may

preserve an adequate sense of the reality and seriousness of those problems. Above all, in order to have an impersonal guide to the revision of their own habits of acting toward the changing child, parents and teachers require a verbal formulation of the chief facts about those ambiguous years of life, when the girl or boy is neither child nor adult, but a mixture of both.

It is the idea of the author that most service of all may be rendered by such verbal formulation to those parents whose children are still in infancy or early childhood. Likewise, it may well be that it is the teacher of the young child who should most thoughtfully consider the adolescent. Not infrequently a parent is heard to say, "Now that my child is fifteen years old I should like to make some study of adolescence." The fact is that only a minimum of advantage is to be gained by such study, when the offspring has already reached adolescence. The maximum gain is to be achieved when adolescence is foreseen in the rearing of the infant and the child.

It should be understood that much of our lore about adolescence rests at present upon the mere opinions of professional observers, rather than upon exact quantitative researches, which would give observation the status of scientific fact. The volume here presented is offered not as a final word upon the subject, but rather as a formulation of the universal problems of the adolescent, as they appear at present, under conditions of contemporary life.

The suggestion that the book should be undertaken at this time came from Dr. C. W. Kimmins, whose experience as Chief Inspector of the London County Council indicates his sympathy with and insight into the needs of youth. Dr. Kimmins subsequently read the manuscript, much to its improvement, and fostered its publication.

There should also be acknowledgment of the courtesy of *The New Republic,* and of the Child Study Association of America, in that they have graciously permitted the reprinting of material in Chapter III, some of which has previously appeared in *Concerning Parents: A Symposium.*

Students of Dr. G. Stanley Hall will miss extensive reference to his voluminous pioneer works on adolescence. The fact is

that methods of study and social conditions have been so modified within the twenty-five years just past, that such reference would seem of historic value primarily, rather than of scientific or practical value to-day.

Finally, it must be said that there is a certain faltering of self-confidence in offering a volume written on one side of an ocean to be read on the other side, even when the mother tongue of all concerned is English. The author craves indulgence for the possible intrusion of citations and of idioms, which may belong only to the United States.

L. S. H.

Teachers' College,
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An appreciation

by

Dr. C. W. KIMMINS

The intense interest which has been concentrated in recent years on the problems of adolescence will ensure a cordial reception for the present volume to the literature of the subject. Professor Hollingworth contributes an admirable survey of the whole field in a singularly lucid and scholarly manner. As a trustworthy guide for parents and teachers it would be difficult to overestimate its value. The reasons for the important conclusions which are reached are supported by a mass of reliable evidence which inspires confidence and carries conviction.

An interesting and somewhat detailed account of primitive pubic ceremonies forms an excellent background for the description of the development of the important changes necessitated by a higher standard of civilization. The importance of a proper attitude towards the question of psychological weaning is fully emphasized, and the different factors which contribute to an adequate solution of this very difficult problem are discussed from a delightfully sane point of view. The value of interests for the mother, outside the comparatively narrow range of domesticity in the home, assumes an importance which is rarely attached to it. As a wholesome auxiliary to the eventful rupture of the more intimate relations existing between parent and child, however, it has obvious significance.

The extraordinary development of summer camps for boys and girls—comparatively unknown in European countries—brings with it many interesting problems. The excellent organization and remarkable popularity of these camps must, of necessity, have a great influence on the adolescent who has to choose between the appeal of the camp and that of the home during the long sum-

mer vacation. As regards psychological weaning, the camp, with its varied interests away from the home, must have a beneficent effect in preparing the boy and girl, and incidentally the parent, for the break which must come later on. On the other hand, the result of further segregation of the sexes may, as is clearly shown, produce the abnormal difficulties referred to in the chapter on Mating, and the necessity of overcoming them by some such solution as co-education. It would appear, however, that where, as in English homes, the adolescent boy or girl spends about three months during the year in the family circle, and is coming into social contact with members of the opposite sex in a normal manner, the necessity for resorting to co-education does not arise to the same extent.

English readers will be particularly interested in the fairly comprehensive account given of the possibilities of successful vocational guidance for after-school activities. In this connection, a very good case is made out for the greater utilization of the evidence afforded by intelligence tests. In America far more attention has been given to methods of estimating the various types of native ability than in this country, and the clear statement of the present position in Professor Hollingworth's book is of special value. Far too little attention has been given in the past to marketing the produce of our schools. The more scientific outlook on the question of vocational guidance is full of promise, and may arrest the tragic wastage caused by misfits in the industrial careers of our children.

Parents and teachers will derive the greatest possible benefit from Professor Hollingworth's treatment of the adolescent's search for a satisfactory philosophy of life. There are many elements which are essential to the development of a successful life-plan, and their claims are estimated and balanced with such admirable judgment that they cannot fail to be appreciated by the student of this all-important problem.

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CHAPTER I

What is adolescence?

Adolescence Defined

Adolescence is that period of life which lies between childhood and adulthood. The adolescent is not a child, nor yet a mature human being. Common observation recognizes that these are transition years, when the boy or girl can no longer be treated as a child, although not yet full grown. This age has been variously called "the awkward age," "the age of storm and stress," "the silly age." The girl is called "flapper," "gawk"; the boy is designated "jackanapes," "shaver," "stripling," "popinjay," "moon-calf," "greenhorn," or, as in the southern part of the United States, "jelly bean." These terms describe the general callowness of the period, and the good-natured contempt in which it is held by the mature.

Approximately, adolescence is the period of "the teens," thus covering about seven years of a person's immaturity. It is to be understood clearly that there are no sudden changes in the growing person, which definitely mark the beginning or the end of adolescence. The child grows by imperceptible degrees into the adolescent, and the adolescent turns by gradual degrees into the adult. The extreme gradualness of the change makes it hard for parents to realize that it is taking or has taken place, and this failure to perceive the transition from childhood brings many problems of adjustment into the life of the youth and of his parents as well.

Puberty

Although there is no definite day or hour when childhood ends, it has become conventional for purposes of discussion to fix upon

the first sign of reproductive power as the beginning of adolescence. The time when the young human being first becomes capable of reproducing the species we call *puberty*. The age of puberty varies with climate, with race, with intelligence, and possibly with other conditions.

First menstruation is regarded as the token of puberty among girls. Among English-speaking peoples puberty occurs at about thirteen years and six months for the typical girl. There are, however, wide individual differences in this matter. Girls may differ from each other as much as three or four years, without falling outside the limits that include normality (the middle 50 per cent. of cases). About 50 per cent. of white girls in the United States menstruate first between twelve years and six months and fourteen years and six months of age. A quarter of them menstruate earlier than this, a few as early as nine years of age, while the remaining quarter menstruate later; a few not until they are twenty years old, or older.

In Northern countries menstruation begins relatively late. In Finland, for example, the middle 50 per cent. of girls begin to menstruate between fourteen and sixteen years of age. The following statistics, furnished by Engstrom,[1] show when 3,500 Finnish women first menstruated. The table is presented to show how great are the individual differences in this matter:

AGE OF FIRST MENSTRUATION: 3,500 FINNISH WOMEN (ENGSTROM)

Age in Years	*Frequency of First Menstruation*	*Age in Years*	*Frequency of First Menstruation*
8	2	18	195
9	2	19	91
10	4	20	31
11	41	21	8
12	178	22	10
13	458	23	2
14	715	24	1
15	778	25	0
16	614	26	1
17	369		

1 Engstrom, quoted by E. H. Kisch, **Das Geschlechtsleben des Weibes**, Urban und Schwartzenberg, Berlin, 1908.

Among Italians and other inhabitants of warm climates, the typical age of first menstruation is earlier than among the English or the Finns. The yellow and the black races are also said to begin their reproductive life relatively early.

The signs of reproductive capacity are not so definitely established in the case of boys. It might be quite possible to establish by aid of the microscope at just what age spermatazoa (male reproductive cells) first appear, on the average. The technique of such investigation would be not only tedious, but socially taboo, as calling the attention of boys to this matter at an age when it is regarded as desirable for attention to be diverted from it. The reasons for this social attitude, which tends to interfere with all direct investigation in this field, we shall discuss in a later chapter. We mention it here only because it constitutes a partial explanation of the lack of exact knowledge about puberty.

As determined by the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics, such as growth of pubic hair and change of voice, puberty appears in boys about a year later than in girls, on the average. In English-speaking countries, therefore, puberty occurs typically in boys between thirteen years and six months and fifteen years and six months of age.

The attainment of puberty is positively correlated with intelligence, and with general quality of the organism. It has been proved that American children who test in the top 1 per cent. of the juvenile population for intellect attain puberty as a group earlier than the generality do. Terman[1] found among intellectually gifted children in California that "of gifted girls thirteen years old or older, 48 per cent. had menstruated before thirteen, as compared with 25 per cent. of unselected girls." It was also found that pubescence, as indicated by amount and kinkiness of pubic hair, occurs earlier among gifted than among unselected boys. On the other hand, feeble-minded individuals mature relatively late. What this correlation between age of puberty and general organic quality signifies for biology is not clear, in the present state of scientific knowledge. It is,

[1] L. M. Terman, **Genetic Studies in Genius**, Vol. I, Stanford University Press, 1925.

however, of practical interest for parents to realize that a bright child is likely to attain an early puberty.

Learning to Shave

Generally the determination of puberty in boys rests upon growth of the beard, change in voice, and appearance of pubic hair on genitalia and in the armpits. These are all significant signs of reproductive capacity, and are referred to as secondary sexual characteristics. The term "shaver" as applied to the adolescent boy no doubt has its origin in the beard which now requires shaving. It would be of interest to ascertain the age at which boys typically shave for the first time. Shaving is, of course, largely a matter of parents' judgments as to whether the boy "is old enough to shave," and not infrequently comrades and the boy himself perceive that the time is ripe long before the parents reconcile themselves to the first shave and all that it implies. Some boys would begin to shave at twelve or thirteen years of age if governed exclusively by the need for it. Probably sixteen is close to the age at which the majority of boys in English-speaking countries have their first shave.

Strictly considered, the beard is to be classified with other hairy growths which appear at puberty, already mentioned. Girls, however, do not typically develop facial hair, though a light down may grow upon the upper lip, being more conspicuous when it occurs in the dark-haired. Hair on all parts of the body becomes more luxuriant after puberty.

The Change of Voice

The change of voice from the child's treble to the deep tones of the adult is much more marked in boys than in girls. In fact, the vocal cords of boys practically double in length between childhood and adulthood, and the voice drops in consequence. This involves also a marked increase in size of the larynx. During the years in which these changes in structure are taking place, the voice breaks easily, and is often hoarse, evading voluntary control. For about two years a boy often has a strange and sometimes disagreeable voice, which may

be a source of great embarrassment to him. It may seem incredible that parents should not have learned from common observation what to expect in this matter of "change of the voice," yet it is a fact that recently a mother appeared in a nose, throat and ear clinic in a New York hospital, with her fifteen-year-old son, and requested that his tonsils be removed. "Because he has been getting such a voice on him that neither we nor himself can stand it." The explanation that the boy's voice was changing and that the difficulty could be righted only by the lapse of time had not occurred to her.

The voice of the girls does not break as conspicuously as that of the boy, but sometimes the girl's voice is hoarse, and more or less out of control for a time. The girl eventually achieves a fuller, richer voice, the voice of the adult, without a marked change of pitch, such as occurs in the boy.

Changes in Size

At the age of eleven years boys and girls are equal in weight and stature. Previous to that age boys are from birth slightly larger than girls. The curves meet at eleven years. Then at about the age of twelve girls begin to exceed boys in both weight and stature. The corresponding acceleration of growth does not begin until about the thirteenth birthday in the case of boys. Girls are typically taller and heavier than boys from twelve to fourteen years of age. After fourteen, boys again go beyond girls, as a comparative group, in most measurements of physical size.

The year during which puberty is attained is typically the year of greatest growth for any individual. Some adolescents grow as much as six inches and gain twenty or thirty pounds in the year which marks puberty, though such large increments of size within a year are exceptional.

Growth in stature and in weight has been studied more diligently than has growth in other dimensions,[1] because the former present more convenient problems. In the psychology of

1 B. T. Baldwin, **Physical Growth of Children from Birth to Maturity,** University of Iowa, 1921.

the adolescent the growth of hands, feet and nose plays a set of rôles fully as important as those of increase in height or in weight. It is well known, both to people in general and to anthropometrists, that various features of the body grow most rapidly at various periods. Thus, the feet and hands attain a disproportionate size early in adolescence. These members are nearly as large as they will ever be by the time the boy or girl is thirteen or fourteen years old. The sudden increase in size, causing at the same time a protrusion of wrists and hands from sleeves previously quite long enough, and a pinching of shoes formerly comfortable, creates something of a problem for the growing individual. This problem is often further complicated by the ignorance of the adolescent, in that he does not know the facts about differential rates of growth, and supposes that hands and feet will continue to grow as recently they have, thus reaching eventually truly enormous proportions. These acute anxieties could, of course, be prevented by information on the subject of growth.

The same considerations apply to growth of the nose. The development of this feature has been very little studied, but from common observation it may be inferred that the nose reaches its maximum size earlier than most other specialized structures. It seems to grow with feet and hands. For this reason many adolescents have the experience of seeing the nose push forward to almost suddenly huge proportions, standing out in bold and mature relief against the rest of the still childish face. Many a young adolescent has spent miserable hours examining his nose before the mirror, despairing over its size, in ignorance of the fact that within a few years it will have assumed its proper place as the moderate and well-formed nose of an adult, whose other features have grown up to match it.

During the months in which the nose is growing most rapidly, the hairs which line the nostrils are becoming stronger and thicker. The pores of the skin grow large, and in some cases the sebaceous glands are difficult to control, so that the pores become clogged. This results in pimples and other minor facial blemishes, which torment the vanity of the adolescent and drive

him to all sorts of lotions, skin tonics, soaps, and other alleged beautifiers.

There are, of course, very great individual differences in rate of growth and in size among adolescents of any given birthday age, just as there are great differences in ultimate size at maturity. These differences are due largely to immediate and remote ancestry, and possibly to influences operating in the environment during immaturity. On the whole, size at any age predicts size at all other ages. The short remain short, the tall remain tall throughout the whole course of growth and at maturity. The idea that there is likely to be some reversal of affairs at puberty, whereby a tall child will "fall off" in growth and become short, while the short child is likely to "spurt" at that time, and grow tall, has been shown to be a superstition, founded on nothing more substantial than human longings. Such a reversal almost never happens.

Rapid growth creates a variety of problems, not only for the adolescent but for his parent as well. In the first place, the appetite for food is often remarkable. The healthy adolescent is always wanting something to eat. One boy, for example, who grew six inches during his fifteenth year, was so troubled by hunger pangs that he would rise at night to drink quantities of water, not knowing what was the trouble with him, and finding that he "felt good as long as the stomach was full."

Problems of clothing confront the parent. Shoes and galoshes are outgrown almost as soon as purchased. Sleeves must be lengthened constantly. Underwear becomes too tight, and leads to irritations and discomforts but vaguely located as to cause. Gloves cease to fit. One thrifty and hard-pressed mother in despair made her son sleep in his shoes, "so that he would surely be able to wear them for a while." Hats, on the other hand, give little trouble through changes in size during adolescence, because the head does not grow rapidly during this period, having attained its growth earlier.

Changes in Shape

Apart from the changes due to size which have been described, there are other changes of *shape* at adolescence. Each

sex takes on the contours characteristic of its adult members.

In the case of the girl, the pelvis broadens, and exceeds that of the boy in girth. The breasts develop, producing curves where in childhood there were straight lines. The throat becomes fuller and more rounded. The shoulders broaden.

The boy's muscles increase very rapidly in size. Shoulders broaden markedly, and arms become sinewy and hard. The jaw bones become more prominent. In general, slenderness of body is typical of the growing adolescent of both sexes. In the case of both sexes, the reproductive apparatus now assumes its adult proportions, growing very rapidly at the beginning of puberty.

Development of Internal Structures

The vital organs and other internal structures of the body also grow larger, and some of them function at this time with particular activity. The glands which are essentially concerned with growth are conspicuously active. The thymus gland, present in childhood, disappears. The thyroid, located at the base of the neck, in front, often enlarges, so that the neck curves outward, particularly in girls. The sex glands undertake their functions for the first time. The sweat glands frequently become profuse in their excretion of perspiration. Damp hands and feet are more noticeable at adolescence than at other periods of development.

The stomach becomes large enough to serve the adult body, and the rest of the digestive system grows in proportion. Lungs, heart, and other vital organs "grow up."

As for the brain, there is no spurt of growth at adolescence. The brain, like the head which contains it, has reached nearly maximum size by the average age of puberty.

Vital Statistics of Adolescents

It would, of course, be expected that the weakest among those born would die before the age of adolescence, and this expectation is borne out by vital statistics. Resistance to disease is good at adolescence. Vitality is high during the period of

rapid growth. The report of the United States Census shows the smallest percentage of deaths occurring between the ages of ten and fourteen years. This finding is verified by studies from other sources.

Although adolescents die relatively seldom, medical literature states that various ailments show a likelihood of making an appearence then. Anaemia, nose-bleeding, headache, nervousness, palpitation of the heart, are mentioned in medical literature. It has not been made clear by research whether such disorders arise first at adolescence, or whether they arise merely as accentuations of tendencies already present in childhood.

Death from accidents probably shows some increase during adolescence, because of the new freedom from control. Death from drowning, from accidents in motor vehicles, from misfortunes with firearms, for instance, probably occurs during these years oftener than during any other equal period. This would follow from the fact that the use of weapons, vehicles, and other devices of civilization is being undertaken independently by the inexperienced during these years.

Anxieties Due to Growth

We have spoken of certain problems due to increase in size. There are various other emotional problems connected directly with adolescent growth. In the first place, some adolescents fear to grow up. They face each additional birthday with depression, and cling to their out-grown modes of dress. They view with anxiety every change in contour, and feel unnatural as the childish form disappears. Some are afraid they may not stop growing; others, that they will not grow enough. They have the fear which comes from feeling at the mercy of a force outside their control. Those who actually fear the process of growth itself are probably few, however. The majority either do not particularly notice the gradual changes in size and shape, or else are proud of them.

More nearly universal are the feelings of awkwardness at being too big, and the embarrassment of stumbling about before the co-ordination of the members of the body has become estab-

lished anew. All sorts of peculiar behaviour arise from attempts to handle the body inconspicuously and successfully. For instance, one fourteen-year-old boy took to tip-toeing all the time. When his annoyed mother reproved him, he became sullen, but sympathetic questioning elicited the fact that he tip-toed for fear of making too much noise with "such beastly large shoes." A girl of fifteen constantly assumed a semi-crouching posture when with groups of people, by bending the knees. Psychological examination discovered that the girl sought thus to "seem smaller," because she "simply could not stand to be so awfully tall." Another girl refused to attend church, because her "neck felt so long in church, with every one looking at it." A boy of fourteen stubbornly refused to sing at school, because of his changing voice, and had a somewhat protracted struggle with the teacher of music. Still another boy relates that when he went with his parents to the city, and to the Museum of Art, he had to take off his shoes about every fifteen minutes to rest his feet, "for they were my Sunday shoes, and had become about a size and a half too small for me since they were bought." The shoes next purchased for this boy were three sizes larger than those in which he visited the museum! The boy said, "I suffered untold pain in those shoes, but my father insisted I must wear them out."

Introduction into the habit of shaving is sometimes accompanied by appreciable anxiety. One man reports, for instance, that he was much surprised and hurt when as a boy he was presented with a shaving set for Christmas. He was filled with strange and disagreeable emotions at the thought that he should be expected to shave. Another, on the contrary, considered that he should begin to shave at the age of thirteen years, and, being unable to convince his parents of his need, formed the habit of sitting with his hand over his mouth and chin much of the time. The psychology of shaving is sufficiently important to demand some thought and conscious planning on the part of parents, so that the habit may come about naturally and without unnecessary conflict.

By far the most troublesome anxieties arising from development itself are those connected with the maturing sex functions. The

girl who has not been rightly instructed concerning menstruation may suffer severe fright and other undesirable emotions upon perceiving the signs of this function. Sometimes a girl will live months in chronic anxiety as to the meaning of what is happening to her. Unwholesome instruction is as bad as, or worse than, no instruction in this matter. The depressing terms commonly used in designating this function, which classify it as an illness, are terrifying, and so are the vague words which suggest the approach of nameless calamity, as "*something* is soon going to happen to you." The whispered tones, in which it is not infrequently thought by the parent proper to convey the instruction, tend to excite shame or disgust, or both. The whole psychology of this natural function should be revised in such a way that it can be referred to in a natural tone of voice, and as a commonplace function of the healthy body. At present there survives in modern attitudes too much of the savage's dread of the mysterious.

Also, the uninstructed or ill-instructed boy may be subject to very acute emotional disturbances, when the seminal vesicles first begin to overflow. In normal boys this overflow occurs at intervals, and they should be educated to expect its occurrence, and to have no fears in regard to it. Unfortunately many boys are left to meet the new function without any correct idea of its meaning, and, becoming fearful, they fall into the hands of impostors, who purposely increase their anxieties in order to obtain money for alleged treatment of what is a normal manifestation. The most cruel emotional conflicts may thus be generated, through the failure of parents and other guardians to instruct the young as to what is usual in sexual development.

Gradualness of Development

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that adolescence does not "come on" suddenly, in any given night or day. It is impossible to fix upon an hour in any life history, and to say. "Just here childhood ended, and adolescence began."

The child between eight and twelve years of age is designated prepubescent. During these years of late childhood there are

typically no conspicuous changes, either of the organism or of the environment. The shedding of the first teeth, and the acquisition of the permanent teeth have been experienced. The important transition to the school has been achieved. The typical child from eight to twelve years of age, save for accidents of fate, grows gradually, without notable event, towards puberty. He goes from the third grade through the sixth grade of the elementary school. He is engaged in the formation of habits of sleeping and eating, of dressing, of speaking, and of everyday living. He is acquiring the so-called tool subjects in school—reading, writing, arithmetic. These years are recognized as very favourable to drill and to the formation of routine habits. The child is under the control of elders to an extent which will never again be possible.

He is obviously and indisputably a dependent. He is too small and immature to earn a living. The child labour laws place him definitely outside the ranks of earners. No one will employ him; no one can employ him. If he rebels against his parents' authority, his size and strength are such that he can be subdued easily. For instance, it is easy to determine his bedtime hour, since he can be lifted bodily and can be thus placed in bed.

Intellectually he is still too immature to question successfully the manners and customs of his elders. The need for systematic explanations of the world, and for consistent plans of future action, is not yet felt. There are no urgent sexual impulses.

It is to be understood clearly that we are speaking here of the *average* prepubescent child. Individual differences are, of course, of very wide range. If we should scrutinize five thousand ten-year-olds chosen at random from a community, we should find a few of them so large and strong as to be capable of "a good day's work" at manual tasks. Others would be so small and frail as to be wholly useless as workers. A few would be fully as intelligent as the average adult is; and, on the other hand, about an equal number would grade below the mental level where school work can be successfully begun. A few would be attaining puberty, while a corresponding few would be eight or ten years from puberty. The status which we have described

above applies only to the *majority*, to the typical members of the species.

From this typical prepubescent child is evolved by imperceptible degrees the pubescent girl or boy of thirteen or fourteen years; and thereafter by degrees still very gradual, though somewhat more noticeable, the total growth is achieved, till we have at last the matured human adult.

The Myth of a Magical "Change" at Puberty

It is still common to see parents cherishing the belief that some magic change will take place in their unfortunate children at puberty. The parent of a feeble-minded, nervous, or sickly child is frequently heard to say, "He (or she) will likely be all right when he (or she) 'changes'." This myth of a re-birth of personality at puberty is by no means confined to the uneducated as mere folklore. Physicians themselves, even in our own day, often advise parents of feeble-minded and otherwise unfortunate children that the latter "will be all right after puberty."

Such advice has no warrant in scientific research. The facts, so far as facts have been ascertained in regard to "change" at puberty, are that the feeble-minded child is the feeble-minded adolescent; the weak child is the weak adolescent. The quality of the organism is a constant, which shows itself from the beginning to the end of the individual life. The stupid do not become bright, the bright do not become stupid, at puberty, or at any other period of development.

This widespread myth that every child is a changeling, who at puberty comes forth as a different personality, is doubtless a survival in folklore of the ceremonial rebirth, which constituted the formal initiation of our savage ancestors into manhood and womanhood. In these pubic ceremonies, which we are about to describe, the child was "made over" socially into an adult. The idea of social change has become confused with notions of biological change in organic quality. There is, however, in reality, no connection between the two kinds of change. The pubic ceremonies effected social change; but they did not, of

course, have any influence upon organic quality, which typically remained and remains a constant.

Certain circumstances of educational adjustment and selection also contribute in part, no doubt, to the illusion of and belief in a magical "change" at puberty. The rather bright child entering school at five or six years of age is in company with others of nearly all degrees of intelligence. Thus, he is compared in achievement with unselected children, and may seem extremely gifted by contrast.

As time goes on, and he reaches the seventh or eighth grade in school (at about the age of puberty) all the least competent of his competitors have been eliminated from comparison with him by failure to be promoted or by leaving school. Proceeding into high school, he is compared with a still more highly selected group, and if he attends a first-rate college he will rank as but an average student, for he will be among adolescents who are on the average as bright as he is. This reduction from "very high" to "average" in status is not due to any "change" taking place at puberty or during adolescence in the individual considered. The change lies in the quality of competitors.

Similar influences of selection obviously may operate to produce the illusion that a dull child is growing brighter at puberty. By the time that period is reached he may with a "slow moving group" or in an ungraded class at school, where he can function successfully; or, leaving school, he may become engaged in some work to which he is suited. Such adjustments produce in the uncritical the illusion that the individual has "changed."

CHAPTER II

The pubic ceremonies

The Beginning of Formal Education

Among savage peoples there is widespread and probably universal behaviour which shows that puberty is a matter of very great importance to the primitive mind. The psychology of the puberty initiations, as described by anthropologists, is of deep interest to those who study adolescence. Pubic ceremonies and formalities of the most solemn character attend the emergence from childhood. Conscious, organized education began among our remote ancestors with these sacred, primitive rites, and gradually extended to those younger and older, as civilization progressed. At the lowest stages of culture the sole formal attempt at education that we find is comprised in the pubic ceremonials. Among more advanced peoples only do we find organized education for young children, while in the most highly cultured communities education also extends up through adolescence, and into adulthood, as among ourselves.

The profession of teaching had its first crude beginnings in the tortures, humiliations, instructions, and, to us, immoral ceremonies of the initiations into manhood and womanhood. With the advent of puberty, the child was considered adult in privilege and responsibility. The years of growth and change which follow, and which civilized peoples call *adolescence,* were and are usually disregarded in the practices of savage tribes. The boy became a warrior before he was fully grown. Girls became wives and mothers at an age when we now regard them as little more than children. It is important to bear in mind that the evidence from antiquity shows these social phenomena to have

held for the white and yellow races in their primitive stages of culture, as they do for red and black savages to-day existing.

Initation of Boys into Manhood

In Africa and in Australia, where aboriginal tribes are still to be observed, most attention seems to be directed toward the boy. Among such tribes the most elaborate and important of all ceremonials are said to be those which transfer the youth, arrived at puberty, from the society of women and children to the society of the men, and thus to the tribal life. The primitive lad is naturally with his mother and with other children from infancy for about the first ten years of his life. The formative influences are thus those of the family circle, and of playmates. However, as he grows his father takes an increasing part in his management. The initiation ceremonies at puberty serve to complete the transfer of the child from mother and family to father and tribe—particularly to the tribe. The period of their celebration constitutes the most crucial epoch in his whole life. The purpose of the ceremonies is to bring the boy to man's estate, with full participation in men's affairs. Community welfare and tribal law must henceforth supersede family affection and authority. In order to bring about this necessary change completely the ceremonies must be made startling, awesome and impressive in the highest degree.

From Melanesia we have the following description of initiation. The rites observed begin with the monsoon, at which time a father is expected to bring his son for instruction by the boy's maternal uncle. Boys who are candidates for initiation are each day blackened with soot yielded from burnt coconut shell, and in addition to this each novice is covered with a huge mat which confines him to darkness during the whole day. No kind of talking or play is allowed, and the boys sit still with downcast eyes throughout the hot day.

Any failure to obey the rules may be punished by death, a penalty which is said to have been actually inflicted on occasions when boys, tired of inactivity, have broken away and run for freedom. Visitors must stay away from the enclosure, until the

youths have been marched off to a hut, from which they emerge again at daybreak.

Among the tribes of south-east Australia, the custom is for fully initiated men to prepare a large clearing, surrounded by a mound about fifty feet thick. Four or five hundred yards distant is a second clearing, joined to the larger by a path covered above with arched saplings. When all this has been constructed, the ceremonies are commenced by a youth who is an initiate of the most recently preceding assembly of the tribes. This young man goes near a log, from which he suddenly begins to run back, shrieking, "I see snake!" Other men, also pretending to be frightened, leap up crying, "Where? Where?" All the men now run away, in a procession, carrying green branches, and shouting that the ceremonies are in progress. This is to warn women and children to keep away from the sacred spot. Powwows occur nightly, and the preliminaries sometimes go on for several weeks. The object is to stir up as much excitement as possible.

When all who are interested or involved have finally gathered, the men rush off at dawn, each carrying a piece of wood on fire. They enter the large clearing, and make a great fire in the middle. In the meantime, a smaller fire has been kindled some distance from the large clearing. Here the candidates for initiation, with those who have them in charge, are assembled. There are two guardians for each boy, and these guardians have a variety of duties to perform. They wait upon the novices, provide their food and water, paint them with the ceremonial stripes, and prepare the necessary bands of grass for their foreheads. Also they instruct their pupils in regard to the nature of a tribesman's duties in war and in peace. They expound tribal law, codes of morals, and marriage law. They tell the tribal legends. The influence of the medicine man is impressed upon the youths. The wisdom and magical power to kill, which reside in the witch doctor, are solemnly avowed.

Then various ordeals are undergone.[1] The candidates are brought so close to the fire that they may be scorched; are sent out to hunt; have a tooth knocked out. The tooth is knocked out

[1] **A. W. Howitt, Native Tribes of S. E. Australia, Macmillan and Company, London, 1904.**

with a chisel and club, the boy being expected to demonstrate manhood by suffering without manifest emotion. According to an observer, one boy whose tooth was not dislodged until after seven blows, "could not have shown less feeling had he been a block of wood."

At initiation in the Kaiabara tribe, old men instructed the young in regard to marriage laws, the boundaries of their country, and suitable food. In modern schools we should call this instruction in law, geography and nutrition. The boys stood in one row, the girls in another, while an old man walked between the rows asking the boys to choose which of the girls each would have for a wife. If a boy's choice fell upon a girl from a clan into which the tribal laws would not permit marriage, he was punished. If he selected a partner in accordance with tribal rules, he was praised.

Among certain tribes a novice was obliged to prove that he could hunt by catching a small animal, and carrying it alive in a bag around his neck during the initiation. This act convinced the old men that the youth had skill as a hunter and was ready to marry.

In some initiation rites the surrender of the boys by their mothers is dramatically represented. At certain ceremonies in New South Wales, after preliminary performances lasting three days, one morning after sunrise all the people—men, women, and children—assembled adjacent to a large circle which had previously been marked out on the ground. The men formed into a group and danced in front of the women and children. The mothers of those to be initiated stood in the front row of women during the dance, and at its conclusion "they commanded the novices to enter the circle, thus relinquishing their authority over them. This signified that the family, which hitherto had retained possession of the youths, now surrendered them to the headmen of the tribes."

Among certain tribes of Queensland, when the time for initiation approaches, the novice, who has been elaborately decorated with waist-belt and head-dress, is brought before his parents and friends. "When the women first gaze upon the lad thus ornamented, they all begin to cry; and so do his immediate

relatives, his father's and mother's brothers, who further smear themselves over with grease and ashes in order to express their grief."

In the puberty rites of the Andaman Islands at a certain stage in the proceedings, the mother, sister, and other relatives of the novice come and weep over him, the reason being "that the youth has now entered upon an important epoch in his life, and is about to experience the trials and vicissitudes incidental thereto."

Every effort is made by the directors of the ceremonies to impress upon the novices the necessity of their strict separation henceforth from all the childish ways of life. One savage tribe holds the custom of having two old men sit down on the ground, in front of the novices, and proceed with ridiculous antics to make a mud pie, after the manner of children, while the men dance around them. "This is to indicate that they must no longer consort with children, and play at childish games, but for the future act as men."

Arunta boys, while being painted—the first initiatory ceremony—are assured that this will promote their growth to complete manhood, and they are also warned that in future they must not play with the women and girls, nor camp with them, as hitherto, but henceforth must go to the camp of the men.

These ceremonies obviously vary considerably from tribe to tribe, but are always present in some form, as tribal custom. The tribe becomes a sort of secret society,[1] consisting of all the initiated men, so that initiation is practically compulsory for a respectable career. Failure to undergo in a satisfactory manner the rites and ordeals prescribed means deprivation of all tribal privileges and disgrace for life. By the initiation ceremony the boy is "made a man," and without it he is not a man. Initiation, moreover, is the privilege only of those who are by birth true members of the tribe. Aliens may aid in preparation for the ceremonies in some cases, and may share in the feasts that follow; but in the sacred rites themselves they have no part.

It is as *ordeals* that puberty rites have attracted most attention.

1 Hutton Webster, **Primitive Secret Societies**, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1908.

Where the obligations of a military career rest upon every tribesman, these ordeals represent an effort to impress upon the novice, by the vivid means of bodily torment, the necessary qualities of a warrior, and to inculcate the indispensable tribal virtues of bravery, obedience, and self-control. The ordeals are very diverse, each tribe having adopted slightly different ones: pulling out the hair, headbiting, knocking out the teeth, sprinkling with human blood, drinking human blood, immersion in dust or filth, heavy flogging, scarification, burning, circumcision, tattooing, are a few of the more common forms.

After their initiatory seclusion, the boys are led back to the tribe and are invested with the characteristic belongings of men. "The ceremony of restoration to parents and relatives after the seclusion is supposed to be unaccompanied by any display of emotion on the part of the boy. There must be suppression of the emotions. . . . The novice has now left the fellowship of his mother. Games are forgotten. A manly future is separated from a boyish past by an unbridged chasm."[1]

The initiates may now begin to look about them for wives, and special efforts are made to heighten their attractiveness. A head-dress of cassowary feathers may be assumed. A skewer-like ornament may be thrust through the nose. Large seeds are placed in the cheeks to make them bulge out, and other beautifiers are employed. Thus rendered attractive they are soon married. In some tribes, as among the Melanesians, the proposals of marriage come from the girls. Where such is the custom, "should an acceptable girl propose, acquiescence is notified by presenting her with a ring of string, conveyed by an intermediary."

Initation of Girls into Womanhood

Among American aborigines it is the girl who receives more elaborate attention at puberty.[2] Among the natives of southeastern Alaska the first great event in the life of the girls is her arrival at reproductive maturity. The old custom was to banish

1 W. D. Hambley and C. Hose, **Primitive Education**, Macmillan and Company, London, 1906.

2 G. Stanley Hall, **Adolescence**, Vol. II, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1904.

her for six months in a small hut, from which she could not emerge except after dark, when she must go with her mother, and wear a prescribed cloak or hood. During the isolation she was kept busy all day long sewing pelts into blankets, and weaving hats and baskets, to teach her industry and patience.

"On the first day of her retreat, a little pin was inserted through her lower lip by a slave, who was then either freed or killed. The child fasted for four days. Then the mother brought a little grease, and a little basket of water. The latter must be overturned three times before she could drink, to teach her self-denial. Then she could eat the grease, and drink four swallows of water through a hollow bone. Complimentary boxes of grease were also sent to the chief families of the father's totem. Then followed another four days of fasting, and then a regular diet of dried venison, fish and potatoes. Great precaution must, however, be taken for fat meat would make her stout; clams would make her lean; anything raw would make her die young; parts of the fish would make her thoughts transparent. If she should comb her hair before the fifth day, it would come out. If she should move about much, she might acquire habits of restlessness. She must not talk much, lest she become a scold."

In fact, there was a brave tribal attempt to inculcate all the good, old-fashioned feminine virtues—obedience, submission, quiescence, self-sacrifice and patient industry, together with a major interest in the matter of personal appearance and coyness. She must not become too fat, nor too lean. Her thoughts must not be transparent.

It is recorded that the average girl soon took to this life, and in accordance with instructions strove to fix her whole attention upon skilful weaving. When the period of seclusion was over, the friends of the parents were invited to a coming-out party, at which the girl was introduced to the eligible young men.

Wealthy families then, as now among us, made a great display. The débutante was led out by her mother and girl friends, in a new calico dress, an expensive blanket, and strings of beads. If she were healthy, industrious, modest, obedient, spoke quietly

and gained a reputation for skill and hard work, suitors abounded, and according to account she was soon married.

Among other tribes it is the custom to confine girls for one month in an isolated cabin when they attain puberty, which is most often in their thirteenth or fourteenth year. No one is allowed to see them during this time, and it is supposed that they are away on a voyage to the moon or some other celestial abode. At the end of a month they return to their people, amid great feasting and rejoicing.

Frazer tells us that among the Zulus and other South African tribes, when the first symptom of puberty appears, the girl must hide herself, not be seen by men, cover her head lest the sun shrivel her, and seclude herself for some time in a hut.

The Hupa Indians of California have an elaborate ceremony for initiating girls into womanhood. Upon the first objective signs of puberty, the girl goes to one of the established bathing places in a creek near by, enters the water at once to her waist, throws it over each shoulder twice with her hands, returns to the house, stoops, and puts out her hands, looks at the door, but does not enter. She then runs to another bathing spot about half as far from the house as the first; bathes, and goes back in the same way. Then she goes to a third place, half the distance of the second. Returning from this excursion, she brings wood into the house, which no girl may do before this time. She must not eat till this is done, and her chaperon gives her but one regular meal a day. She must go without drinking water for ten days, during which this ceremony is repeated, and must live upon acorn mush, dried eels, and salmon, but must eat no fresh fish. During all this time she must wear a dress made of the inner bark of the maple, prepared and woven into cloth. She must not look at the sky, must look no one in the face, especially a man, and while in the house is concealed from view if a man enters. She must be very careful of her acts and words, for whatever she says or dreams during these ten days will come true, and she will ever afterward be what she was during her training.

The second night dancing begins. It is in the house, but the girl being initiated is covered with a blanket. In the dances the

women sit around the wall, and the men shake and brandish sticks made of mock orange, split at the end so that they will rattle, and decorated with paint. When the men go out from the house at intervals of about an hour, the women sing. This performance goes on for nine nights. At the concluding session there is a special song, which is not sung at any other time, during which the blanket is held over the girl and struck with sticks. When the men leave at dawn, the girl is uncovered and emerges. Two women stand in front of the house, one hundred yards from it, facing each other, holding shells high above their heads. As the girl approaches them, she whips herself over the shoulder with woven strands of maple bark. She aproaches and then recedes from the women, continually whipping herself. When near them, she leaps up and gazes into the shells, doing this ten times for each woman. She has now "seen the world of the immortals," and makes a last trip to the bath, followed by small children, who entice her to look back. *If they succeed, all the ceremony has to be begun again.* When the final bath is ended, the girl is a woman, and can eat any foods.

Informal Observances of Modern Peoples

These primitive practices are of interest to us for various reasons, one of which is that they show us the origin of certain customs which we, as civilized peoples, observe to-day. One of the most striking of these customs is the "coming-out party" of the fashionable young girl, which fills many columns of the newspapers each winter. Among contemporary peoples there are many customary regulations concerning dress, diet, social intercourse, titles, manners and privileges, the abrogation of which marks the emergence from childhood. In the United States the title "Mister" is now applied for the first time before the surname of the growing boy. He acquires his first evening clothes. He begins to smoke openly, and is offered tobacco by his father, which was not done in childhood. He now drinks tea and coffee. Some time during the teens he receives his own latchkey and a shaving set. A watch is likely to be presented to

him. Among the well-to-do he often has for his own some vehicle, formerly a horse and carriage, now more commonly a motor-car or motor-cycle. Marbles and other childish toys are put away.

The girl begins to be addressed as "Miss," being no longer called by her baptismal name, except in the case of intimates. She commences to use cosmetics, and is invested with whatever garments may at the time be modish for adult females. She now partakes of whatever foods, drinks, and condiments are customary for elders; as in the case of the savage girl, "she may now eat anything." Like her brother in modern times, she expects to receive a private timepiece, a latchkey, and a vehicle. Dolls are put away, and child's toys become unsuitable.

Public Observances

In the large cities, among well-to-do families, the début, or coming-out party, is still customary, though there are signs that the fashion for this function is on the wane, at least among American girls. The début as practised among families in New York, Chicago, and other cities is conducted according to numerous rigidly prescribed rules. The wealthier the family, the more precisely are these rules observed.

Boys and girls play together freely till they are twelve to thirteen years old. Then they are separated in day schools, and later in boarding schools. During holiday seasons, the old playmates may meet at a few informal parties, but not often. The girls are secluded during these years in "finishing schools," where instruction is chiefly in music, manners, languages, and art. Stress is laid on dress and the toilet.

When the girl has been thus "finished," a date is set for the coming-out party, after much consultation to avoid conflicts with the parties of other débutantes. The summer preceding is largely given over to making entertainment lists, and to ordering the proper gowns. Special attention is given to hair, complexion, and general appearance. Upon returning to the city in the autumn, it is not customary to attend any parties or meet any people socially before the "coming-out."

All the parents' friends are invited to the début. The dressing of the girl for the party is an important affair. The hair is arranged by a hairdresser, and the most becoming things are chosen. Friends send flowers and other presents. Parents often give jewels, not previously regarded as appropriate.

The débutante then receives the invited guests, with her mother. Usually the reception is at home and is followed by a dinner and a dance. The eligible men of her social set are present, many of them bachelors older than herself.

A busy social round now begins. The girl goes from luncheons to teas, from teas to dinners and receptions, attending the coming-out parties of other débutantes, where she now "assists." On Sunday she pours tea at home, the eligible men going about from one residence to another. Also, she is now expected to make formal calls with her mother, and has calling cards engraved with "Miss" before her name. She announces a day "at home," where she receives calls with her mother each week.

Formerly chaperonage was required for dining in public or attending the theatre with a man, but the customs in reference to chaperons are rapidly changing. In any case, chaperonage is much abated after the first winter "out."

This celebration lasts two or three months. At the end of this time the débutante is taken away to travel, usually in Europe, if she is an American girl. When she returns she is an adult member of Society.

These ceremonies of début are similar from city to city. The "introduction" of the wealthy young girl has come down from time immemorial, being gradually longer and longer postponed, until the débutante is now eighteen to twenty years old, rather than twelve to fourteen, as originally. The younger girls are now called "sub-debs", in America.

Confirmation in an orthodox religion is another ceremony of puberty, which still has a public character with Americans. Also, graduation from school—"commencement"—is to be looked upon as a kind of public initiation into the responsibilities of life, at the end of schooling.

However, among English-speaking peoples, to-day, there is no

formal ceremony of a public character that definitely disconnects the boy or girl from childhood in all its aspects. The début publicly announces, for a small number of wealthy families, the maturity of the girl. Confirmation publicly connects the boy or girl with the congregation of adults, but by no means all boys and girls are confirmed. Commencement for those who are graduated, officially severs the connection of the child with the school. But we have no ceremony which officially severs every child from infantile habits of action, and forces him or her out into adulthood. The decay of these public ceremonies under civilization has undesirable psychological consequences in many cases, yet it is difficult to see how they could have been maintained or how they could be revived.

Legal Regulations

Apart from the informal ceremonies of initiation now left to the private enterprise of the family, there are certain recognitions in law of emergence from childhood's status. The age for shaving, for ownership of watches, for the application of cosmetics is not prescribed in law. The age for payment of full fare in travelling, for licence to drive a motor car, for marrying without parent's consent, for inheriting property, for voting is in every case regulated by law. For some of these formalities the age now lies at the end instead of at the beginning of adolescence. Thus they have been longer and longer postponed till they now occur long past puberty, and could scarcely be called pubic ceremonies. This postponement of the age of responsibility has arisen from the more complicated nature of the environment under conditions of civilized life.

The law also recognizes the moral irresponsibility of the immature person. A person cannot commit a crime in many modern civilized states till after the age of sixteen years. Until that age, wrongdoing is legally designated "juvenile delinquency," and is not punished by the penalties prescribed for adults in similar situations.

What the Ceremonies Mean

It has been pointed out that these impressive coming-of-age ceremonies are found everywhere in early stages of culture. They differ greatly from place to place, but certain essential and fundamental ideas are in every case discoverable—certain recognitions of fundamental psychological needs, capacities, and tendencies which are part and parcel of normal adolescent growth. All the major persistent problems of human youth are recognized. In the first place, there is clear recognition of the necessity for getting away from the family, and of becoming a member of the tribe as distinguished from the family group. In the second place, it is indicated that the adolescent is becoming an earner, and that he confronts his vocational career. In the third place, there is explicit formulation of the fact that the adolescent has arrived at sexual maturity, and is capable of reproducing the species. In the fourth place, there is recognition of the need which the maturing person feels for a point of view upon the universe, which will give him a satisfactory conception of life and death.

Various other minor ideas find expression in the pubic ceremonies, but these appear to be the most outstanding. These are the problems which characterize adolescence, and in which the struggles peculiar to that period of life originate. The person who successfully matures has achieved emotional independence of his parents, or other guardians of childhood ; is earning his way in the world; has solved the problem of mating; and has adopted a religion or philosophy that will unify his life and give it meaning. These are among the most important of all the psychological adjustments which human being have to make during their lives. The years between twelve and twenty are the crucial years for these developments. During this time one is "born again," according to the symbolism of the pubic ceremonies. He will emerge from the ordeals an *adult*, if he meets them all with undefeated courage. But he or she who retreats from these ordeals, defeated in any of the four major struggles

of youth, emerges with an aborted personality. The initiation into manhood or womanhood remains incomplete. The person is likely to retain permanently something of the immaturity and impotence of childhood.

CHAPTER III

Psychological weaning

Importance of Getting Away from the Family

It has been pointed out that modification of family ties is one of the most important functions of pubic ceremonials. Primitive man recognized, as the modern psychologist recognizes, that there is an urge which develops in every normal human being in the years between twelve and twenty, to get away from family supervision and to become an independent person. We may call this process *psychological weaning*. Like the physical weaning from infantile methods of taking food, it may be attended by emotional outbursts or depressions ,which are likely to come upon people whenever habits have to be broken. In each kind of weaning we have a situation in which habits appropriate and necessary in a preliminary stage of development come into conflict with the urges and activities growing out of further development of the organism. Also, in either the physical or the mental weaning, at least two separate sets of habits must be superseded, the habits of the parent and the habits of the offspring. In mental weaning, indeed, several sets of habits may be involved. There are the habits of the child, of the mother, of the father, and often of older brothers and sisters, or even of grandparents, and of uncles and aunts, all having the possibility of acting in opposition to the new attitudes that must come when childish things are to be put away.

The process of getting away from the family thus stands double, triple and even quadruple chances of being painfully and imperfectly accomplished in modern life. The technique of weaning, and especially of mental weaning, deserves study by

all parents who desire the welfare of their children, instead of their own emotional indulgence.

By getting away from the family is not meant the mere circumstance of leaving the parental roof, although in most cases that is automatically involved. There are persons who have fully accomplished their psychological weaning who continue to reside in the parental house; and, on the other hand, there are those who live far removed from it in space, yet have never freed their minds from childish dependence upon parents or from childish obedience to them, and who always expect the world at large to protect them as parents protected them in the home.

Also by emancipation from the parents is not meant disorderly conduct, defiance of legitimate authority, or insolence. Some of the most conspicuously unweaned of adolescents are the most insolent, disorderly, and troublesome. They behave like infants indeed—infants weighing more than a hundred pounds, and grown to be five or six feet tall. Such adolescents, however insubordinate in conduct, are not emotionally emancipated in the sense in which we are using the term. On the contrary, they are usually bound to the parental resources in all essential respects. They are not on the way to the kind of maturity of which we are here speaking.

By getting away from the family is meant a detachment from it in the emotional life to such an extent at least that there shall remain no crippling bondage to interfere with legitimate personal choice and achievement of what counts most for adult happines, vocation, mating, and attitudes towards life and death.

The individual by the time he or she is twenty should have left home in his feelings. He should have broken the habits of childish obedience, dependence and protectedness, which are inevitably fostered by the immaturity of childhood, and should be ready to face the world, without "turning back."

Learning to Let Go

Much instruction is devoted to teaching persons how to grasp and how to hold objects, materials and ideas. So much attention

is, indeed, given to lessons in grasping and holding that it is scarcely realized that *letting go* must also be learned. The infant does not know how to release what he has in his hand. He must acquire the skilful act of relinquishment. One who has observed a baby trying to let go of a ball will realize that skill is involved.

So it is with less material things. It is as hard to learn the art of letting ideas and habits go as it is to acquire them in the first place. Yet each period of life requires that something be relinquished. Adolescence requires that childhood be given up, and the adolescent has to learn the art of relinquishment as he goes along.

It is evident that, as mankind has become more and more civilized, the problems of adolescent adjustment have become more and more complicated. In primitive life there was no question of the mother's apron strings, not only because aprons had not at that time been invented, but because release from the family situation was then accomplished by formal public action. Then, as now, "the mothers wept," and other relatives also, but the primitive community required that hunters and fighters begin their life work early. These public needs grew gradually less pressing as men by research gained more and more control over the earth. Wealth and security accumulated, and the ancient tribal ceremonies of puberty fell into disuse. We now leave it to the adolescent to disconnect himself or herself from emotional and economic dependence upon the family.

Although the putting away of childish things is necessary for carrying into effect normal life plans, it is nearly always somewhat painful, and many persons never accomplish it at all. They then remain *homesick* all their lives. The homesick individual is ill of a mental illness which incapacitates for activities of adult life.

One of the facts earliest appreciated in the modern study of ineffectual personality was that incapacity for adjustment is often connected with abnormal persistence of attachment to the family situation. Habits of invariable yielding to parental dom-

ination, or habits of being tenderly sustained and protected without facing competitive work, have never been broken.

The attachments to protective parents, the submission to dominating parents, the comfort of food and shelter secured without effort, ideas of filial duty—all develop strongly in the long, impressionable period of childhood through which they operate.

Technique of Weaning: The Revision of Habits

Now, it will be asked, how can parents work toward the normal, healthy emotional weaning of their children? What techniques may they employ? It is hard for parents to lead up to the right outcome in this matter, unassisted by formal public action, unless they keep themselves actively conscious of its imminence and importance; unless they have foresight, insight and self-control.

One of these requirements, insight, can come from the study of the psychology of childhood and adolescence. The growing of a child is so very gradual, and habits of acting toward an infant become so firmly fixed, that the parent is liable to fall victim to his own habits, unless he or she revise them constantly in the light of developmental psychology. The clutch of habit is nowhere more powerful than in the parent child relationship. Parents begin when the child is born to help or to hinder normal adolescent emancipation from them, by the way they treat the child, *in revising both his and their habits as* development progresses.

This feat of education is so difficult that primitive men, as we have seen, did not trust parents to carry it out at all. It is even hard for parents to realize that the size of a child's shoes must be constantly revised as time goes on. The present writer has sometimes seen mothers striving with great effort to force last year's rubbers or overshoes upon the feet of a growing child, wondering all the while "why they will not go on." How much more difficult, then, to realize the necessity for revision of habit in the case of *mental* growth, which is invisible!

The foundations of a successful adolescence must be laid, step by step, in childhood. Will the adolescent withstand home-

sickness when he is eighteen? It depends largely on the degree to which parents have fostered self-reliance and progressive attitudes in him from early childhood. It depends on whether the parents have acted as though the child belonged to them, or have acted as though he belonged to himself and his generation. Specifically it depends on the age at which the parents cease to "tuck him in" at night, to wash his ears, to supply his handkerchief, to call him "baby lamb,"[1] to kiss him before company, to dress him, to cut up his food at table.

One may ask, how can a child of three of four years be self-reliant? How can a six-year-old depend upon himself? Consider a few examples from real life. A boy of three and a half years is still nursing from a bottle because, his parents say, it was harder for him to drink from a cup. He cried when the bottle was taken from him, so they gave it back to him again. Another is unable to walk along the street without holding on to someone's hand. Here is child of six years, unable to dress herself. There is one of five years yelling and falling into a tantrum if his mother goes out and leaves him at home. His mother always slips out of a side door secretly on the rare occasions when she leaves him, to avoid these scenes. She never faces the emotional situation with him.

All these young children seem to the psychologist fully launched before school age on the way to a difficult adolescence. They will probably have great trouble in growing up. The mental histories of homesick adolescents and adult are replete with similar incidents. The seven-year-old of normal intelligence who cannot dress himself, who permits himself to be fed by his nurse at table, who cannot go to sleep alone at night, is no doubt well on the way towards chronic homesickness.

This problem of throwing off infantile dependency is especially hard, it seems, with only children, with youngest children, with physically delicate children, and with girls. Also, the difficulties seem to arise quite largely from the possessive attitudes taken by *mothers*.

[1] In some oriental communities of the present day, the "milk name," or as we would say, the "pet name," is abolished at a certain age, in the course of a formal ceremony of renaming, and may not be used thereafter.

The Possessive Mother

Let us glance for a moment at the unfortunately conspicuous part which we find mothers playing in the histories of the home-sick. The father does not usually cling with such tenacity to his maturing children, but in many cases the mother holds on as long as she possibly can. We have hundreds of mother-in law jokes, but hardly any father-in-law jokes.

This difference in behaviour we can readily and sympathetically comprehend if we reflect upon the life of the typical mother, or at any rate of the typical mother whose children, let us say, are now adolescent. She has accepted as her life-task the bearing and rearing of children. It is understood by her to be her career. She has been led by all the pressures of Society to think of herself in this as a lifelong rôle. But no one has pointed out to her, and it has not occurred to her spontaneously, that this is a life-task only if child-bearing goes on, as formerly it did, until the age of at least forty-five years. Genealogies of families born a hundred years ago teach us that women were quite commonly engaged in rearing children until they were fifty or sixty years old. If mothers bear children after they are forty, it will be true that they can occupy themselves until old age in what is conceived to be a *life-work*.

But in modern times relatively few children are born in the families of the intelligent and strong. The mother is likely to have all, or shall we say both, of her children in adolescence by the time she is forty five years old. Still strong, energetic, and prime for her task, she sees what she had been told was her career slipping automatically, as a function of normal growth, out of her hands. The finished products, her adolescent children, are trying to leave her jurisdiction. Without reflection and without analysis of what is happening, she grasps at her disappearing career. She takes as firm a grip as she can, in trying to hold it. Quite often this means clutching the youngest child or the weakest child with a strangle-hold.

If the father were to see his banking business, or his medical practice, or his grocery store leaving him in a similar manner,

he would hold on anxiously and grimly, too. Such a situation is, in fact, frequently observed, in the case of men retiring from profession or business. This conduct of mothers is but to be expected from our general knowledge of the psychology of habit formation. The importance of the accustomed task in middle life can scarcely be overestimated, in the mental hygiene of human beings. Nobody wants a future empty of its familiar, interesting task, and so the funny yet bitterly pathetic mother-in-law joke multiplies.

Homesickness

Let us cite a few concrete instances of homesickness from the hundreds which are met in daily life. A boy was referred for psychological examination at the age of nineteen years, because his education was being seriously interfered with by chronic homesickness. The school history was as follows: At the usual age he started to attend elementary school in the small town where his parents lived. He did well there and was graduated in due course. Then in accordance with the family traditions, at the age of fourteen he was sent away by the father to a preparatory school to be made ready for college. He remained there for two weeks, during which he wept much, could not eat, could not study, and begged to be sent home. His mother insisted on bringing him back, which was done, and he attended the public high school in the home town until he was graduated from it. During all this time there was a difference of opinion between the parents as to the course to be pursued, the father believing that the boy should have been forced to stay at the preparatory school away from home.

After graduation from high school, the problem again arose. There was no college in the home town. The boy, then aged eighteen, was sent to a large college, where he was miserable, made no friends, lost ten pounds in weight, could not study, occupied himself in trying to conceal his weeping. He wrote home that the food at the college was "terrible," that his digestion was being ruined, and finally that his heart was becoming weak.

He developed physical symptoms rapidly, and at last, before

the Christmas holidays, he had to be sent home. There his mother received him with satisfaction, coddled him, waited upon him, and suggested that he might not be physically able to undergo college education. The family physician, however, stated that the boy was in good health in all respects, so the father determined to try another college, compromising by selecting one near enough to home so that the boy could visit frequently. Here, too, all sorts of difficulties developed. The boys in the dormitories were coarse and rude. The instructors were dry and uninteresting. A very bad cough had come on.

At this time, the boy being now in his twentieth year, the father perceived that the situation was becoming dangerous and called for advice. The mental examination showed that this boy was of excellent intelligence, and fully capable of pursuing a college course, rating well above the usual college senior in this respect. Stupidity was thus ruled out as the cause of his failure to progress. The family history as to achievement was good. No man among near relatives had failed to function occupationally on the family level which was in the professions. The boy had two sisters of whom there were no complaints.

When the relationships between the boy and his parents were examined, it was revealed that the mother had always coddled him from infancy, had encouraged him to remain in bed at the slightest illness, had read to him for years instead of requiring him to read for himself, and had clung emotionally to him throughout his life. At the age of nineteen years, she had not broken off the habit of tucking him in at night. She still called him her "precious lamb," in public. "He is mother's beau," she would say. "He doesn't care for the other girls." Special foods were cooked for him. In every respect, childish attitudes had been encouraged by the mother to persist.

As a result there appeared a typical "mamma's boy," aged nineteen years. For instance, during the interviews held with him, he ate sweets from a paper bag, like a child, and naïvely offered some to the examiner. Even this habit had not been broken. Never had he earned a cent in his life. "Mamma always gave me my allowance," he said. He did not care for girls. He was afraid of them, and disliked parties. The "mam-

ma's beau" idea seemed to have been successfully inculcated. He had developed a variety of doubts and anxieties concerning his powers and his physical health.

It was recommended that the boy should get work for the summer, at some distance from home, earning money, preferably at some form of manual labour, to dissipate his fears about his heart, stomach, and practically every other vital organ, and that he thereafter be sent to a co-educational college to complete his college course. These suggestions were received by the mother with deep offence, but the father helped the boy to carry out all the recommendations. The homesickness was gradually cured, in spite of the unfavourable circumstance that this case had been allowed to go on in this way for nearly twenty years.

Another similar case is that of a girl, seventeen years old, referred for mental examination because of persistent homesickness, with threats of suicide. This girl was a handsome, intelligent person, who had become so disgusted with her homesick state that "suicide seemed the best way out of the mess," as she expressed it.

The history of the case showed that the girl was one of two sisters, neither of whom had ever spent a night away from home until this one was sent to a boarding-school at the age of sixteen years. The occasion of being sent away was that her parents desired her to be graduated from a school founded by one of her ancestors. This meant leaving home.

Never ill in her life previously, strange symptoms now developed. She wept almost constantly, complained of weight in the chest, later developed nausea. She was sent home, recovered at once, and returned. Again the weeping commenced. The physical symptoms reappeared. She now developed what were thought to be indications for a surgical operation, which proved unnecessary, however, as the indications disappeared upon reaching home.

Returning again to school, she was again so wretched that she could neither study nor mingle socially with the other girls. She was much ashamed of herself, and in her inexperience had decided that she was "no good," and that suicide would be advisable.

So acute was the emotional condition in this case that it seemed best for the girl to return to her home, and to attend the high school in her own town, undertaking in the meantime a very gradual process of psychological weaning. This was brought about by going first for one week to an aunt's house, with full knowledge that the stay was but for a week; later for two weeks; later still to a house not that of a relative for two weeks then to an hotel where all were strangers. Then the visit was for three weeks, then for four, until finally the emotional habits were sufficiently revised to permit of normal departure for a whole school term.

The parents in this instance fully realized the mistake they had made in allowing a child to sleep every night for sixteen years in the same room, and for twelve of these years in the same bed, without even once undertaking any revision of the habits thus formed until the drastic change was suddenly made of sending her completely away from home. They began at once to prepare in a more healthy fashion for the weaning of the younger sister.

Scores of instances like this could be collected from the experience of those in charge of boarding-schools and colleges. Homesickness is a very serious disorder to one who is its victum. Career, or marriage, or both may be rendered impossible by this affliction.

Extreme Instances of Parental Domination

The lengths to which parental domination may go are emphasized for us by occasional extreme instances, which are well-nigh incredible. For example, a young man permitted himself to be reared as a girl, under the name of Leona, until he was past twenty years of age, because his mother had desired a girl when he was born, and had determined to treat him as a girl.

An old mother died recently at the age of one hundred and thirteen years, living with three bachelor sons, aged eighty-one, seventy-four and seventy years respectively, "who said they never married because they did not wish to leave their mother."

These three bachelor sons ran the farm. The youngest, aged seventy, whom she still called "the baby," did the housework. A married son, aged seventy-seven years, lived only a few miles away. Although these "boys," as they were called in their neighbourhood, were known to be among the richest residents of their locality, they kept the home place as much like old Ireland as possible, "to please mother." "No telephone bell marred its quiet; there was no radio; they had no motor-car."

Recently also a mother made a will which stipulated that before her son could inherit either money or property he must leave his wife and "go far away, to enjoy it." "My watch is to be given to my son to wear always around his neck, that he neither lose it nor drop it while working—and that he shall not give it to any one else." The mother's will further provided that the son, thus supervised, should be buried by her side at his death, and that his wife should not be allowed to attend the mother's funeral.

Such instances of maternal possessiveness and of reaching out from the grave are, of course, extreme, but they serve to emphasize more usual instances which we no longer notice through familiarity.

Nature of the Attachment to the Family

The question has been raised as to whether homesickness has a sexual element in it; whether the attachment to the parent is sexual in character. It has been thought by some students of human nature that the homesick boy is (unconsciously) in love with his mother, the homesick girl (unconsciously) in love with her father, in the same sense in which one is in love with a mate. It does not seem necessary to adopt this point of view. The attitude of the unweaned adolescent (or adult) is rather that of the creature toward its keeper than of the lover toward the mate. It is infantile rather than lover-like. It continues habits of dependency learned in the cradle. We observe that the attachment of the homesick is not only to the parent, but also to inanimate objects of comfort, such as a bed, a chair, a room, a menu. Outbursts of weeping may be provoked, especially at meals, for instance, by the sight of unfamiliar foods, and by

the thought that no one is any longer interested in providing the potatoes cooked in a certain way, or in preparing the favourite dish. Indeed, close study of homesick adolescents would probably disclose that their depression is bound up with ministrations to bodily comfort, such as are connected with food, clothing, and shelter, more closely than with deprivation of satisfactions which are uniquely characteristic of the mate relationship. The parent is involved in the depression of the unweaned adolescent in the same way as in the depression of the infant undergoing weaning from the breast—because the parent is the purveyor of physical comfort and of habitual solicitude.

Especially is it true of the mother that she is from the beginning the source of food, warmth, and comfort.[1] So we find that it is from the mother that the great majority of the homesick, regardless of sex, are unable to free themselves. Girls as well as boys are likely to be involved with the mother, not with the father. In fact, a very large number of the conspicuous cases of failure to accomplish psychological weaning are mother-daughter situations, in which the habits of infancy have never been broken. To say, as certain psychoanalysts would, that these mother-daughter and father-son cases are on a basis of sexual perversion is to violate the scientific principle which requires that any element must be deleted from an explanation if it can be spared. We do not need this idea of sexual attachment in order to explain the facts. We can explain the facts simply by reference to the general laws of emotional habit. A domesticated and petted animal will make every effort to return to its keeper, if suddenly removed from habitual comforts. Yet we do not say that the dog or cat or horse has a sexual interest in so doing.

General Symptoms of an Unweaned Condition

In everyday life we meet those adults who have failed of psychological weaning. They present various characteristic attitudes, which reveal their failure. For instance, they are likely to expect and ask special consideration from employers, and thus

1 James L. Mursell, "Nutrition and the Family," **Psychological Review**, November 1925.

to become intolerable nuisances in the world of business and the professions. The employer, being a person in authority, is expected to act as the indulgent parent has acted, in the position of authority. When special consideration is refused by the employer, seeking his own advantage rather than the pleasure of his employee, the unweaned employee may resign in a pet. If he continues his work, he may have a tantrum in which he talks angrily to or about his employer, or he may develop the attitudes of a persecuted person, and act like a suffering hero. Obviously, any and all of these reactions will lead to failure in the rôle of employee. Many a life of occupational drifting is directly caused by the failure to be weaned from the home. In such cases every person in a post of authority becomes a surrogate for the parent, and is expected to act as the parent has acted in the past.

Again, many matrimonial wrecks are to be explained by reference to this same cause. The unweaned person expects the mate to act like a parent. If the parent has been indulgent, then the unweaned offspring of that parent will expect the mate to wait upon, to coddle, and to comfort him or her, regardless of any inconvenience or personal sacrifice. On the other hand, if the parent from whom the adult is unweaned has been dominating and dictatorial, the unfortunate offspring expects the mate to make all decisions and arrangements, to direct activities, and to take all responsibility for domicile, for social occasions, and for the care of children when the latter are born.

Sometimes the unweaned adult will even refuse to leave the parental home at marriage, and thus subjects the mate to what is likely to be a very restricted life under the roof of parents-in-law. In milder cases, the unweaned mate does not find it necessary to live actually in the parents' house after marriage, but still refuses to leave the town or vicinity where they reside. Perhaps it is stipulated that the mate must live "next door," or in the same street with the parental house. In this way a wife may, and often does, ruin the career of her husband by restriction; and a husband may ruin the happiness of his wife by compelling her to live under the direction of his parents.

Another manifestation of the unweaned condition is the choice

of a very much older person as a marital partner. The boy who is still emotionally dominated by the parental relationship is liable to fall in love with a woman old enough to be his mother, while the girl is attracted to men of her parents' age rather than to her contemporaries. Marriages founded on such discrepancies of age are not likely to proceed happily, because the mate relationship differs fundamentally from the parent-child relationship and cannot be forced into the pattern of the latter.

It is undoubtedly true that normally there persists as an element in human nature satisfaction at being protected in weak moments, at receiving sympathy in difficulties, at being provided with physical comfort. These elements do not disappear in persons who have achieved detachment from their parents. Psychological weaning does not mean complete self-sufficiency. Every typical human being remains throughout his life to a certain extent in need of sympathy and protection. The distinguishing feature of the unweaned condition, as compared with the normal condition in this respect, is that the sympathy, the coddling, and the supervision of *persons in positions of authority or of intimacy* are taken for granted, and that the indifference or refusal to coddle of persons in such positions evokes depression or tantrums on the part of the unweaned adult. These are the specific reactions of the person whose infantile habits have not been revised with the passing of time; who remains psychologically unweaned. Persons in *positions of authority* are expected to act like parents.

Why is it Desirable to be Weaned?

The question arises, why, in cases where it is difficult and troublesome, should psychological weaning be undertaken? Why should not the line of least resistance be followed, by allowing the children to retain their "cradle-habits"? Why should not one be trained to live with his parents all his life? The answers to this question are to be found in the fate of those about us who have continued in the infantile state.

In the first place the parents will die. Vital statistics tell us

that the parents of persons who are thirty-five years old are likely to be dead, under present conditions. The average person is thus ultimately forced from the parent by the death of the latter; and this happens typically at an age when it is difficult, if not impossible, for the unweaned offspring to initiate the adjustments normal to adolescence. The "mother's boy" or "mother's girl," left to begin self-support, emotionally and financially, at the age of thirty-five years or later, is a sad spectacle. Since the sustaining arms of the parent will be thus forcibly removed in the course of nature, it is far wiser to remove them with far-sighted planfulness at an age when the offspring is best fitted to enter upon the competitions and struggles of life.

There is another sound reason for psychological weaning, which would remain, even if parents could live for ever. This is the principle of *individual differences* in biological endowment. Children bear but a partial resemblance to their parents in natural abilities, in tastes and in enterprise. No two human beings are ever exactly alike in the combinations of traits which make personality. It may be claimed that identical twins are an exception to this rule, yet even twins do not have identical finger-prints. Brothers and sisters differ greatly among themselves, as every one may observe. Yet brothers and sisters are on the whole much more like each other than they are like either parent—a fact that appears wherever precise measurements of resemblance have been made.

The variety of human nature thus provides that much misery will result when adult offspring remain tied to their parents' supervision. To the variations supplied by biological nature are added those which come by change of invention and custom from generation to generation. Between persons born two or more decades apart there are usually irreconcilable differences of taste. Age and youth cannot live together, not only because people are diverse in native endowment, but also because each generation is different from that preceding, in use of mechanical contrivances, in mode of dress, in style of recreation, and in the idea of what constitutes truth and beauty. The songs, the conveyances, the idioms, the manners, the prices, the aesthetics of each one's youth are outmoded by the time that youth has

elapsed. Yet habit makes it difficult to relinquish them. Thus, the parent is likely to insist upon these cast-off models as proper for the offspring to adopt. Only tragedy can result for the adolescent who tries to live the youth of the generation that preceded him. Between those of different generations a gulf of difference in taste is fixed.

It is thus clear to the impersonal observer that *variation*, due both to biological nature and to education, renders it imperative for adult happiness that a child be weaned mentally from parents by the time he is full grown. The adult mind cannot be maintained in health by feeding upon parental solicitude, any more than the adult body can be maintained in health by sucking milk from a breast or bottle.

Finally, when all is said, the most important reason why an adolescent should be weaned emotionally is that he may be tolerable to people at large, who have no special sentiment in regard to him.

New Powers and Urges

We have shown that getting away from the family is likely to involve a conflict between old habits and new urges. What are these new urges and how do they arise? They arise as functions of the maturing organism, chiefly as concerns the intellect, and as concerns sexual powers and interests. They have to do with the life plans of the individual in regard to vocation, mating, religious belief, and the general concept of the self. These urges cannot become strong until sex and intellect approach maturity, which is during adolescence. They grow as organs of the body grow, especially the brain with its appendages and the sexual organs. It is to satisfy cravings arising from these maturing organs that the adolescent struggles for his freedom, against the pull of his own habits and those of his parents.

In all that has been said of winning detachment from the parental home there is, of course, no implication that the truly matured person must be one who is hostile or coldly indifferent to that home as such. If the parental home has been a good

one, the independent adult will value it for what it was worth, and will cherish its memory. If the parental home has been bad, the independent adult will evaluate that fact also. In either case, the home of childhood will eventually take its place in the psychology of the weaned offspring simply as a part of the community as a whole, appraised for its value as the chief factor in childish experience; but it may continue to be loved as something that has done good and given pleasure, though displaced from its former position as the centre of the universe.

It will be objected that the parent must receive consideration, and that he, or especially she, has after all a right to be served emotionally as well as in other respects by mature offspring, in view of the care given in rearing the latter. The answer to this must be that the ethics of parenthood is a difficult and complex matter, which lies outside the scope of this discussion, except by implication. Our affair here is to describe what usually happens to an adolescent who is denied release from the parents, and to contribute whatever suggestion may be implicit in the conditions observed. In this connection it may be added that covert hatred or contempt is typically the eventual portion of the parent who hinders the psychological weaning of his child.[1]

In order to foresee and guard against an unintentional clutching at their adolescent children in a blind effort to prevent their normal departure, parents should begin early to cultivate interests extraneous to their children. Such interests will serve to occupy and balance them against the day of their children's psychological weaning. The adolescent should neither be thrust forth suddenly from the home nor be held in bondage to the home. The weaning should be gradual but complete. This achievement calls for patience and for insight on the part of the parents, under the complicated conditions of our advanced civilization.

1 It may be thought that the Chinese, among whom ancestor-worship is an important phase of religion, constitute an exception to this rule. We are beginning to see, however, that human nature is in reality the same for Chinese as for others. The rising generation in China is rebelling against family domination. See, for instance, "Young China Marries," by Lewis Gannett, **Harper's Magazine**, May 1927.

CHAPTER IV

Seeking self-support

Uniformity of Primitive Occupation

Another adjustment which is clearly provided for in the ancient pubic ceremonies is the entrance of the novice upon preparation for his or her vocational future. The individual now begins his or her career as an economic being, either by actually earning a living, or by entering upon vocational training.

Vocational guidance was not a complex problem under primitive culture. There was no such specialization of work as prevails to-day. The division of the world's toil *between the sexes* was almost the only specialization attempted. It is true that the medicine man and the chieftain existed, and represented the first vague beginnings of our highly specialized modern professions, but for nearly all primitive adolescents the vocational future was, and is, a straightforward and simple affair and the training for it brief and simple. Fishing, hunting and fighting were for the boy; agriculture, cooking and child-bearing were for the girl. These are occupations which can be followed with various degrees of success by persons of all amounts of ability above the level of idiocy. Also, they can be entered upon at a uniform and relatively early age—at thirteen to fourteen years—without elaborate or expensive education.

Occupational Choice To-day

Consider the evolution through which man has passed as regards occupation, during the past five thousand years. Machinery has recently modified the whole industrial organization. Research has differentiated the learned professions into a mul-

titude. These changes have brought forth a host of occupations classified as clerical. The majority of boys and girls of our own day still enter upon their careers as earners of a living at about the age of fourteen years; but what a complex situation confronts them! It is no longer a matter of taking up "man's work" or "woman's work." It is a matter of choice, either haphazard or deliberate, but strongly tending to be irrevocable, among a multitude of possibilities. For those who look forward to the prolonged education leading to the professions, the time of actual entry upon the remunerative vocation is ,of course, very much delayed, sometimes until well into the later twenties.

The three great general differences between the problems of earning which confronted the primitive adolescent and those which confront the civilised adolescent of our generation may be summarized thus: (1) Modern adolescents have to choose from a multitude of highly special occupations, whereas formerly this was not so. (2) This differentiation of work has brought about a great diversity of age at which modern adolescents begin to earn a living. (3) A social-economic change is taking place whereby the vocational prospects of girls are no longer to be decided on the basis of sex alone, as formerly, but on the basis of individuality as well. Out of each of these conditions many psychological problems confront youth and youth's advisers, to baffle and perplex.

How Work is Related to Mental Endowment

In considering the adjustment of youth to the world's work, it is of primary importance to know as much as we possibly can about the way in which the differentiation of labour is related to mental endowment. The idea that anybody can do any kind of work, if his ambition be but sufficiently aroused, is no longer entertained, even in America, by those who are informed of the facts established by psychological research.

One of the most extensive studies we have of the way in which the occupations of adults are related to intellectual capacity is that made among drafted men in the United States army.

in 1917.[1] When intelligence tests had been given to these men and the middle range of ability in each occupation had been determined, interesting facts emerged. It became clear that there is a great difference in the intelligence typical for the various occupations, after the competitions of daily life have taken place, among men between twenty-one and thirty-one years old. The occupations requiring least capacity for abstract thinking (intelligence) were found to be those classified as unskilled manual work; those requiring the most intelligence were the learned professions, such as medicine, engineering and the ministry. Occupying the middle position between these extremes are the skilled manual trades, such as carpentry, bricklaying and plastering.

Furthermore, those vocations at the high end of the scale are shown to be much more severely restrictive than are those at the low end. For instance, a first-rate mind (an A mind) may, sometimes does engage in manual occupations. Actually a few A intellects have been found among men digging ditches for a living. But a mind of small calibre (a D mind) cannot engage at all in being an engineering officer, and none has been found so engaged. In other words, an intellect may do work far beneath its maximum ability to perform, but it cannot possibly perform tasks which are on levels above its maximum scope. In providing training for a youth, it is therefore of very special value to know which are the occupations which exclude all but first-rate ability, and to know whether the youth being considered possesses such ability. For a person may earn a living at what is too easy for him, though usually he will not be happy; whereas he will be a complete economic failure if set at tasks that are too hard for him.

Relation between Paternal Occupation and the Intelligence of Offspring

In considering the validity of the test methods used to measure the intelligence of adults engaged in various occupations,

1 **Memoirs of the National Academy of Sciences**, Vol. XV, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1921.

it is of interest to compare the intelligence of their offspring, measured by a different series of tests. Research reveals a practically perfect correspondence between the median positions occupied by fathers and by offspring respectively, on the intellectual scale. In several different school systems the relationship has been computed between the intelligence of school children and paternal occupation. The result invariably has been that the children of professional men grade highest, those of clerical workers grade next, those of skilled workmen show a mean corresponding with the average for the total juvenile population, while the children of unskilled manual toilers grade last, as a group.

To cite a concrete example of such investigation, in an American city, 2,782 school children were rated for intelligence by group tests, and later the occupational status of their fathers was related to the test results. The mean intelligence quotient of the offspring in each of the several occupational groups was as follows:

Occupational Status, American Fathers	*Mean I. Q. of Offspring (Par: 100)*
Professional men	115
Clerical workers	106
Business men	104
Skilled manual workers (trades)	99
Semi-skilled manual workers	92
Unskilled manual workers	89

Duff and Thomson [1] found about the same relative distribution of intelligence as related to paternal occupation, in their survey of the County of Northumberland. Their result was as follows:

Occupational Status, British Fathers	*Mean I. Q. of Offspring (Par: 100)*
Professional	112.2
Managerial	110.0
Higher commercial	109.3
Military and Post	105.5
Shopkeepers	105.0

1 J. F. Duff and G. H. Thomson, "The Social and Geographical Distribution of Intelligence in Northumberland," **British Journal of Psychology**, 1923.

Occupational Status, British Fathers	*Mean I. Q. of Offspring (Par: 100)*
Engineers	102.9
Foremen	102.7
Building trades	102.0
Metal workers and shipbuilders	100.9
Miscellaneous industrial workers	100.6
Miners and quarrymen	97.6
Agricultural workers	97.6
Labourers	96.0
Brain workers (numbering 1,722)	106.6
Hand workers (numbering 10,848)	98.6

There is, of course, especially in the United States, a desire on the part of many to interpret all these results as effects of environment; to argue that physicians, for instance, make high scores in tests because they are educated, and that their children make high scores because they come from an environment provided by educated parents. This interpretation is possible, in the present state of research, but it is not probable. For example, the fact of *overlapping* between groups at different occupational levels is hard to explain on the basis of environmental influence. If the *environment of the miner's home* keeps miners' offspring relatively inferior intellectually, why should we find a few first- rate intellects among miners' children? And, on the other hand, if lawyers' children are on the whole superior in mental capacity *because of their home surroundings*, why should we find some very stupid children in such excellent homes?

American investigators compared the intelligence of lawyers' children with that of miners' children in the schools of New York State, and found a considerable amount of overlapping between the two groups. The best of the miners' children are nearly as good as the medium child of lawyers, while the least able child of lawyers ranks with the average child of miners.

It is easy enough to explain this overlapping by reference to biological principles. Mothers and remote ancestors, as well as fathers, influence the quality of offspring. Also, even in the fathers, intellect alone does not determine occupational status. A very intelligent man may be a day labourer, through some dire misfortune of disposition, health or early opportunity.

The children of unskilled manual workers may thus occasionally inherit superior intellect, but it is hard to see how their inferior environment could produce it. Similar arguments hold for the overlapping from the side of the lawyers' children.

These facts of *overlapping*, whereby comparative groups of offspring prove to be not mutually exclusive, but on the contrary to include each some members of the other upon the range of ability covered, also show that it is neither just nor advantageous to select children for education or for vocation on the basis of parental occupation. It is no doubt true that the *average* offspring of manual workers will make good manual workers themselves; but a few of them will be capable of intellectual work. Similarly, a few lawyers' children should find their life-work in the manual occupations, such as mining, street-cleaning, tailoring, and so forth; though the *majority* of lawyers' children are capable of earning a living at mental work.

For the vocational guidance of youth we now have three propositions before us, as a result of recent psychological research: (1) The intellectual ability required for success differs greatly in degree, among the various occupations open to youth. (2) All degrees of intellect, from highest to very low, are vitally needed in the world's work. (3) Children cannot be fitted into specialized vocations primarily by reference to parental occupation. In educational psychology we stand to-day not far from the beginning of detailed investigation of these propositions. Each year sees a few advances toward definite, special knowledge.

Selection of Adolescents for Education

Secondary and collegiate education leads on to the vocations which call for superior intelligence. Professional schools of good standing to-day require at least secondary educations for entrance. The great increase in numbers of high school pupils in recent years in the United States, with the overcrowding of classrooms, has forced investigation of the psychology of adolescents in secondary schools in America.

In the United States, in 1890, 11.5 per cent of the fifteen-

year-olds reached high school. In 1918, 35.9 percent did so. In 1890, 2.4 per cent of the adolescent population reached the final year of high school. In 1918, 13.7 per cent did so. In 1890, 1.1 per cent went to college. In 1918, 3.5 per cent did so. Since 1918, there has been still further increase, out of all proportion to increase in the general population. High schools and colleges have become greatly overcrowded, and the question has had to be raised as to whether free education beyond the elementary school can be continued indefinitely at public expense.

In England and other European countries the problem is, of course, different, since there it has not been assumed that secondary and collegiate education should be provided by taxation, for every one. Nevertheless, in all countries the question arises as to how the young can be most advantageously fitted to education, and through education to work, in our extremely complicated modern world. Reference to paternal occupation has been shown to be a gross over-simplification of the problem, because of the overlapping of ability between the offspring of widely different occupational groups. The proper award of scholarships, and the exclusion of the unfit whose parents can pay, are to-day matters of concern in every civilized country.

The Value of Mental Tests

Students of psychology are coming to believe that the single most valuable instrument of guidance that we have at the present time is the scientifically devised mental test. Tests of mental capacity have been in course of development for about fifty years. However, it was not until the opening of the twentieth century that such tests were actually applied in the attempt to select children for education. In 1904, the French psychologist, Alfred Binet, announced that he had been able to separate intellectually incompetent children from their schoolmates by means of a series of standardized tests. This achievement crowned the efforts of many years, during which Binet had been a devoted student of child psychology and of mental tests.

Binet's success was founded, however, not only upon his own previous researches, but upon those of other psychologists as well. Spearman in England, Stern in Germany, Cattell, Thorndike, and Norsworthy in the United States, as well as psychologists in other lands, had carried out researches which had yielded much information by the time Binet conducted the first practical tests. At the outset mental tests were used almost exclusively to study feeble-minded children, but during the past decade they have been used more and more extensively to study the whole range of intelligence among school children. A sufficient number of studies of adolescents have now been made by this method, so that we have a considerable body of knowledge helpful for the vocational guidance of youth.

For instance, there is no longer any question but that successful pursuit of organized learning beyond the limits of the elementary school calls for better than average intelligence. In the United States studies of pupil failure in the high school shows that many are attempting the course, aiming at clerical work and the professions, who are by nature unfitted. We may cite two outstanding studies, from the many available, which enlighten us in this matter.

In the Washington Irving High School for Girls, in New York City, four different curricula are offered, from which girls may be graduated. It is found that the pupils pursuing these various courses differ somewhat in median intelligence, though with a great amount of overlapping among groups. Those girls in the so-called "academic," or college preparatory courses, have the highest median score on mental tests; next the commercial students; then those in practical arts. Though the differences are not great, it has nevertheless proved feasible in some cases to adjust failures in the school by persuading girls to transfer from one course to another. The part played by insufficient intelligence in producing failure in this school is illustrated in the following sample cases.

A standard intelligence test [1] was given by the school psy-

1 The Terman revision of the Binet-Simon Tests by L. M. Terman in his **The Measurement of Intelligence**, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1916.

chologist to two hundred and twenty girls, "selected because they were failing in school work or in conduct, or in both; or because they made low scores in the group test; or because it became known that they were struggling against economic needs, difficult home conditions, or handicaps caused by unfortunate early experiences or temperamental deficiencies." The distribution of intelligence quotients[1] (100 I.Q. representing par or average intelligence of the generality, 109 I.Q. representing median high school pupils) was as follows:

Distribution of Intelligence Quotients

I.Q.	Grade of Intelligence	First Term	Above First Term	Total
59— 69	Moron[2]	26	8	34
70— 79	Borderline	57	21	78
80— 89	Dull normal . . .	36	29	65
90— 99	Normal or low average . .	12	17	29
100—109	Normal or high average . .	3	10	13
110—120	Superior	0	1	1
		134	86	220

On the basis of repetitions of this mode of sampling high school failures, the authorities of the school conclude that "many pupils come to high school every term who have not enough intelligence to do any work which can properly rank as high school work." Yet it is usually difficult, and sometimes impossible, to persuade the pupil and her parents that modification of their plans is imperatively indicated.

One of the most extensive studies of the intelligence of adolescents in high school is that of Proctor, carried out with pupils in California. It was found that pupils who succeed in graduation from high school are a superior group, with a median intelligence quotient of III (as compared with par of 100). Those who "drop out" from high school after a year or two of attendance are in the majority of cases less intelligent than the median graduate. Also, there is a marked negative

1 An intelligence quotient is expressed as the ratio between the score normal for a person's age, and the score he actually achieves in an intelligence test. An I.Q. of 100 is "par"; less than 100 is "below par"; more than 100 is "above par."

2 A feeble-minded person.

relationship between age and intelligence among adolescents in high school. The youngest group is the brightest; the oldest group in the dullest.

Counsel and advice given to these adolescents with the help of the mental tests, resulted in a marked decrease of failure among guided pupils as compared with those unguided. The slower pupils were advised to pursue light schedules and to avoid the more abstract subjects, such as Latin grammar, algebra, and physics. Where vocational ambitions expressed were in obvious disharmony with the endowment available for achieving them, tactful counsel sometimes led to modification of the course being pursued. The adolescent was thus helped to avoid the bitter experience of failure.

Concrete Cases of School Failure

Actual cases make clear the way in which mental tests illuminate the problem presented by the adolescent who is a failure or a conduct problem in school.[1]

Case A is that of a girl fifteen years and nine months old, tested at the request of a teacher of biology, who said the girl's written work was without sense. The girl was already repeating in high school work in which she had once failed. She was found to grade at a mental age of ten years and nine months, with an I.Q. of 68. She would thus be rated as a feeble-minded person. The high school cannot minister at all to the needs of such a girl. If she and her parents will not consent to withdrawal from high school, then there is nothing to do but to let the girl go on failing until the limit for schooling at public expense shall be reached.

Case B is that of a girl, aged fifteen years and seven months, who had failed twice in first term academic work, in high school. Her habits of persistent unreliability constituted a bad influence among classmates. Her mental tests revealed a mental age of thirteen years and five months, which gave an I.Q. of 86,

1 Edith N. Tuttle, "Use Made of Psychological Tests at the Washington Irving High School," **Bulletin of High Points**, Board of Education, New York City, 1921.

classified as "dull normal." Her parents were advised to let her go to work, and the school employment bureau saw to it that she was placed as well as possible.

Case C[1] is that of a girl nineteen years and two months old, very much over age for the first term in high school. She attended elementary school for thirteen years, whereas the average graduate finishes the course in eight years. Her mental age is twelve years and six months. Her I.Q. is 78, which classifies her as intellectually dull, though not feeble-minded. She would be capable of finishing in a creditable manner the sixth year of the elementary school, but cannot go beyond this point except by the grace of kind-hearted teachers. For three terms Case C has been failing in the college preparatory course in high school. Her mother had refused the advice that she should change to the practical arts course, and insisted that she must be prepared for college. After the psychological examination this advice was repeated. The mother was told that without doubt the girl's ability lay in directions away from college work. The girl was willing to accept the advice given but the mother would say only, "I want her to keep at just what she is doing."

Without amendment of existing law, this high school could not rid itself of this hopelessly inappropriate pupil until the latter's twenty-first birthday.

These instances could be multiplied indefinitely from the files of schools, where the educational selection, and thus the vocational guidance of youth, is being undertaken. It is probable that the most flagrant cases of misplacement, such as those exemplified by Case A here quoted, would scarcely be matched in the older countries of Europe, since it is only in the New World that secondary education is maintained free for all at public expense. It may be asked how a feeble-minded girl could pass subject-matter tests in such a way as to gain admittance to schools beyond the elementary grades. The answer is that kind-hearted teachers and overcrowded class-

1 Edward C. Zabriskie, "Individual Psychological Examinations at the Washington Irving High School in New York," **Bulletin of High Points,** September 1921.

rooms "push through" many of those who could never pass a test given by an impersonal agency. The morons (feeble-minded persons) who reach American high schools cannot pass tests of knowledge which have been scientifically standardized. However, these tests are only beginning to be used for purposes of promotion in schools. Teachers in the majority of instances give tests devised by themselves, which they themselves score. In this way pity for failure creeps in as a personal element, leading finally to graduation of the moron from the elementary school. Any pupil who has such a certificate of graduation automatically gains admittance to the public high schools.

Although in the British Isles and in continental Europe adolescents will scarcely be found so drastically misplaced, nevertheless maladjustments of similar kind, differing in degree only, will be found in schools. The dull son of a prominent and wealthy father constitutes a serious problem of educational and vocational adjustment wherever civilized people are found. Also, the able son of poor and obscure parentage is occasionally present everywhere. These deviations from family norms are proportionately few, certainly, but their absolute numbers are fairly large. About 10 per cent of the offspring of noble and wealthy parents deviate in ability so far below the family norm as to constitute problems for those who try to fit them to their expected status. The same thing is true of the children of manual toilers. About 10 per cent of them are too intelligent to be best suited to manual work.

Importance of Traits other than Intellect

We have said that the single most important means of guidance available at present is, perhaps, the intelligence test. This is not to say that intelligence is the most important determinant of vocational choice. Intelligence is certainly very important, and it *may* be the most important element in occupational enterprise, but we are not yet in a position to state that such is the case.

Health, longevity, disposition, character, special talents, as for music and drawing, are all of crucial importance for self-

support. But tests which are good instruments of prediction have not yet been devised for these traits. Thus, help in guidance is not available, except from the unreliable methods of personal estimate and the study of ancestry. The importance of traits other than intellect emerges clearly from the case of any adolescent who may be in question. For instance, a boy may show the typical intelligence of motormen, but if he is colour-blind he cannot choose this vocation, since he cannot distinguish between red and green lights. Again, a boy may have the intelligence to become a first-rate surgeon, but if he faints at the sight of blood, and quails at the thought of physical suffering, he should not enter that profession. A boy may grade at the norm for students of law, but if he stammers he will probably be unsuccessful in pleading.

Not intelligence alone, but the total personality, should be evaluated in the choice of a life work. Very slowly science is accumulating methods and instruments to make such evaluation possible. At present, guidance can be given only along broad lines and in respect to certain aspects of vocation.

Determining Vocation by Caste

In the earlier periods of differentiated work, occupation was very largely hereditary. That is, callings descended from father to son. The son of a nobleman became a nobleman. The son of a cobbler became a cobbler, or, if he had an uncle who was a baker, he might become a baker. The son of a lawyer was expected to enter the law, or some related profession. The son of the king was crowned ruler.

As time passed, and more was learned about human nature, both through the medium of common observation and through scientific study, the principle of vocational predestination was impaired. Within the present century especially, the institution of hereditary title, duty, and privilege has received rude shocks, and is now rapidly disintegrating. Such disintegration was inevitable, because of the fact that children *vary* around the parental norm. Some sons of lawyers are stupid and some sons

of miners are bright, as we have already pointed out, for example. This fact we referred to as the *overlapping* between groups. This *overlapping* in mental and physical equipment is what renders the Old World's policy of the predestined task untenable.

In the New World, on the contrary, it has been from the beginning the accepted doctrine that "any child may become anything." This doctrine probably meant to the forefathers that educational and political opportunity should be held open to talent wherever originating, without regard to parental status. Later, however, this principle of equality of opportunity was interpreted to imply equality of mental and physical endowment. Thus, free schools in the United States have long been established on a lock-step basis, the blind assumption being that all are equally capable of learning the same things if only "will-power" can be sufficiently stimulated by the teachers. The implication of this educational policy is that any child is capable of following any occupation whatsoever.

These two points of view represent each a half truth. If we put them together we shall have the whole truth for which we are seeking. The scientific study of human nature informs us that about 75 per cent of offspring can be assigned with social justice to the level of occupation for which they are naturally fitted by simple reference to their parents' occupations. The remaining minority will be misfits in modern life if so assigned. And it is impossible to tell in youth without the use of psychological methods which individuals belong to the deviating minority. Formerly there was no method of appraising human faculty without trial by life itself. Such trial carries the individual a long way past youth—past the proper period of *preparation* for the suitable task. The person who can best do a certain work may, it is true, be found anywhere, in any "walk of life" as a child (though with much greater probability in some groups of parent than in others). Lacking a technology of human nature, yet having to proceed somehow, it was inevitable that one of two extreme policies should be adopted, as has been described.

It is still true that we lack a complete technology of human nature, and must fall back to a great extent upon trust in trial

and error as regards life-work. The gain over past practice lies in the fact that we now know as a matter of established scientific fact that neither of the extreme points of view as regards vocational guidance is correct. We still err, but we know now that we err; whereas formerly there was no genuine awareness of ignorance on the part of youth's official guardians.

Vocational Problems of Girls

In past centuries sex, even more strongly than social caste, operated as a determiner of vocation, as far as girls were concerned. "Women's work" was settled on the basis of sex, not on the basis of individuality. It was assumed, indeed, that girls had little or no mental individuality. They were supposed to resemble each other closely in intellectual calibre. In illustration of this theory of female homogeneity we find in a panegyric on Murdia, dating from the second half of the first century, the sentiment expressed that the gravestones of women should be all alike, "Because their virtues admit of no heterogeneity, and it is enough that all have shown themselves worthy of the same good report." [1]

Mental tests applied in the twentieth century have shown beyond a doubt that mental individuality among girls is similar in range and scope to that existing among boys. The sexes distribute so nearly alike in tests that no need is found for separate norms. The same tests can be applied to both sexes, for purposes of prediction. What is the implication of this fact for the vocational adjustment of adolescent girls to-day?

Formerly "women's work" was grounded on physique rather than upon intellect. It involved the production of new human beings, and the performance of manual tasks pertaining to and compatible with primitive maternity. Primitive maternity may be defined as a condition of being physically attached to infants, one after another, from about fifteeen to about forty-five years of age. The primitive mother was thus continuously engaged for about thirty years, if she lived so long, in bearing, suckling,

1 Quoted by L. T. Hobhouse in **Morals in Evolution,** Chapman, London, 1915.

feeding, transporting, and burying infants. Public policy with good reason fostered no expectation of intellectual performances on her part.

But within the past century with the invention of machinery and the knowledge of birth control, what is called the "woman question" has been insistently raised. The "woman question" is how to reproduce the species, and at the same time to work and win work's full reward, in accordance with individual ability. It is the question as to whether the differentiation of toil can proceed into a third stage of evolution, in which women will perform work in accordance with individuality rather than in accordance with sex. In fact, there does appear in reports of the National census in recent years an ever-increasing variety in the work pursued by women. Women are now found even among aviators and mariners, while men are engaging to some extent in what has previously been termed women's work, for example, in cookery and in child welfare. Many able students of human society regard these facts as signs of the advance of mankind into a stage of social economy, in which women will no longer form an undifferentiated matrix, but will do specialized work, just as men have for so long done, following useful professions, trades or unskilled labour, in accordance with native endowment.

When we elicit the attitudes of adolescent girls of our day by direct questionnaire, we find that those of superior ability are keenly interested in the question as to how they may find work which they can enjoy. In 1925 Dr. Terman, of Stanford University, reported the vocational attitudes of high school girls who test within the top one per cent. of the adolescent population, as concerns intelligence. One hundred such girls were asked this question, among others pertaining to vocation, "Do you prefer the duties of housewife to those of any other occupation?" The answers, well decorated with exclamation points and underscorings, were not in the least indecisive. Of the 81 girls who answered, 71 per cent said *No*, and 19 per cent said *Yes*.

Very recently the Bureau of Vocational Information in New York City published a statistical study of one hundred women

in business and the professions, at present living in Boston or New York, who are married, who have husbands, children, and salaried work.[1] Introducing this study, the investigator says: "Scores of eager girls just stepping out of college are asking themselves the question, How shall they have the heritage of happiness implied in a husband and children, and still retain the mental activity and stimulus of interesting work? Sundry proposals have been advanced by the theorists. . . . Doubtless a measure of truth lies in each theory, but women are impatient for the details of reality. More useful by far to them are the actual experiences of women who are reaching out for and gathering all the fruits of life."

It is true that in 1920 there were in the United States 124,000 married women in the professions, an increase of 40 per cent. between 1910 and 1920. The question therefore no longer is, can women combine marriage with careers, but how are they managing it and how does it work? Hence, the Bureau undertook to discover what general conditions, factors, and trends control this situation, at present of such vital interest to the most intelligent among adolescent girls.

We may undertake to state here but briefly the findings which are of value for the guidance of adolescent girls, in this matter:

I. Fewer than ten of the hundred women studied were actuated by financial necessity to work at business or profession. Practically one half of the total number were motivated solely by need of a congenial outlet for capacities and energies. Others in noting a desire for financial gain cited the power thus to buy advantages for their children.

2. Two-thirds of these women had full-time work. Approximately nine-tenths of them had special or professional training before marriage. A majority were college graduates.

3. Eighty-six of the hundred told their earnings. The total annual earning thus divulged amounted to $298,195. The

1 Virginia M. Collier, **Marriage and Careers,** The Channel Bookshop, New York, 1926.

salary range was from $ 1,000 to $ 27,000 per year, with an average at $ 3,467.

4. Distributed among the hundred mothers were two hundred and two children, ranging in age from maturity to infancy.

5. The most important factor in success in this combination was overwhelmingly judged to be the attitude of the husband. Indeed, the general opinion of these wives was that the combination is impossible without the husband's help, especially by way of co-operative attitude.

For guidance in respect of two of the major adjustments of the adolescent years—adjustments to vocation and to mating—adolescent girls of the present day need access to much information of the kind exemplified in this recent study. For the gifted, who are most intensely concerned, the soundest and most nearly just policy for education is probably that which prevails among us to-day. This policy is to admit gifted girls to all kinds and to all ranges of training, and then to leave it to them to work out the division of work, and its compatibility with the other demands of life, as well as they are able. It seems reasonably clear that gifted girls will have to solve their own problems, by undertaking experimental lives, with such information and advice as the past is able to offer them. From the results of mental tests applied to girls during the past decade, there is no cause to doubt that a solution will be found, which will be satisfactory from a social point of view and also to gifted girls themselves. This solution will probably come through the specialization of work among women, so that the care of very young children will be expertly undertaken; through increased knowledge of birth control, with rational limitation and spacing of offspring; through a gradual evolution of a public expectation favourable to the appointment of mothers in posts of responsibility. All of these ways of acting are already achieving respectability in contemporary life, largely through the efforts of gifted women who understand what their problem is.

Securing Vocational Information

On the whole, in modern life, the youth approaches occupational life blindly, with but the vaguest ideas about it. He has no clear knowledge of what kinds of work exist, nor of the training needed for each, nor of how people find their way into each kind of work, nor of his own personal fitness for any given occupation. The differentiation of work has been so rapid that literature and education have lagged behind. The typical adolescent is eliminated from school with no accurate knowledge of occupations, and with no means of any genuine orientation.

This situation, the result of civilization, is forcing itself more and more insistently upon the attention of educators. Schools for the training of teachers have for more than twenty years been conducting work in vocational education. This has carried over here and there into the work of the classroom in high schools. Simultaneously we have witnessed the beginning of a literature which is intended to inform youth. Recent volumes of this character are exemplified by the following list:

Allen, J. G., **Guide to the Study of Occupations**, Harvard University Press, 1921.

Bates, W. G., and Wilson, E. A., **Preparing to Live and Earn**, Longmans, Green and Company, New York, 1926.

Ernst, C. H. (ed.), **What Shall I Be?**, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1925.

Leuck, Miriam S., **Fields of Work for Women**, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1926.

Morgan, D. S., **Living and Working Together**, Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York, 1925.

Rodger, Esca, **Careers**, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1927.

Scribner's Vocational Series, Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York (published at intervals.).

Smith, H. B., **Industrial History**, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926.

Zeigler, S. H., and Jacquette, Helen, **Choosing an Occupation**, John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia, 1924.

In classrooms various experimental devices have been tried. For instance, the study of occupations has been grafted upon

a traditional study, such as English or history. Thus, in the High School of Grand Rapids, Michigan, a course in English composition was given over to writing upon the world's work. A special library was provided for the purpose, and all themes, instead of dealing with miscellaneous topics, were written about occupations. It is reported that the adolescent pupils enjoyed this project, and it was felt by instructors that the study of occupations could be successfully handled thus, without adding to the traditional course of study, or otherwise disturbing existing conditions.

Another experiment has been that of bringing speakers from those successfully engaged in various occupations, to address the high school at assembly. Several difficulties have presented themselves in this attempt. It is not easy to secure speakers for a variety of callings, except in special places, and it is hard to get people successful in occupations, who are at the same time accustomed to public speaking or to teaching, and who can present their subjects interestingly and clearly. Many of these "talks" turn out to be failures for the purpose intended.

A few high schools are beginning to conduct courses entitled "Occupations," in which there is no attempt to engraft the subject upon English or history, but in which a new subject-matter is definitely introduced, namely, the systematic study of the world's work. Evidently these courses are very interesting to the pupils. They deal with matters of closest interest to the youth, and thus require no artificial motivation. Often vocational guidance is given in connection with such a course.

A course of study to be called the Life-Career Class, has recently been advocated to extend from the sixth through the ninth year of the schools. It is pointed out that a large number of adolescents do not go to high school, and that the study of work should therefore be placed in the elementary school also.[1] In the Life-Career Class, as thus advocated, there would be a general survey of the occupational opportunities which lie before the young. A brief but definite study would be made of each of the chief vocations, with analysis of its characteristic

1 J. M. Brewer, **The Vocational Guidance Movement**, Macmillan Co., New York, 1921.

advantages and disadvantages, the remuneration involved, and desirable preparation, the manner of entering and possible lines of promotion. Attitudes toward work would be fostered. There would be consideration of the moral qualities necessary for success, and the relation of occupation to the other duties and opportunities of life. The history of human work would be taught, its forms in savage life, its evolution and differentiation, its relation to art and science, and how it differs from the work of brutes. In the traditional school all this knowledge is now kept from the child, so that he has later to acquire what he can by the wasteful process of trial-and-error. Few workers ever learn the historic setting of their work, or see their occupation in the light of man's long struggle forward from the days when hands, feet, and teeth were the only tools. Few manual workers are aware of the historic relation between science and industry. Few scientists, perhaps, know much of the history of hand work, of guild law, of trade custom.

In all this it is of the utmost importance that "inspirational" teaching, which urges one and all to scale the heights, and enter learned professions, be avoided. The facts about work should be presented. Information, not inspiration, is the aim of such teaching, especially in the grades, where pupils of all degrees of calibre and of aptitude are in attendance. The manual work of the world, for which the majority are by nature fitted, should be treated with the respect it deserves. The history of the skilled trades, their fundamental importance in civilization, the dignity of craftsmanship, the opportunities offered in these fields should be presented. Along with the heroes of politics, finance, medicine, and law should be cited the good builders, potters, and weavers. The kinds of work for which the majority are suited, and which are performed by most of the people in the world, should not be slighted as at present they are, at least in American schools.

Often the single greatest need of the adolescent in his groping toward economic self-support is for sound and extensive information about vocations. A literature of such information is accumulating, as is evidenced by the publications to which reference has just been made in this chapter. Both teachers

and parents have a duty to discharge in bringing this literature before the young.

The Influence of Parental Attitude

When all is said and done, the single most important determinant of life-work for the majority of adolescents, apart from the inescapable limitations of personal endowment, is the attitude of parents. A parent by refusing to provide the means for training, or by insisting upon a given course of education for the dependent child, constitutes an influence which is unavoidable. The most conspicuous instances of parental domination appear, of course, in those cases where the child is very different from the parent of the same sex.

The most painful maladjustments in this respect are probably those in which an able father tries to force a relatively incompetent son to follow the paternal vocation. Such cases come repeatedly to the attention of the educator and the psychologist. The boy is expected to maintain the family level, in business or in the professions; yet by a combination of ancestral traits, he varies from the level of his father and is fitted by mentality for the calling of bricklayer, plumber or teamster. In this situation parents seem almost never to be able to follow the advice given them. Having cherished for about fifteen years the belief that their son would be what they wish, they cannot reconcile themselves to the disappointment of giving up their cherished dream.

Indeed, it is by no means simple to formulate suggestions for vocational adjustment, which can provide both for the natural ability of such an adolescent and at the same time for his self-respect, in the light of his family background. To advise that the son of Mr. Well-to-do or Mr. Director should become a skilled chauffeur or stone mason would by the parents be regarded as a simple insult. This has been proved so again and again, when parents of wealth and position have been told plainly that they have children who would make excellent gardeners, mechanics, or cooks. Yet the genuine adolescent adjustment of the least able tenth of offspring from the most able parents demands that advice like this be given. The chronic

attempt to do what lies forever beyond capacity can end only in ultimate misery—illness, delinquency, hatred, depression, disgust. About one in every ten of the children born into families who expect all their children to attend college, cannot do so. These are hectored, reproached, shamed, and made to suffer from a sense of failure, in many cases, until by the time they have passed adolescence every chance for a happy attachment to any vocation has been ruined.

Scores of such cases could be cited. Take, for example, the instance of the twenty-one-year-old son of a rich and successful banker. The boy was referred for psychological examination because of repeated failure in college entrance examinations. His father was a graduate of a famous college, and the boy had long been registered for this same college. It now appeared, however, that for some mysterious reason he could not pass even one of the entrance examinations.

His school history showed chronic difficulty in keeping up to grade in the preparatory schools attended. He had been tutored constantly, and in spite of this had repeated a year's work several times in school. Finally, at the age of nineteen, he began to try the college entrance examinations, with the results already mentioned.

An examination of intelligence readily cleared away the mystery in this case. The boy was of but average intelligence. That is, he graded barely within the range of the middle 50 per cent. of all children born, as respects intellect. It is predictable that children who have not more than this degree of intelligence cannot pass into or through the college from which this boy's father had been graduated; nor can they proceed creditably through the select preparatory schools where this boy had been placed. The intellectual equipment of the youth was such as to fit him for skilled manual work, and this information was conveyed to the parents. They admitted, in disgust, that the boy "would always prefer to fool around the plumber when he comes, rather than to concentrate on his school books."

However, the adaptation to the idea of relinquishing college was too difficult. Neither parents nor son could face it. They had been for too many years committed both in their own minds

and in the expectations of their social circle to the pursuit of college, and so they prepared to go on with another year of tutoring, examining, and failing.

This boy had already developed a most unhealthy attitude toward himself and his world. Expected from early childhood to do what he could *not* do, and hectored constantly for his failures he was becoming cynical, abusive and "wild." He had threatened to burn the house down. He had once taken a job on an ocean liner, planning to run away, but was found out and prevented from going by his frantic parents.

Maladjustment to vocational prospect produces scores of such difficulties with adolescents, year after year. In the opposite case, where an adolescent is an exceptionally able member of a family, which does not expect him or her to rise above the family level occupationally, the individual may nevertheless find his way to his own level more easily. It is often a long and discouraging struggle, but at least it does not involve a sense of disgrace and of failure. It is no shame to the family for an artisan's son to rise to the judge's bench, but it is likely to be considered unsuitable for the judge's son to earn his living at manual work.

Also, the public helps the able member of a poor family, in a limited way, by providing scholarships. On the whole, it is surely easier, in the United States at least, and probably in nearly all civilized countries to-day, for the occasional able adolescent of poor family to rise to his own level vocationally, than for the relatively unintelligent adolescent of good family position to find his proper occupational level, without disastrous loss of self-respect.

Parental determination to fit a child into an occupation above or below the general capacity of the latter is not, however, the only cause of stress. Many parents wish, for sentimental reasons, to have their own business or professions carried on by their own offspring. Many a father looking at his new-born son and then at his flourishing farm, or bank, or medical practice, associates the two inseparably in his mind, and decides that the son shall "follow in his father's footsteps." For any one of a number of valid reasons the son may at adolescence

fall out with these plans. He may be attracted to a distant country, he may be unsuited by temperament for the tasks assigned, or his abilities may lead to cravings which cannot be satisfied by following his father's footsteps. In these cases long and exhausting conflicts may consume years of life. Sometimes the son runs away and is not heard from for years. In other cases the son develops some spurious illness or defect, which renders pursuit of the father's plan impossible. For instance, heart disease might excuse one from farming. Paralysis might exclude one from surgery. Stammering would render a career in the pulpit impossible. The hard-pressed youth sometimes finds the way out of his emotional trap through some form of spurious invalidism. The outcome of such struggles between parent and child is hardly ever completely wholesome for the latter. Girls, too, may be subjected to these vocational plans of parents, chiefly perhaps at present by the refusal of parents to allow the daughter to follow any paid vocation, or only such as were deemed proper in a past day.

Although in the present state of confidence in mental tests, most parents refuse to be guided by the advice that a child, especially a son, is not mentally equipped to function on the expected level, nevertheless a few parents even now take advantage of such advice. The greatest chance of a happy outcome in such situations exists when the parents are advised of the child's qualities while the latter is *still in early childhood.* This is so because the fostering of false expectations can then be avoided. Neither parent nor child becomes definitely committed, publicly or privately, to an impossible goal, so that the humiliation of failure does not enter into the problem. It is this humiliation that creates emotional and social disaster for the youth; so in avoiding this the worst difficulty in the situation is avoided.

If all children could be rated for their parents, mentally and physically, before they are eight years old, and if parents could reconcile themselves to the results thus impersonally obtained, some of the misery which now develops in the struggle and stress of finding occupation could be saved to adolescents.

They could be saved at least from the dreadful experience of failing to fulfil impossible parental expectations.

The Problem of Prolonged Preparation

A very troublesome feature of modern civilization is the constant lengthening of the period of preparation for all learned professions. So out of proportion to the life-span and to organic needs has the standard of professional learning evolved, that it is now scarcely possible for young persons to become self-sustaining economically by means of a profession until nearly thirty years of age, if but the conventional rate of progress through schools be maintained.

To the solution of this increasingly difficult problem the school might contribute much more effectively than at present it does. For the very gifted, who are those best fitted by nature for the learned professions, it would be entirely feasible to bring the period of education within reasonable bounds by means of rapid progress in elementary and secondary schools. A boy or girl testing in the best one half of one per cent of the population as regards intelligence, could arrive at self-sustenance in a profession by the age of twenty-three or twenty-four, by entering college at fifteen and being graduated at eighteen. The following four or five years could be used for professional training and apprenticeship. Thus, the young man or woman could mate at a time reasonably within the period of natural promptings. As matters are coming to stand at present, the mean age of marriage for professional men is above thirty years. This delay in mating is out of proportion to biological development, and to the life-span, and creates maladjustments.

Unless there be some planned and conscious provision for rapid progress of gifted individuals while they are yet children, little or none of the time of their preparation will be saved. Time-saving in the years preceding the professional school itself is suggested, because it would probably be much more difficult to arrange modifications of organization than in non-professional schools; and also because a gifted mind will want to spend

unlimited time in the mastery of the special branch of knowledge chosen as a lifework.

It has been proved by the experiments of recent years, in the United States and in Germany, that gifted children can be selected at an early age by means of mental tests, and can save two or three years in the elementary school, with results beneficial from every point of view. That such children could, in addition, save a year in high school is suggested by recent studies of high school pupils, who, under ordinary conditions, work far below their capacity. Four years thus saved under the age of twenty will be of inestimable value in easing the tension of adjustments to psychological weaning, to self-support, and to mating, all of which in modern life depend so intimately upon vocational preparation.

The period of prolonged preparation for the professions carries with it the problem of *the allowance* during the dependency of the adolescent. We have seen that "in a state of nature" the adolescent was not a dependent. He or she entered at the age of puberty upon the career of economic self-support. The problem of spending money did not in primitive times arise. There was no money. The adolescent earned his own food, clothing, and shelter directly from the raw earth by following the occupation uniform for his sex. Under conditions where a person of thirteen to twenty-one, or even to twenty-five or thirty, is still economically dependent upon parents, stress and tension easily arise from the failure of the latter to reflect upon the artificiality of the relationship, and to provide for the privately felt needs of the adolescent (or adult) dependent. A situation in which a son or daughter, past the age when the average adolescent is earning money (about fourteen years), is still dependent upon parents must be met, where possible, by a definite, unquestioned allowance to the adolescent, if serious tensions are to be avoided. This principle is violated constantly, especially in the case of daughters living at home, who have no money at all that can be used privately.

Ideally, every adolescent should have some opportunity to earn money for himself or herself. Since for most people today, as in primitive times, life depends upon work, the *habit*

of earning one's way should be formed early. The mental hygiene of adulthood is closely involved with the habit of self-support; with the knowledge that a living can be earned; with the freedom from the oversight and scrutiny of others, to which the adult who cannot support himself is subjected. For these reasons it is a measure of mental hygiene to let every adolescent of both sexes earn some money, and this will be possible in most cases. In any case, the normal adolescent must be expected to cause much trouble for himself and others, unless definite provision be made, at least in part, for what in primitive life he always had—control of *his own living.*

Vocation and the Life Plan

In the life plan of an individual no more important and crucial rôle is played than that taken by lifework. Failure to find a congenial and fitting work brings as much discontent as any maladjustment of life can bring.

Psychologists are not agreed as to whether there are in human nature inborn drives toward constructive activities which we call work. There is much to be said in support of such a view. The lower animals show definite drives toward characteristic activities which eventuate in constructions. They seem greatly satisfied in carrying out these activities, and behave as though much annoyed when thwarted in so doing. The bird makes nests; the beaver cuts trees and constructs dams; the wasp manufactures paper; the bee tends hives; the terrier digs in the earth.

It is probable that human beings, too, have their characteristic constructive activities, which early in life become moulded in the specific forms suggested by the customs of elders and by the bodily needs. But whether or not the drives to work are inborn, work soon becomes habitual because it is the price of life for most people. Thus, work becomes one of the major phases of human life. Its great importance for mental health has been much stressed by those who have spent their lives as students of mental hygiene. "Nothing is so great a service, nothing so great a gift, as to give another an opportunity for a

task worth while, and the achievement of that success which comes in the doing." [1]

The great importance of this adjustment in adolescent psychology is implicit in the expression, "What are you going to be?" It is always understood that this question refers to vocation. It means, "What vocation will you follow?" The very being of the person is in his or her work. Furthermore, the vital term "living" is used to signify earnings, the reward of work. In occupation the "living" is found.

We have said that the choice of work is typically a choice of adolescence—of the decade between fifteen and twenty-five years. One who has made no beginning of any sort in the direction of a satisfying and appropriate occupation by the age of twenty-five, is not likely ever to find a good adjustment in this matter. There are, certainly, exceptions to all rules; but there are, nevertheless, rules, and this is one of them. A person who has achieved no vocational experience or preparation in early youth, is likely to become a drifter, a jack-of-all-trades, a vocational opportunist. A genuine career must usually be founded on the years of early youth. It can be founded otherwise only by the rarest individuals, with the greatest difficulty.

It is not easy to grasp this fact in youth, even though elders may state it repeatedly. However, those to whom it matters most that a genuine career be built are probably also those who perceive the facts of the case early. There are adolescents in each generation who urgently need a life plan before they are fifteen years of age and who foresee that time actually will and does pass. Adolescents of very superior intellect lay the foundations for their work early in many cases, either with or without guidance. Otherwise we should not witness any distinguished careers.

It must be borne in mind, however, that to a very large number of adolescents it will make very little difference what specific work be chosen, if only the *general level* of occupation be suitable to ability. For individuals of good physique and average mental gifts any of the skilled manual trades is likely

1 W. H. Burnham, **The Normal Mind**, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1924.

to be nearly as appropriate and satisfying as any other. For adolescents who have good health, but constitute the least intelligent 10 per cent. of the human species, almost any kind of semi-skilled or unskilled work will probably be suitable. It is, after all, the *general level* of competence that is in the majority of cases most important for guidance.

This is why fortune-tellers and other spurious guides have a measure of success. The fortune-teller informs the inquiring youth that he will become a very successful carpenter, that he was born to be a fine carpenter, and is exactly suited to that work. Thus confident of his future he may enter upon the calling of carpenter, his success proving the sagacity of the fortune-teller. It does not occur to him that he might have been equally successful at a dozen other trades. Of all the youths who are so uncritical as seriously to consult fortune-tellers, a large number are probably somewhat suited to success in nearly any non-intellectual occupation. A large number have no very definite vocational tastes or ideals. Their vocational problems are therefore well solved if they succeed in entering the suitable *broad level* of occupation.

Fear of Not Finding a Place

To the inexperienced youth, searching for a point of entrance into vocational life, it often seems that all posts are already occupied. He sees every necessary task being performed by some one who is apparently in condition to continue at work indefinitely. The fear of not finding a place thus takes hold upon the adolescent, and may reduce him or her to a state of emotional panic. In order to escape from this fear, there may be desperate clutching at the first "job" that offers, regardless of its fitness and desirability; or there may be retreat from the problem, as by adopting governmental protection through enlistment in army or navy, or as by hasty and ill-considered matrimony in the case, especially, of girls.

Much could doubtless be done to relieve youth of this devastating fear of not finding a place if simple instruction

could be given, based on statistics of the annual demand for employees. It could be shown at what rate persons are dying and being retired in various professions and businesses; at what rate industry is expanding; how new inventions destroy old occupations and create new ones. Youth could be thus led by the study of impersonal facts to have confidence that there will be a chance to work.

An important factor contributing to fear of not finding a place is that the adolescent, in untutored ambition, fastens his attention only upon places which are unsuitable for persons of his age. He looks, for example, at the posts of business executives, of established lawyers and physicians, of proprietors, of editors, and so forth, and finds all these places filled. He sees no chance to join these ranks. Despondency, following from contemplation of the lack of vacancies, may be avoided by changing the mental set of the youth, so that he contemplates not the posts which are occupied by experienced middle age, but those which are open to inexperienced persons. When the youth has been trained to expect entrance at the bottom instead of at the top of the occupational ladder, his panic will be alleviated, for he will see that the chance to begin "in a small way" does actually present itself, and that the entrances to the various posts on which his attention has been concentrated are open only at points very remote from those final goals.

Without authoritative instruction even very intelligent youth does not clearly comprehend the ways in which vocational opportunity evolves through the death and retirement of those "higher up." One who has lived but a few years in the world has not noticed many deaths or retirements. If a death or retirement has chanced to fall within the personal experience of the sixteen-year-old, it is interpreted as an accidental or unique event, not as an instance of orderly and constant demand for recruits to do the work of the world. The laws of demand could be made clear by specific teaching of the facts as revealed in statistics.

In this connection, also, it would be helpful to teach the normal course of occupational enterprise, and to show at what

ages various posts of responsibility are typically reached, and the emolument typically attained. Needless discouragement would thus be avoided in many instances. Investigation to accumulate this valuable information has been undertaken in the United States by Dr. Kitson [1] and others.

Finally, fear of being superfluous may be mitigated by specific teaching about opportunities occurring outside the immediate vicinity. The modern adolescent should know the world-wide demand, as well as the demand of his own immediate neighbourhood. He should be educated so that he can think of seeking work in more than one locality. This phase of the matter is obviously closely bound up with psychological weaning, and with the restriction which the unweaned experience in seeking employment only near the parental homes.

As far as the duty of schools is concerned, the reassuring information suggested here could be given in the courses on Occupations or in Life-Career Classes already mentioned, along with other kinds of vocational information.

1 H. D. Kitson, **The Psychology of Vocational Adjustment**, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1925.

CHAPTER V

Mating

Recognition of Sexual Maturation

In the ancient pubic ceremonies the maturing of the sexual powers, with their accompanying psychological manifestations, was, as we have seen, frankly recognized. The pubescent girl and the pubescent boy were deemed eligible for matrimony, and the impulse to fall in love and to mate had its share of attention in the initiation ceremonies. Among our savage ancestors falling in love at adolescence seems to have had a different status from that which it has among us. It seems to have been regarded in all primitive tribes as a proper and dignified proceeding, one of the good and natural phases of life. So far as we can infer from description of the pubic ceremonies, it was not a matter to be jeered at or to be discouraged by shame. It was not called "calf-love" and "puppy love," and was not regarded as an outcast among human impulses.

For a long period in the history of the human race, following the days of savagery and extending to our own time, the policy observed by parents has been one of silence and mystery concerning all things sexual. Everything connected with sex has been considered "low," and therefore the less said and the less known the better, especially for adolescents. Such had long been the almost universal attitude of elder society, until the present generation. Within the past two decades many of the most intelligent parents have come to believe that the policy of silence and taboo has not been a success. It has not promoted morals or preserved "innocence," but has been, on the contrary, the source of many evils, particularly evils of

mental sickness and distress. The point of view is being adopted in education that to ignore the drive of sex is as dangerous as to ignore any other of the basic instincts, and leads to aberrations of conduct as grave.

It is indeed interesting to reflect upon the possible origins of the taboo under which sex has for so long striven. By what mechanisms of social development, and for the sake of what social aims has sex come to be looked upon as something indecent? In what way did this vaguely defined shame, which is one of the strongest irrational forces in modern life, come into being? Social psychologists do not agree upon its origin. Some believe it rose out of religion. Others explain it in other ways. In many respects it would seem that the chief force tending to produce this unfortunate state of affairs has been economic. Let us see how it might come about through economic pressure that a mode of action formerly "good" might become "bad"; how economic desires might so operate as to cast a sinister shadow over other normal human cravings.

Origins of Taboo

If we try to analyse social "good" and social "bad," and to discover anew how these valuations come to be attached to human conduct, we find that "good" and "bad", socially speaking, originate in the wants of the dominant members of the social group. If there were but one human being in the world there could be no such evaluations. The conduct of Crusoe before he was joined by Friday, was neither socially "good" nor "bad," because there was no one there to *want* him to behave in one way rather than another. Even after Friday appeared, "good" and "bad" were formulated on the basis of Crusoe's wants, he being the dominant member of the pair.

We see this principle well illustrated throughout the range of parent-child relationships. Parents *want* children to keep their clothes clean, to eat only when meals have been prepared, to obey without questioning, to keep quiet, and to revere their ancestors. Thus, all children know that it is "bad" to soil their clothes, to ask for food at odd hours, to make noise, to con-

tradict and argue. Parents, the dominant members of the family group in the typical home, determine by their own craving what is "good" and what is "bad"."

To return to the question of "good" and "bad" under immediate consideration, in the days of our primitive ancestors there was no such prolongation of the period of dependency as now prevails. We have noted the great contrast between the vocational preparation and career of the savage adolescent, and of the modern civilized youth of the twentieth century. The savage youth is prepared to earn his living by the time sexual impulses become strong and specific. The primitive girl can grub roots with a bent stick, can tan hides of animals, and can carry a child on her back quite competently by the time she finds herself "in love." Thus, when the young adolescents mated and brought children into the world by the time they were fourteen or fifteen years old, they were then able to assume the economic burden for themselves. The dominant social group, the parents and elders, were not burdened, and no *want* arose among them to suppress mating among the adolescents of the tribe. Therefore, sex activity was not "bad," and was not condemned in religion, in politics or in custom.

But consider the young adolescent of yesterday and to-day, in his or her economic capacity. The boy or girl of fourteen or fifteen years cannot support a family in our society. For many, many generations since we rose above savagery, it has been impossible for the boy and girl in their early teens to receive recognition as the fully responsible economic founders of a family.

Unfortunately, however, there has been no modification of the sexual instinct, nor of the rate and time of its development. The original nature of man remains the same through all the eras of invention and discovery. Shoes, hats, tea kettles, tables, chairs, refrigerators, stoves, houses, and now finally gramophones, motor-cars, and radios have been invented. It may be truly said that many of the earlier inventions, such as shoes, hats, and houses, have become absolute economic necessities. A family cannot be considered on a sound economic basis in a modern city which does not provide for its members shoes,

hats, housing, and at least five hundred other articles, large and small, all of which cost money. Quite rapidly the more recent inventions such as motor-cars, inoculation against disease, hospital treatments, and gramophones are becoming necessities rather than luxuries. Every article and service costs money. The standard of living rises and rises. The boy and girl must be older and older before they can meet the standard. Along with the inventions which raise the economic standards of respectable living, biologists have failed to invent a method of delaying puberty and the psychological impulses that mature in the teens. Puberty comes just as it did before expensive shoes and stockings had become badges of respectability.

It is urgent, therefore, for the parents and elders to suppress the drive of sex, if they possibly can, until the young are able to assume the economic responsibilities which exercise of sexual impulses typically entails. Otherwise, parents and elders will be burdened with the offspring of the economically incompetent young. This they do not desire. Thus, the elders *want* the youth to suppress sexual impulses. Therefore, automatically, these impulses become "bad." One who exercises them in ways contrary to the customs prescribed by economic conditions is a "bad" girl or a "bad" boy.

No doubt there are other pressures and motives which enter into the "shamefulness" of sex. Explanation by one fact only is likely to be an oversimplification of such a problem. Nevertheless, it seems highly probable that economic motives play a large part. In such matters the elders, obviously, always have the advantage of the young. Innuendoes inculcated from early childhood have effect in proportion to the sensitivity and intelligence of the child. The most obvious method of social control is to frighten. The youth has not as yet the data from experience or from history on the basis of which to reason independently. He (or she) is thus placed in a position where he tends to grow up, regarding as mysteriously evil and dangerous one of his fundamental impulses, which later, by some miracle of psychological hocus-pocus, he is expected to recognize as entirely proper, good, and even essential to the continuation and welfare of the nation. The fatuity of this procedure is extreme,

and constitutes a violation of the principles of education and of mental hygiene. Much misery results from the inconsistency of social pressure, for those who submit themselves completely to its control.

Sex Attraction

Although not at present one of the socially applauded or pedagogically fostered tendencies of youth, adolescent love continues to be one of the most powerful motives of adolescent conduct, with which teachers and parents must reckon. Let us inquire somewhat more analytically into its nature, its manifestations, and its perversions, for a happy adult life depends very largely on how these impulses are controlled and utilized.

In the first place, we may be sure that in all living and surviving organisms, including man, there are strong impulses of some sort which lead to reproduction. A species having no strong impulse eventuating in procreation would soon become extinct. Thus, the very fact that we find a species in existence at a given time is in itself sufficient proof of such an impulse.

In some way as yet unexplained by biologists, members of the human species were differentiated into the two sexes. It then followed from evolutionary laws that individuals who failed to attract or to be attracted by persons of the opposite sex were eliminated through failure to reproduce. Those survived to constitute and fashion the species who felt sex attraction and acted in accordance with its drive.

What, then, is the nature of sexual instinct? The analysis of this element in man's nature has been attempted by a few psychologists. They agree that by observing the deportment of people as they exist in society it is very difficult to disentangle what is original in sex passion from what has been learned in law and custom.[1] The most evident original or unlearned element in the situation is special attentiveness to members of the opposite sex, who are not too young nor too old, and who are in no way disgusting. This attentiveness

1 E. L. Thorndike, **The Original Nature of Man,** Teachers' College, Columbia University, 1914.

varies in readiness with various periods of life. Probably it is at its height during the adolescent years, when sex attraction is becoming strong and specific. When mutual attentiveness has been set up, this is followed by other activities such as approach, retreat, caresses, bodily contact, leading finally by trial and error to the contact which is specifically procreative in result. Apart from education, this entire activity is unaccompanied by any ideas whatever either of sin, of purity, of chivalry, of shamefulness, or of procreation itself. By original nature the activities are purely impulsive, done because the organism is "set" by nature to carry them out, and accompanied, at the time only, by experiences of intense satisfaction.

Although sex drives are among the strongest to which human beings are subject, they are nevertheless remarkably susceptible to checking or to intensification by slight differences in the stimuli met, and by the inner condition of the agent himself. Also, habits once acquired and the conflict of antagonistic impulses operating within the person may exert marked influence upon sexual activity. William James has noted of the inherent influences which may tend to check spontaneity: "One of these is ordinary shyness; another is what might be called the anti-sexual instinct, the instinct of personal isolation. (To some people even hand-shaking is disagreeable.) Thus it comes about that the strongest passion of all, so far from being the most irresistible, may, on the contrary, be the hardest one to give rein to." Elsewhere James adds: "The passion of love may be called a monomania, to which all of us are subject, however otherwise sane. It can co-exist with contempt and even hatred for the object which inspires it, and whilst it lasts the whole life of the man is altered by its presence."

In the discussion of sex impulses it is important to inquire whether, and to what extent, such impulses are capable of voluntary control. Some phases of sexual activity are *reflex* in character, that is, are not under the control of the individual. To the situation, a member of the opposite sex, who by reason of a certain combination of age, bearing, and aesthetic appeal attracts attention, there are urgent responses of the anatomy which are as definitely reflex as is the expansion of the pupil

of the eye in darkness. The organism takes a certain "set" or attitude, which is involuntary. This reflex phase of activity tends strongly to eventuate in the total sequence of responses already mentioned, namely, in approach, flirtation, caress, and bodily contact. The intitial reflex phase of this sequence, involving the sexual apparatus, is not subject to such influences as laws, conventions, rules, which come through social inheritance. These reflexes come through biological inheritance, being present because such organisms as made these responses were well fitted for survival, and became the progenitors of our species as that species exists to-day. This reflex activity cannot be modified by disapproval of elders. Elders might, for instance, disapprove of sneezing and coughing, might even make these into very shameful acts. Yet adolescents could do nothing in compliance with such a code, except to avoid all situations which provoke coughing and sneezing, or to hide themselves when such responses were inevitably provoked. Sneezing and coughing are, however, completely reflex acts, whereas sexual acts are but partly reflex. The total sequence of sexual activities is largely under voluntary control, and can be modified by ideas and by habits acquired.

Another point to be emphasized in considering sexual instinct is that it is not a reproductive instinct psychologically, though physiologically it is. Sexual responses are not, by original nature, made for the purpose of obtaining offspring, nor with that consequence in view. Apart from all training, sexual responses are made without reference to the fact that children are thus created. This may be substantiated by various proofs. For instance, feeble-minded boys and girls, who often have well-developed instincts, but who have very little power of knowing or learning, often produce children without having the slightest idea how the event came to pass. They do not, without specific and repeated instruction, connect their sexual impulses with the very remote event of the birth of a child.

In this connection it is interesting to become acquainted with what students of primitive man can tell us. Many students of earliest culture believe that mankind did not discover the phenom-

enon of paternity for a long time.[1] & [2] Children were supposed to be due to the magic influence of rivers and trees, or rain and sun, of the dead and of absent persons. Myths of virgin births persist in the literature of many peoples, as remnants of these naïve explanations of reproduction. A Chinese woman was standing near a tree, which was being chopped. A splinter flew into her mouth and she bore a child. A princess found a flower on her robe after bathing, and soon thereafter became a mother. When increase among the population was desired by wholly untutored man, sacrifice was made to the trees, to the sun, and the rivers.

The names are lost of those acute thinkers and original observers who first discovered the momentous fact that sexual activity is the invariable cause of the remote event of childbirth. The establishment of this fact must have influenced profoundly the subsequent development of sex customs. As thinkers about youth's problems, it is important for us to bear in mind that each human being is born without knowledge of the causal connection between sexual response and reproduction; that each has to learn it, either by instruction from others, or as primitive man had to learn, by sheer experience of cause and effect.

Another point that should be raised in consideration of sex attraction is this: Does it tend inherently to monogamy? Are boys and girls so constituted that they feel attracted to one only of the opposite sex? And having felt this attraction, do they then remain permanently in a condition of exclusive attention to the unique object of passion throughout life? Some sentimental persons apparently cherish the belief that this is characteristic of the human species.

However, the existence of such social problems as prostitution, bigamy, divorce with remarriage, and like situations, points to what scientific observers are agreed is true, namely, that human beings are not by original nature monogamous. The history of human marriage reveals almost every possible combination of

1 E. S. Hartland, **Primitive Paternity**, David Nutt, London, 1909.
2 B. Malinowski, **The Father in Primitive Psychology**, W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1927.

the sexes in mating, from group marriage (regarded by some students as promiscuity), to strict monogamy. Whatever form of mating may have prevailed at any given time and place has been then and there regarded as "right" and "the way." It is true that in none of the various combinations of mates have all the complicated drives of human beings been completely satisfied. The point which we wish to make here, however, is simply that biological nature does not provide for monogamous marriage, in the same way in which sex activity as such is provided for. Monogamous marriage has to be taught and enforced. Sex attraction has neither to be taught nor enforced under conditions prevailing in a state of nature.

It may seem unnecessary to analyse the sexual instinct thus, and that it would suffice merely to recognize that it exists. However, it is desirable to have a really clear idea of this force in human nature, in order to understand the mental, ethical, and social adjustments of adolescence. No one is likely to alleviate the maladjustments which at present arise, who adheres to the belief that sexual impulse is, in all its manifestations, entirely under voluntary control and is voluntarily initiated; that the impulse is psychologically connected by original nature with reproduction; or that it is by nature monogamous. False belief in any of these respects leads to misunderstanding and trouble.

Who are Attractive to Youth?

Normally, the most potent stimuli to sex activity are persons of the opposite sex. Not all members of the opposite sex are equally stimulating, however. Psychologists have tried to find out what elements in personality especially stimulate sex impulses, using the questionnaire method of investigation. From the testimony thus given by young people, it would appear that physical beauty, especially of the face, is a most potent stimulus. Some testify, however, that the face has relatively little potency for them, beauty of hands and feet being more important. Still others mention the build and contours of the body. Occasionally very specific details are mentioned, such

as the eyebrows, the ankles, the mouth. Certain observers are more susceptible to the manner of dressing than to the person clothed. "Resemblance to animals," as to the monkey, the goose, the cat, the squirrel, is referred to surprisingly often as a cause of dislike or repugnance, by adolescents reporting.

Although physical appearance, including dress, is evidently the single most important source of sex attraction for the young, it is nevertheless true that they mention other qualities as having effect also. Young people of sufficient intelligence to have entered high school place certain traits of character high in describing the "ideal girl" andt the "ideal boy." Thus, recently several thousands of high school boys and girls were induced to list qualities of their "ideals." The boys' list of qualities of the ideal girl stood finally as follows: (1) good looks, (2) intelligence (education), (3) personality, (4) honesty, (5) affection, (6) good manners, (7) morality, (8) health, (9) agreeableness, (10) ambition.

Whether "ideals" compounded of these qualities in the order thus given would really prove most attractive to the majority of adolescents remains, of course, to be proved. There is a considerable difference between the boys' list and the girls' list. That "good looks" stands really eighth with girls, as compared with first in the case of boys, seems fairly doubtful as we observe the reactions of adolescents in the world about us.

However, observations upon this matter are very difficult, for there is wide disagreement from person to person, from race to race, and from generation to generation as to what "good looks" may be. Among some peoples those who are very fat are considered beautiful; among others slenderness is preferred. In some communities a flat nose is a stimulus to sex attraction; in others, a flat nose is an inhibitor.

Moreover, "styles" in beauty come and go, from decade to decade, within the same communities. Thirty years ago in America many curves were esteemed in the ideal of female beauty. "The Gibson Girl" was a curved person. To-day curves are "out." The flat, straight figure is admired. On young men of the 'eighties moustaches were considered things of beauty, but a youth in moustache and whiskers would have

small chance of being popular among young girls of our own day. The "sweet, old-fashioned girl," in mitts and bustle, would be laughed at most heartily by boys who are now passing through adolescence, though loved by the youth of a former day.

Also, styles in manners and in speech change from generation to generation. The whimpering, clinging manner of the girl of forty years ago constituted sex appeal for the young beau of her time; but a modern youth responds to "dash" and "go," eschewing the "sad" and "wet."

Thus, perhaps the most that we can say by way of generalization is that *whatever is in vogue* as to costume, hair-dressing, cosmetics, manners, and speech constitutes sex appeal for the generation then on the scene. The boy or girl who is "swell," "snappy," "en vogue," is the one who stimulates the greatest response. What style or vogue is, and how it changes from year to year, are largely questions of aesthetics, into which we need not enter here; but it is fatuous for parents to suppose they can set the style for their adolescent children, or can press the latter into the mould of fashion that prevailed in their own youth. The mother of to-day who insists that her daughter should wear long skirts, long hair, and whalebone corsets dooms the girl to failure in the sphere of sex attraction, if docile, or to desperate rebellion, if self-assertive. Neither of these unhappy conditions is to be desired. Each generation knows what constitutes attractiveness for its own members, and will fight to achieve it.

When we consider these facts, it becomes apparent that a large place must be assigned to clothes in the life of the adolescent boy or girl engaged in courtship. The clothes must be "right," or acute misery ensues. A considerable amount of delinquency among adolescents, especially among girls, is directly traceable to the intense craving for the "right" clothes. Young adolescents who earn, tend to spend too large a part of their money on clothes, in the interests of attracting a mate.

Finally, the value of the strange and of the forbidden must not be overlooked, when inquiring what attracts youth. Curiosity is mixed with the first approaches to the opposite sex—

curiosity in regard to the strange. Any element of novelty in a sex object gives it additional force. In fact, familiarity with a person tends to lessen the value of that person as a stimulus to sex interest, and without some kind of novelty that interest may fail. This fact also is reflected in the changes of style from year to year. By means of different, and hence more striking, clothes the element of novelty is reintroduced into the situation where lovers are concerned. This is true, of course, not only for adolescents, but for lovers of all ages. Many peculiarities of sex conduct, otherwise inexplicable, become clear when we remember how important novelty is. The "new girl" or the "new boy" entering the school or the community has an advantage in sex appeal over all the rest, other things being equal.

Again, the parent who wishes to break off a growing attachment will do well to remember the added charm of the forbidden. The spirit of self-assertion is, especially in youth, closely associated with sex impulse. Clandestine love is especially attractive to the youth, apparently because spiced with rebellion against authority. Love-making carried on in the face of obstacles is sweeter to many temperaments than that carried on at the instigation of elders. Much of the troublesome conduct of adolescents occurs because parents assiduously and stupidly remove all elements of novelty and of the forbidden from those whom they have themselves chosen as "matches" for their children, while endowing those whom they deem undesirable with just these very charms.

In fact, nearly all the impulses and drives of which human beings are capable may and do come into play in connection with sex activities. The impulse to *cherish* and protect is often conspicuous, especially with those capable of rising to the higher levels of sentiment. This is not merely an inherent feature of sex impulse, as such impulse may be exercised with quite brutal disregard for the object which incites it. Also, the satisfactions of *ownership* are experienced. Uncertainty makes all ownership doubly dear, and thus flirting to arouse jealousy originates in the desire to re-awaken interest in an ownership which has become too complacent through being undisputed.

Although it is true that sex attraction is aroused normally and usually by persons of opposite sex, it must not escape us that these are not the only stimuli which can arouse desire. Words, pictures, objects, in fact, anything that has once been associated in experience with arousal of the sexual reflexes may achieve the power of a sex stimulus, and may even take the place, through habitual excitations, of the normal stimulus. Persons of the same sex, rather than those of the opposite sex, may come to excite sexual responses. Of these aberrations we shall have more to say in discussing perversions.

The Normal Growth of Sex Interests

Formerly the little child was assumed to be sexless in all his interests. The idea and experience of sex, it was commonly held "dawns on" him at puberty. Psychologists now understand that this view is quite erroneous. The sex life of the child begins at birth, and very gradually develops with the development of the total organism. One of the important contributions of child study has been the discovery that sex reflexes and sex interests appear normally very early, and must be considered and trained in the integration of the childhood's self, if proper attitudes are to be maintained at and after adolescence. Here again the period of puberty marks no abrupt transition, but is simply the time when the long antecedent development emerges, occupies a larger place, and attracts the notice of the observer. Thus, there is a tendency to drop into the fallacy of supposing that something entirely new has suddenly happened; the "silly age" has arrived.

Of fundamental importance in the healthy development of sex interest is the establishment of what psychologists call hetero-sexuality. By hetero-sexuality is meant the psychological condition normally attained, in which the primary sex interest of the individual focuses upon members of the opposite sex. This is the only direction in which sexual development may proceed with uitimate integrity and happiness, because it is the only way in which the physiological and the psychological equipments of the person can eventuate at one with each other

in maturity. For normal adjustment to life during and after the maturation of the sex organs, it is absolutely essential for both sexes that this heterosexual attitude be achieved. Yet under present conditions the guardians of youth—ministers, teachers, and parents—seem in a conspiracy to prevent the child from attaining a healthy development of sex interest. This is chiefly for the reason, already discussed, that the adolescent is not competent economically. If offspring should be produced, great unpleasantness would occur. Thus hetero-sexual attitudes are blindly thwarted and discouraged during the time when they should normally be reaching the climax of development. The adolescent is segregated with members of his own sex, or is frightened away from intimacy with such members of the opposite sex as may be in his environment. It is said, for instance, that one of the oldest of American colleges maintained a rule that "no female be allowed upon the premises, save such as are old and of horrid mien."

Previous to the onset of puberty, the child is not definitely hetero-sexual. Its sex life has been but incipient, as we have already said. Its longings for human contacts have been vague and unlocalized; its affections attachable to persons of either sex somewhat equally. The four or five years following puberty are the best years the person will ever have in his or her life to establish in a normal way a definitely hetero-sexual attitude; to develop an unhampered, unabashed, unafraid, undisgusted attitude toward contact with the opposite sex. If this emotional attitude be not established during these crucial years, it can hardly be accomplished in a normal way. Once prevented from developing, it is not likely thereafter to come naturally and normally. It can then come, if at all, only after a long and expensive process of re-education, undertaken to relieve the nervous illness and suffering that result when mind and body are chronically at variance with each other.

How may parents aid in assuring the normal growth of interest and confidence in relations with members of the opposite sex? First, certainly by their own relations with each other. The children of quarrelling, unhappily married parents are exposed to influences that warp the emotional life in regard to

mating. But it is not enough for parents to present in their own relationship a pattern and example of normal attitudes. Normal development requires the presence of that which stimulates it, in this instance the presence of "members of the opposite sex, not too young nor too old," and in other respects attractive. Hetero-sexuality can be established in no other way than by social contact and actual acquaintanceship with those of opposite sex. It does not develop in emptiness. Anything that has the effect of depriving a person of these necessary contacts during the years of immaturity, particularly during the years of adolescence, is not for his or her best interests as an adult.

In the attempt to postpone the development of interest in the opposite sex until the economic security of the youth can be achieved, very unhealthy ideas and ideals are often forced upon the boy or girl. One of the least fortunate of those forced upon the boy is the over-idealization of women, the fiction that women are to be thought of as scarcely earthly creatures, as something too fine, fair, and holy to be regarded with any but the most worshipful thoughts. The boy is told that in his consideration of women he should always have his mother and sister in mind, and must speak, act, and think in terms of mother and sister when contemplating his relations with women. These are unpractical habits of thought. Such ideas may do great damage to those who are very sensitive to their appeal. A boy who is emotionally convinced that women are frail, holy, angelic creatures, too good to touch, and who can find no way of thinking about them except in terms of mother and sister, is liable to become ill in mind and aberrant in conduct. Happy and suitable mating is likely to become difficult or utterly impossible for him.

The most frequent of the unhealthy ideas with which parents and others attempt to immunize the girl against intimate contact with those of opposite sex is that men are dangerous, mysteriously charged with ruin and sinister intention toward girls. There is talk of "protecting" oneself and of "being protected," without clear and candid explanation of just what there is to call for protection. Thus, vague and monstrous

ideas are inculcated in those who have not the hardihood to observe and think for themselves. Emotional conditioning ensues of a sort to "protect" the girl not only until "marriageable age," but for her lifetime from all normal and spontaneous sex expression. Such girls are forever defeated in their struggle to attain emotional maturity, and the full use of their whole organism.

For the normal, uncrippled development of adolescent interest in the opposite sex two environmental conditions are necessary. First there must be members of the opposite sex, in sufficient numbers, of appropriate age, and with attractive personal qualities, in the environment. In the second place, there must be a proper fostering attitude on the part of parents and other guardians of youth. Hundreds of adolescents reach the end of the adolescent years without having enjoyed these healthy environmental conditions. And in consequence those who deal professionally with mental suffering in adults—psychologists, psychiatrists, ministers—see hundreds of persons who "break down" in middle life or earlier through maladjustments of mating.

The notion that the suitable mate will miraculously appear out of space at the proper moment is the sheerest sentimentality, having no bearing upon the real world. There must be provision for the boy to know *many* girls and for the girl to know *many* boys in adolescence if the right outcome in mating is to be achieved.

As for fostering attidudes, when adolescents try to become acquainted with each other and to draw together in social life, elders mock their awkwardness or become suspicious that the ultimate form of sexual contact is imminent. Neither levity nor suspicion is a fostering attitude. Neither one is helpful to the adolescent. That which would help him or her would be a cheerful and quite matter-of-fact attitude, interested but not obviously watchful, an attitude like that which the good and intelligent parent takes in education, vocational ambitions, or other important adolescent concerns. This is naturally difficult for the parent, because sex interest on the part of the

adolescent is more fraught with possible annoying consequences to the parent than these other concerns are.

In English-speaking countries the consummation of sex attraction in marriage is no longer typically an event of adolescence. The average age of marriage lies for both sexes above twenty-one years. Matrimony and the problems of reproduction are now typically problems of maturity. It is the cultivation and establishment of *attitudes* and of *acquaintanceships* that belongs under present economic conditions to adolescent years. If these have been normally developed, marriage will later occur as a typical adjustment of the drives that lead to mating.

It was pointed out in the discussion of psychological weaning that failure to become emotionally free from a doting parent may lead to maladjustments in mating. The unweaned individual either cannot bring himself or herself to marry at all, or else wants the mate when married to lodge in the parental home. This, too, might, perhaps, be considered a crippling of full growth to hetero-sexuality, since the allegiance to the mate must ever be divided with others who are not properly sharers in such allegiance.

Courtship

Under courtship we may describe those activities which have for their conscious or unconscious aim to attract the favourable attention of the opposite sex as such. Such activities may often be observed among prepubescents, as incipient manifestations of growing sex interest. Boys still in the barefoot stage may be seen turning somersaults before the gate of some girl still in socks, and the little girls often shout unnecessarily, make faces, and so forth, in order to turn the attention of boys to themselves. However, it is not until such formalities occur as the laying away of dolls and childish clothes, of shaving, and of long trousers that boys and girls try openly to begin "going together." The activities of courtship vary in detail from generation to generation, but along broad lines they remain much the same.

Dancing is one of the most conspicuous of the activities, which can be put to the uses of courtship. The adolescent is greatly interested in "getting up" dances, which give the opportunity for conversation and flirtation with those of opposite sex, and for experimental contact with them. At the dance each sex has a good chance to make acquaintances, to compare the appearance and quality of a large number of possible mates, and to search out congenialities. It is highly probable that during adolescent years every female "not too old nor too young," is appraised by the boy as a possible mate, and that the same is true in the case of the girl as regards all males. Dancing is thus an exciting and pleasurable recreation, as it affords a partial satisfaction to the sex impulses which cannot as yet achieve full and specific expression. Modern mental hygiene does not agree with the view which found dancing a device of the devil. It seems that partial satisfaction of a normal craving is better than no satisfaction at all, or than perverted satisfaction.

Flirtation is conspicuous among adolescents, involving those indirect invitations, pursuits, and retreats which are familiar to all. Girls especially are likely to flirt, because in our civilization manners decree that the approach of the girl to a youth who interests her must be indirect. She must gain attention without straightforward statements, and must conceal while revealing her emotional state. Thus, all sorts of devices are invented in deportment, which have ostensible purposes other than their real one, and which may puzzle and irritate parents, especially those who have forgotten completely how adolescents are motivated. Irrational giggling is one of the most annoying of these manifestations.

Any action apparently without rational use or warrant should be referred to courtship as a possible motive. In at least five cases in ten flirtation will be involved. At present the tendency is more and more toward greater freedom of the girl in courtship. It is no longer out of the question for a girl to issue a direct challenge to the interest of a young man. As direct methods achieve respectability, flirtation may decrease as an adolescent activity.

The cost of courtship is a serious problem to the adolescent, especially if dependent upon parental resources. A young man is often tempted to spend beyond his purse in competition for the company of a girl. A girl feels that she must dress in such a way as to gain her share of courting. In modern times it costs something to maintain social contacts with those of opposite sex. Many stormy battles arise between adolescents and their parents because the former are not earning and are not allowed sufficient money to indulge in courtship.

From a psychological point of view it would be advised most strongly that the adolescent be provided in some way with money for these reasonable needs, preferably through earning by his own efforts. If one earns to pay for courtship, he or she may gain a clear idea of the fact that mating implies the necessity for work.

Individual Differences

Since psychologists have not as yet devised any method of measuring impulses, we can but infer from general behaviour how and to what extent individuals differ in respect to the strength of impulses to mate, and how they vary with age and with sex.

From what can be observed, we infer that sexual instinct, like every other mental trait, is distributed over a wide range of intensity, varying from a few persons who show very little of this motive, to a few persons whose chief interest it is. Between these extremes are all possible degrees of the trait. The great majority of the people have that amount of the urge, which has insured the continuity and multiplication of the species against every conflicting trend and obstacle.

It is frequently asked whether mating impulses are the same in both sexes, or whether male and female by nature respond differently, either in kind or in degree. It is certainly very difficult to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion in this matter. So far as ordinary conduct is concerned, very different pressures, both social and economic, are brought to bear upon boys and girls, so that we can draw no very reliable conclusions

from their respective modes of behaviour. By the time sex impulse attains full strength they have been differently educated. Testimony is subject to the same difference of pressures. We could compare the conduct and the testimony of the sexes reliably only if both were subject to the same constraints and restraints.

There are restraints upon the activities and upon the testimony of women which are not present in the case of men. This carries us back at once to the discovery of paternity. When men found that they too were creators of children, they began to feel possessive toward their creations, as being extensions of the self. When private property was established it was in human nature that each man should desire to identify his "own flesh and blood" with his other possessions and creations. Inheritance of property was instituted.

But here an important problem arises in human psychology, due to sex differences in reproductive function. Every woman can know beyond doubt whether or not she has produced a child. The objective evidence is unquestionable. She does not have to depend upon the good faith of another. On the other hand, no man can know that he is the father of a child, except through his belief in another person. This psychological situation would tend strongly to influence men so that they would, unconscious of their true motives, perhaps, try to devise all possible forms of insurance against deception. Thus, we have many educational and legal devices in the history of mankind for securing strict faithfulness to one mate on the part of each woman. We have developed the "personal ideal," which sociologists stress as a means of social control. We have had denial of the existence of active sexual impulses in women. We have had wife-beating formally sanctioned and severe laws punishing by torture and by death a woman who would render the paternity of her child uncertain. Religious threats of appalling character have been made, and there have been many other devices of social control to insure knowledge of paternity to the father desiring that knowledge.

This situation is cited merely as one important illustration of the conspiracy of biological circumstances to bring about

inequalities of social pressure upon the sexes, with resulting unreliability of social conduct as a criterion of difference in original nature. In the history of civilization we find husband-beating very seldom formally sanctioned, and almost never do we find sanction for killing men who are promiscuous in sexual relationships. We have had what is ordinarily referred to as "a double standard of morals." Is this double standard based on psychology, or on education and economics?

Under the conditions of unequal pressure, which have just been sketched, it seems impossible for us to derive a direct answer to this question. Psychologists cannot investigate human drives independently of testimony. However, it is feasible to study the same drives in the lower animals. Where such study has been carried out it has not been found that female animals show weaker impulses than males. Female animals will surmount obstacles, such as electrified obstructions, to reach the males, as often as the males will cross to reach the females. Amount of activity directed toward a sex object is not greater in the members of either sex, in animals experimentally observed under laboratory conditions. If in human beings there is not a basis in nature itself for a double standard of morals, we shall expect the double standard to disappear from educational procedure as women become more able to assert themselves as arbiters of law and custom.

We have not as yet very precise knowledge as to how sex impulse varies with age. We have stated that it gradually gathers strength through childhood, with marked increase at puberty, and it is thought that it probably attains its full power by the end of adolescence.

Conduct When Puzzled

We have noted that the urge which leads to sex activity does not originally have the fixed and specific goal that it acquires in later years. The organism is at first impelled by vague restlessness and by unspecified craving for a satisfaction the means to which are not definitely and in detail visualized. If during this stage of development circumstances are such as

to place the individual in a "trap" or "cage" situation, where no normal outlet for the emotions is presented, he or she is likely to become *puzzled*. The typical activity of a craving but puzzled creature has become quite familiar to psychologists through the study of animals.[1] Such activity conforms to definite laws of learning, and is hence highly predictable when all elements composing the situation can be planned.

A kitten, hungry for food, placed in a cage with food outside, will try to emerge. We say that the kitten thus takes an *attitude* or *set* toward the restraint experienced, and that he is made *ready* to take this attitude because he is *hungry*. He is, however, puzzled as to how his hunger may be satisfied.

It is next to be noted that the kitten strives "blindly" or in an uninformed manner. He performs nearly every act of which he is capable. He jumps up, jumps down, bites the bars, claws the bars, emits vocal sounds, waves his tail, paces, turns his body hither and thither, licks his lips, and so forth. He is thus driven by his hunger into *trial-and-error activity*. His response is not direct and single: it is *multiple* and awkward.

But still the kitten does not respond just equally to every element in his cagedness. Some elements have more power over him than do others. It has been observed that such elements as the shade of the experimenter's necktie, the facing of the cage north or south, the day of the week, have little or no value as determinants of the cat's activity. On the other hand, such elements as the bars of the cage, or the position of the stimulating food on the outside, have a prepotency as determinants. The activity of the organism is, therefore, not wholly random, even at the outset. It is selective rather than quite confused.

The selective character of the kitten's activity is due largely to previous learning. An organism responds in a new situation as it has already learned to respond in situations most nearly like it in previous experience. This is to say, that an organism will react similarly toward things that are alike; will behave by *analogy* with previously experienced stimuli. For instance, a

1 E. L. Thorndike, **Animal Intelligence**, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1911.

cat, which has already learned to emerge from one cage by striking a knob with his paw, will when placed in another cage go about pawing everything that *resembles* a protruberance. The less there has been of previous experience, the more nearly random will the activity be, although some stimuli, and their analogues, have power to excite special responses apart from previous experience.

Furthermore, anything that has once been brought in as a *part* of the situation being experienced may come to be responded to as if it were *the whole* original situation, no matter how irrelevant or uninteresting it may have been when introduced. Thus the words (at first wholly impotent), "Kitty, kitty, kitty," spoken in a certain tone, again and again, when the kitten is hungry and food is brought, will come to elicit by themselves the same response as that elicited when the food itself was in the situation. This we call *associative shifting*, and it is especially conspicuous in the formation of emotional habits.

How does it come about that the activity of the kitten *grows selective, follows analogy, shifts with association*, and thus leads finally to an *outcome?* It is because an organism *yields* to whatever satisfies cravings, *neglects* whatever brings neither satisfaction nor annoyance, and *avoids* whatever brings positive annoyance. *A puzzled organism is liable to learn to do whatever will bring release from craving.* The caged kitten will eventually learn to perform *any act* within its powers that will bring satisfaction. This act need not be a "proper" or "wise" act, such as learning to strike with the paw the knob which opens the door of the cage. It may be the act of scratching the ear, of licking the forepaw, or even of retreating from the dish of food. The skilled psychologist can eventually produce "foolish" or "perverted" habits in the kitten, if he will simply wait repeatedly until the animal acts in that way in the course of its prolonged trial-and-error struggles, and will repeatedly seize that moment to release the animal from craving, by presenting its food. Thus, *any act* of which a puzzled organism is capable may become attached as a response to *any stimulus* to which it is sensitive.

These laws of habit formation hold throughout the organic world, and are fundamentally the same for man and beast. Human beings when puzzled follow the same laws of learning, which have been illustrated in the case of the caged kitten. The fact has been demonstrated repeatedly in laboratories of psychology.

Aberrations

Let us now see how the adolescent may be emotionally trapped or caged, and be thus restained from finding the normal outlet for his developing sex cravings. Let us repeat that in the earlier years the sexual drive is typically vague as to goal and hence liable to distortion. If a dead wall of repression, as by ignorance, fear, shame or disgust, is raised against the development of the trend, the individual finds himself emotionally caged. In this situation the organism does not conveniently become quiescent until the socially approved moment for release. As a matter of glandular and muscular development, the organism begins to crave and in the uninformed person the blind trial-and-error struggle is inevitably set up. Then whatever chance act brings satisfaction will have a strong likelihood of becoming habitual.

There are various forms of sex conduct that give approximate satisfaction, and hence may be adopted in the unenlightened striving for adjustment, but are undesirable either because the individual fixed therein is prevented from achieving full happiness, or because they are socially unprofitable. These forms of conduct are called perversions. They are acquired in accordance with the laws of learning, which govern all habit formation.

We have just noted that by the law of analogy, in learning, the tendency is to respond, in the absence of an appropriate stimulus, to whatever is most nearly like the appropriate stimulus, in the immediate environment. In the absence of the door-knob, the kitten which has found release through door-knobs will go about behaving toward *any* protruberance as though it were a door-knob. The proper or usual stimulus to

sexual response is a human being of opposite sex. But under some circumstances persons of the same sex may become stimuli, because they are *nearly* like the appropriate stimulus. Such circumstances would be those tending to puzzle the adolescent, and place him in an emotional trap—complete absence of young persons of opposite sex, for instance, or fright and disgust attaching to members of opposite sex, through unfortunate experience or report.

If this emotional habit becomes definitely established, so that an individual has an abnormal attachment for a person, or persons, of the same sex, we express the condition by saying that the individual is perverted. Such problems are most likely to arise where the individual is by original constitution unstable and easily influenced by chance happenings or emotional shocks. Sometimes two persons, both thus perverted in habit, conceive an attachment for each other.

The process of trial-and-error whereby such a perversion comes about is perhaps quite different in detail for every pervert. Something occurs in the experience of the developing personality to interfere with the usual modes of response and to place the individual in an emotional trap or puzzle. This interference may consist in a strong infantile attachment to the parent, which is never permitted to get free in the normal way. Again, it may be some shock concerned with information about sex, which, by frightening or disgusting, turns the emotional life from the normal stimulus. It has been pointed out already what harm is done by teaching boys that women are holy and by teaching girls that men are villains. Whatever the causes, they point to the necessity for getting normally free from parents, for social contact with young members of the opposite sex who can be thought of as possible mates, and for sex education of the right kind in childhood.

Among adolescents in segregated schools, where members of the opposite sex are absent, we have violent "crushes," involving members of the same sex. By crush is meant that species of absorbing affection which involves jealousy, and demands the exclusive response of the object to which it becomes attached. It is somewhat uncertain whether these evanescent crushes are

to be considered psychologically as mild perversions of sex attraction or not. In the vast majority of cases no specifically sexual activity is involved, but kissing, embracing, superlative terms of endearment, the desire for exclusive possession and the jealousy already referred to, characterize the situation, and suggest that the vague, unlocalized drives of sex are thus finding expression in the absence of more appropriate objects.

The most frequent form of the crush is probably that in which an older or in some way superior individual is made the object of adoration by one younger, or more dependent emotionally and intellectually. Occasionally crushes are mutual in the sense that two are devoted exclusively to each other. Much day-dreaming about the beloved is involved, and the attention wanders from the routine requirements of the day, as it does when one is "in love."

From common observation one would say that it is in segregated schools, that is, in schools for one sex exclusively, that the crush is most troublesome. A statistical study of the subject would almost surely show comparative infrequency of the crush in co-educational institutions. Under co-education the affections fasten upon members of the opposite sex more generally. Adolescent love is almost sure to be a problem for parents and teachers, one way or another. From the psychologist's point of view, the problems connected with the crush are more troublesome, because less healthy, than those arising from the love for one of opposite sex.

These adolescent crushes appear to be evanescent in the majority of cases. The boy or girl recovers, and later reacts toward the opposite sex in the normal manner. This fortunate outcome is particularly likely if the object of the crush is a healthy-minded and kindly person, with no desire to absorb the lives of others, and gifted with tactful methods of discouraging sentimentality.

Crushes on teachers are very common, and may lead to demoralization of a school, unless handled in a matter-of-fact way. Failure to handle crushes successfully sometimes leads to the dismissal of a teacher. It is probably impossible to generalize concerning the remedy. Each case will call for a slightly

different treatment from every other. A matter-of-fact attitude is most therapeutic. For example, if the affected individual brings sweets as a tribute, the recipient may accept them and "pass them around" to be eaten chiefly by others, as though assuming it to be a gift held in common. If flowers are brought, the teacher may place them away on some stand other than her own desk, for all to share. If the object of affection behaves in a matter-of-fact way all will usually be well. However, in violent cases the only remedy may be to separate the affected adolescent from the object of attachment for a considerable period of time. Thus the harmful reactions will die out by disuse. Sometimes the individual can be cured simply by introducing into the environment the appropriate stimuli to sex attraction, namely, members of the opposite sex, "not too young nor too old."

Occasionally a school or camp will be almost disorganized by an epidemic of crushes, which gradually wanes after a time. Some individual, who has formed the "crush habit," is usually to blame for such disturbances, by stimulating the emotions of the less volatile members into activity.

The question arises as to the distinction between friendships and crushes. In friendship there is usually no emotional absorption on the part of either friend. Friends are usually more nearly equal in age and ability. There is a healthy independence of each other, co-existing with congeniality and affection. Neither friend flies into a suicidal passion if the other goes off to spend a day with some one else. Circles of friendship may include three, four, five, or half a dozen individuals all equally congenial and devoted to each other. The crush is confined to two people.

Other forms of perversion come about through the law of associative shifting, in learning. When a habit is being formed, a response may become attached to any *part* of a situation originally provoking the response as a *whole situation*. Thus, any object, word or idea closely associated with sex may come to provoke the total sexual response. In this way we find perverted habits developed, in which the responses normally made to a person of opposite sex are made only to some object once

associated with sexual satisfaction which in the life history of the individual takes the place which should be occupied by a mate.

Finally, the thwarted adolescent, blindly striving for satisfaction, may find it in self-stimulation, and may thus become fixed in the unfortunate habit of manipulating erogenous zones of his own body, as a release from his drives.

These and other perversions are learned as adaptations to life, during adolescence and perhaps before. The psychologist and the educator have no easy and infallible remedy for such habits once acquired. A long and tedious process of re-education is in every case necessary. The circumstances which have led to the distortion, the original "trap situation," must be uncovered, if possible, and the emotional "set" or attitude must be reconstructed. This is very difficult, and in many cases it cannot be accomplished at all.

If every child could be handled in accordance with what we now know of the principles of mental hygiene as we are trying to make them clear in our present discussion, probably most serious aberrations could be *prevented.* Such a condition of universal parental clear-seeing and of benign environment is, however, utopian, though both insight and circumstances may be expected to improve as education spreads.

Certainly it is of primary importance that every adolescent should have in life some positive influences which will develop a normal kind of sex consciousness. It is essential for a good adjustment in mating that young men and women should have full opportunity to meet and know each other well, so that final choice may be less a matter of chance than it now is. Many an adolescent does, in fact, grow up without chancing to know more than one or two eligible, to say nothing of congenial members of the opposite sex. This social condition is not conducive to successful mating.

Co-education

It would seem here that we have one of the soundest arguments for co-education of adolescents—an idea which is alien

and absurd to communities where by tradition the sexes are separated for schooling at or before puberty. In England and in eastern United States, for example, it is traditional to separate the sexes in high school and college. In the middle western and far western sections of the United States, on the other hand, co-education of adolescents is customary, and in these states marriages of schoolmates and of college mates are extremely frequent. The alumni registers of the state universities, for example, of Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Nebraska, or Minnesota will show a very large proportion of alumni and alumnae married to each other. These western people have had opportunity during four years of high school and four years of college life to know, and know very well, literally hundreds of youths of opposite sex during the years when hetero-sexual interests are developing. They have had a genuine opportunity to make a real choice in mating. No statistical study of the rate of divorce and other domestic infelicity among these alumni, as compared with alumni of segregated colleges, has been made, but common observation would lead to the hypothesis that such study would show much less infelicity among the co-educated.

The fact that co-educated adolescents might tend to fall in love with each other was urged about half a century ago as a fundamental objection to co-education. As a matter of fact there is undoubtedly far less sentimentality in co-educational schools than in segregated schools. In the former case, members of the opposite sex are seen and known for what they are. They are not thought of as impossibly gallant heroes, horrible ogres, glittering knights, mysterious, golden-haired angels, and the like, as pictured by romanticism uncorrected by actual experience.

Among psychologists and sociologists who make it a life-work to study the family and its problems, there is coming to be a consensus of opinion which leans to co-education for adolescents. Thus Pfister,[1] who has dealt professionally with many wrecked lives, writes: "It is certainly right and proper that boys and girls should be educated together. When boys know only the company of other boys, and girls only that of other girls, healthy

1 O. Pfister, **Love in Children and Its Aberrations**, Dodd, Mead and Company, New York, 1924.

moral training becomes very difficult." Groves says: "Discussion regarding the advantages and disadvantages of teaching boys and girls together continues, but fortunately for the welfare of the family the trend is constantly toward co-education. . . Sex attraction is a perfectly normal element of the adolescent period. Co-education does not produce it; segregation cannot prevent it. It comes because it is due in the development of the young person. Society knows no more effective way of dealing with it than to provide everyday contacts for boys and girls in the wholesome associations of school activities. The atmosphere of the co-educational college is far more normal and educational than can ever be developed in any college exclusively for men or for women."[1]

So far as mating and the development of attitudes normal to mating are concerned, co-education is certainly for the best mental health of most adolescents. Since no intellectual inferiority of either sex has ever been demonstrated, there seems no adequate objection from any other point of view. Co-education is not expensive. On the contrary, is is cheaper to maintain one site and one set of college buildings than to maintain two. If special subjects of study are desirable for girls but not for boys then these subjects can be given to one sex alone, as is done in western United States in domestic science, for instance, in the co-educational high schools and colleges with which the present writer is most familiar.

Rational Control

Apart from the anxiety of the parent to save himself from inconvenience, there are many good reasons for controlling the ultimate expression of sex activity until the modern individual is fully mature. Among civilized peoples it is not possible for the sex drive to function fully as soon as it develops, because man's nature consists of so many other strong drives, which also demand satisfaction, and which conflict with satisfaction of the

1 E. R. Groves, **Social Problems of the Family**, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1927.

sex drive. Man's nature now craves not only a mate, but a mate that shall be found permanently suitable and congenial and shall not bring him scorn, disapproval, or too much economic stress, and who will not arouse fighting responses within him. Modern man has to live in a society where monogamous marriage is the socially approved way of mating. Therefore he cannot sample one mate after another, and retain the approval of fellow men, which is so necessary for the satisfaction of most people. It is thus of the greatest importance that the one mate allowed be as suitable and congenial as possible; and a mate selected at fifteen is no doubt less likely to prove permanently satisfying than is one selected six or seven years later, after taste has matured through wider observation. Few adults can honestly say that they would now be happy if they had married the one who seemed most charming to them at fourteen or fifteen years of age.

But not only must the mate himself or herself give satisfactions other than that of sex. Mating must be adjusted to the other important desires of a human being. Man craves, also, good food, good clothing, a warm and secure shelter, leisure, amusement, social prestige and expert medical attention when he is ill. These wants we have referred to as "the standard of living." The desired standard of living cannot be maintained, except by control and inhibition of sexual drives. For those gifted adolescents who, in addition to material goods, crave power over and knowledge of the environment, inhibition is doubly imposed. "It is, after all, not an instinct, but the total individual that has to be satisfied."[1]

The instinct of sex comes to be longer and longer inhibited, so that man shall not sink into misery through giving all to that, and violating other needs. The question for education is, How shall this inhibition be accomplished with a minimum of harm? How shall mating be delayed in such a way as to provide for the satisfaction of all other wants?

It has been urged that these problems could best be solved by birth control. If young people could enter marriage with the

[1] R. S. Woodworth, **Dynamic Psychology**, Columbia University Press, 1917.

certainty that children would not be born at once, then adolescents could mate, each party to the contract supporting himself or herself. In this way children could be produced later, when the parents have established themselves financially. At present religious scruples and other doubts stand in the way of incorporating available knowledge of birth control into the training of youth. However, as scientific methods of birth control become more and more developed, it may well be that a majority of youth may find them helpful in adjusting to life's problems, as a minority are certainly finding them helpful to-day.

Methods of birth control are, however, not at present developed to a point where they can be applied in all cases with certainty of success. No doubt they do, in fact, operate in a majority of cases merely to diminish the number of offspring, rather than to give perfect, rational control of reproduction. Children are at present, therefore, imminent whenever the young marry. It has been suggested that, under these conditions, the parents of the young couple should stand ready to continue their partial support, until support of offspring can be fully achieved by the latter ; that this should become a duty of parents in view of the prolongation of infancy which civilization brings. If this custom of continuing the partial support of married offspring could once achieve social sanction, no doubt it would seem proper and right. Each generation having enjoyed its benefits in youth would feel it just to continue the custom with those following. However, it is clear that one generation somewhere must initiate the custom without having had its benefits. Perhaps human nature is such that this initiating generation will be hard to find! In any case, the average parent is scarcely, and scarcely will be, in a position to support grandchildren as well as children. The well-to-do parent is perhaps the only one who comes under practical consideration in this proposal.

As for adjustments outside of marriage, apart from all question of sin, the presence of venereal diseases in the population, especially in that portion of it which is most readily available for promiscuous sex experiences, is reason enough for a control based on wholly rational grounds. Venereal diseases contracted

in youth play a large part in the unhappiness and breakdown of adults.[1]

There are still further grounds for rational, informed control, apart from all reasons of economics and of hygiene. When sex experience in its ultimate form has no social sanction outside of marriage, it is likely to be otherwise available largely in circumstances which violate aesthetics in various ways. Thus ignorant youth, in the grip of uneducated impulse, is in danger of seizing satisfactions of the moment under conditions which in retrospect are aesthetically revolting. Appetite may become thus unfortunately associated with disgust and such association may lead to serious subsequent unhappiness. Hunger satisfied by eating a food in a disgusting situation may render that particular food for ever repugnant to the individual who is sensitive to beauty and cleanliness. Thirst quenched by drinking, in ignorance of its nature, a draught subsequently found to violate aesthetics may lead to nausea. Therefore, rational control is necessary in order to prevent the misery which results, when recurrent appetite has become associated with stultifying distaste. These considerations should also be borne in mind when conducting sex education by verbal or pictorial means.

Sex Education

Many parents oppose the idea of sex education for the young on the ground that they do not wish the innocence of their children to be destroyed. The fact, easily ascertainable from any open-minded investigation of the subject, is that children are almost sure to gain some kind of information about sex matters not later than the beginning of the adolescent years in some way or other. Usually, indeed, this comes much earlier. The child begins to ask questions before the sixth year, which lead directly to sex information, if they are answered as they should be. It is, therefore, not a question whether the young shall be taught about sex, but only a question as to who shall

1 G. V. Hamilton, **Objective Psychopathology**, C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1925.

be the teacher. Shall they learn from playmates and from viciously inclined adults? Or shall they learn from parents and teachers? There seems little to argue for the former.

From the educational standpoint it is undoubtedly wiser to teach the necessary self-control on the basis of economics, psychology and hygiene, than on the basis of sin and evil. A person of normal intelligence refrains from eating a dozen pieces of pie or from spending all his time at games, if he is convinced that these things will cut him off from something which in the long run it is more important for him to have. So if the genuine reasons for control be presented to the adolescent who is intelligent and capable of grasping *ideas*, he or she will be strongly influenced toward self-control. We have said that control must enter at the level of ideas, since the reflexes are in large measure uncontrollable.

The motives of sex, thus temporarily rejected, may become harnessed by means of ideas to other motives. A partial satisfaction may be thus achieved by working hard to master a field in order that in the long run mating itself may be enjoyed more completely. Thus, a youth of good quality may throw himself into study or work, with the ideal of marriage and the family ahead of him, using up his energies under the influence of this ambition.

When the determination to exercise control for the sake of vocation and health has been brought about there are various aids to this end which may be taught. A psychological method of handling a rejected motive is to occupy the attention with other activities. Athletics in high schools and colleges help to serve this purpose, by taking up the attention and the energy with other interesting activities. To afford free play for other strong interests is a great help in handling this problem of adolescence.

As for adaptations outside of marriage it is most helpful to teach the essential facts about the nature and prevalence of venereal diseases. The youth should know that promiscuous relationships are likely to ruin health and to spoil the chances of making the final desirable adaptation in marriage, on a high level of mutual fitness and respect. More adults die of paresis

than die of typhoid fever in New York City, for example, as a result of syphilis contracted usually in early years, in complete ignorance of what lay in wait.

Where ideals of economic security, of permanence of affection, and of personal health can be developed, or where substitute activities can be instituted, they serve to balance the adolescent against the immediate urges of the sexual trend, and play an important part in enabling the trend to be better realized later. Although they operate to delay the ultimate motor responses, they do not have the deplorable effect of making the drive appear evil, shameful, or abnormal, as the cruder methods of control do. Thus, the way is paved to a healthy adaptation in marriage, whereas the old frightening methods paved the way for mental conflict, evasion and perversion. The puritanical education played the instincts false, and thus divided the personality against itself.

A complete discussion of sex education would require a volume of its own. Such volumes are available,[1] and there is no need to present another one here. Only a few of the more important principles can be suggested. First and foremost, there should be nothing vague or indefinite about the instruction given. The appearance of the sex organs should be made clear, their names should be learned, their functions should be explained. The process of reproduction should be given in simple, brief description. Any question asked by the child should be answered, if the answer is known. The subject should be treated in a purely matter-of-fact tone—not as something especially solemn or charged with emotion of any sort.

Moreover, sex education should by no means be delayed until adolescence. It should begin when the first questions are asked, which will usually be in early childhood. Little by little a child's spontaneous questions will have led him to complete knowledge, if they have been clearly answered, by the time puberty occurs. Sex knowledge given in childhood is received without either shame or avidity, being then of no special emotional significance. If the parent is afraid that the child thus educated will bring

1 M. A. Bigelow, **Sex Education**, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1916.

embarrassment upon himself in the present state of taboo by talking openly and freely to others about sex, it may be taught that these facts are usually considered to be of private and intimate concern, like money matters, or family affairs, and are not generally discussed in public.

The question has been raised as to whether girls and boys should be educated alike, or whether boys should be taught facts which are withheld from girls. Educators writing upon this question more than ten years ago generally held that boys needed more thorough information than girls in matters of sex. There has been a great change in attitude toward the so-called "innocence" of girls during the past decade. It is doubtful whether the adolescent girl of to-day will be satisfied with anything less than a thorough account of sex. It was formerly advocated, for example, that the boy should know the anatomy of the female reproductive system, and the names of the organs; but that it was unnecessary for the girl to have this information concerning male anatomy. The adolescent girl of to-day does not hesitate to seek this and all other information necessary to give her a clear idea of what sex is and what it means.

Certainly there should be given a clear account of the venereal diseases, and the ways in which each affects the life of him or her who contracts it. It should be definitely explained just how these diseases may be avoided. Among enlightened parents there seems to be no longer any sentiment for bringing up sons and daughters in ignorance of these dangers to which all who are unwitting may be exposed.

Probably mental conflict and disorder arise more often from sex than from any other single source in modern life. In fact, there are psychiatrists who believe that *all* mental maladies have their origin in the fears, cravings and inhibitions connected with sex. This extreme view of the origin of mental disorder is not generally held, but unquestionably a very large proportion of human ills do originate in the irrational mismanagement of this force in human life. We have tried to show how these ills may be mitigated, and we may summarize what has been said under the concept of mental hygiene.

Principles of Mental Hygiene

The first principle of mental hygiene in relation to sex is that of *enlightenment.* This does not mean that through information alone all maladjustment could be avoided, for there are many adolescents who are not sufficiently intelligent to grasp the essential ideas, even when simply presented, and there are many more who are too impulsive to be capable of self-government through knowledge. However for a majority, enlightenment of the kind that comes through valid information is a prime preventive of human ills in this sphere, as well as in others.

Another principle may be briefly formulated as the principle of *habitual contact with reality.* Actual close acquaintanceship during youth with many real persons of opposite sex who can be thought of as potential mates is healthy. Youth spent in an unreal world of fiction and of day dream, cut off from the genuine presence of proper potential mates, is not likely to eventuate in successful mating.

Finally, taboo on sex activity during youth should never be promoted by means of fear and shame. The use of such terms as "ruined," "lost" and the like is to be avoided. No word that makes sex as such seem dreadful should be used in dealing with the immature.

If these straightforward principles could be made operative everywhere, happiness, especially in adolescence, would be greatly increased.

CHAPTER VI

Achieving a point of view

Questions of Origin and Destiny

It is characteristic of every normally intelligent human adult that he needs some explanation of the universe in which he lives. He needs some satisfactory answer to the question: What is the meaning of existence, and of his own existence in particular? In childhood such questions as the following are formulated, and are asked intermittently as mental development progresses : Where did I come from ? Where shall I go when I die ? Who made everything ? In childhood these questions may be answered satisfactorily by almost any authoritative reply.

At a mental age of about twelve years, however, these questions begin to require some definite and logically coherent answer. They press for more or less systematic account. In the primitive pubic ceremonies these demands for an explanation of the universe were recognized. During these ceremonies, the youth was initiated into the religious beliefs of the tribe. An explanation of the universe and of his place in it, worked out through the reflections of his ancestors, was given to him. Thus was the adolescent "confirmed" and supplied with a point of view upon life and death.

For example, among the primitive Omahas, inhabiting the plains of Nebraska, the child's mind was said to have "become white" when it was obvious that he could remember events with clearness and in detail. This recognition was customarily accorded about the age of puberty. The boy was then taught the tribal prayer, "Here, needy, he stands and I am he." Undertaking a solitary journey, he then sang this prayer for four

nights and days, in lonely places.[1] This ritual, with further ceremonies, constituted confirmation in the religious belief of his people, securing for him the protection of the deities, and the satisfaction of his mental needs.

Is Religion Instinctive?

Attempted inventories of the original nature of man do not include mention of a religious instinct. The religions of the world have apparently grown out of a medley of impulses, such as fear, submission, desire for a sense of security, self-assertion and so forth. These impulses, in combination with intellect of a certain fairly high degree, result in cravings for immortality of the self, for comfort and protection, and for guidance in the maze of life's difficulties, which are satisfied by a set of beliefs and ceremonies called a religion.

The primary part in the need of a religion is played by intelligence. Animals other than man, young children and feeble-minded persons, get on well without religious beliefs, because they have not the degree of intellectual acumen which would enable them to formulate questions of life, death and conduct. Religion becomes a problem of adolescence not because there is at that period a development of a religious instinct, but because *intelligence* develops during the teens to a point where question and answer arise as manifestations of growth in mental power.

The Maturing of Intelligence

Since the beginning of the present century psychologists have learned more than in all time preceding about the growth and maturation of intelligence.[2] Present data indicate that intellectual growth, like physical growth, begins at conception and continues until some point in late adolescence. Methods of measurement now available show a steady rise of the curve of

1 A. C. Fletcher, **Indian Story and Song from North America,** Small, Maynard and Company, Boston, 1900.

2 F. M. Teagarden, **A Study of the Upper Limits of the Development of Intelligence,** Teachers College, Columbia University, 1925.

mental power to the age of about sixteen years, on the average, and little if any rise thereafter. Among adolescents of superior intelligence as a group such as are to be found in high schools, improvement in scores on tests of intellect is found up to eighteen years, and has not been proved to have ceased at that age. However, unselected persons seem to reach their maximum in mental tests not later than sixteen years of age. Apparently the nervous tissues which form the physiological basis of mentality "get their growth" at about the same time as the bony tissues of the skeleton. At the close of adolescence, certainly, increments of power from inner growth have ceased.

It is at adolescence, therefore, that "reason flowers." Or in more matter-of-fact phrases, it is during adolescence that the individual first achieves his maximum power of thinking and planning. This fact makes clear why it is that the need of a constructive and systematic explanation of the universe is now felt for the first time. Below a *mental age* of about twelve years the intelligence is not sufficiently developed to reason independently or with long sustained effort.

Also, it is evident that systematization of conduct, plans for reforming the world, and other activities that call for abstract thought are not possible in childhood, except for the very few of most superior intelligence, who arrive at a mental age of twelve years while they are still but six or seven or eight years old.

Individual Differences

This brings us again to consider individual differences. There are literally enormous differences in power between the best intellects and the poorest intellects in the world's population, or in any large unit of people. Adult intellect ranges, in innumerable degrees, from that of the lowest idiot to that of the most gifted thinkers of all time, such as Plato or Pasteur. The average man or woman attains a degree of capacity for thinking which lies midway between these two extremes. The average or typical power of thought is, as a matter of fact, not very great, when measured by what it will bring in the

way of desires attained or of fallacies detected. Psychological and educational measurements show that the average adolescent has not that degree of intellectual power which is necessary, for instance, to master algebra.[1] The average adolescent does not need a complicated and highly logical system of thought about the universe, therefore, but he does need some point of view, suited to a relatively limited power of questioning.

Diverging from the average, on the one hand, are all the hundreds of adolescents who are too limited intellectually to need any explanation of the universe at all. There are numerous persons, about five to six per cent. of any ordinary population, who never, no matter how long they may live, rise in power of thinking to the level of the average twelve-year-old child. These adolescents remain untroubled by religious and philosophical struggles. They take the world as they find it, from day to day, hardly looking beyond the week or the season in their efforts to comprehend their lives. They cannot foresee the coming of winter, or the coming of old age, much less the coming of death. The need for a plan of life beyond the grave, and for a system of conduct to achieve this remote good, never troubles them. Nevertheless, many of these adolescents are seen subscribing to religious doctrines, by way of formal confirmation. They passively or emotionally accept whatever explanation may be offered to them, without having felt any genuine need whatever for replies to questions which they have never formulated for themselves.

On the other hand, there are equally numerous adolescents who have begun while they were still children to question the universe with urgent, insistent longing for reply. Their craving for answer is very real. They, too, constitute about five to six per cent of the total population, being the most intelligent of their generation. These arrive at a *mental age* of twelve years and above while they are still young children. It is among these gifted intellects that the most prolonged and serious mental conflicts arise, in the effort to achieve a point of view that will give life genuine integrity. From the most intelligent

1 E. L. Thorndike, **The Psychology of Algebra**, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1922.

of them closely reasoned systems of philosophy and of ethics emanate, as they live out their maturity.

Growth of Intellect Illustrated

In the decade just passed the mental contents of hundreds of immature persons of various ages have been carefully elicited and examined, so that we are now able to tell with considerable precision what may be expected of individuals in various stages of mental growth.[1] We know, for instance, that not until the mental age of twelve to thirteen years has a child formulated such concepts as *pity, revenge, charity* or *justice.*

The following are typical replies of normal children ten and eleven years old to the questions: What is pity? What is justice?

Pity: "Is to take something. They say 'Take Pity,'" "Is not to hit anybody." "When some one hurts somebody, you should not do it." "Pity means to be poor." "It's what they say when a cat comes along and kills a nice robin: 'Oh, what a pity!'"

Justice: "Always do right in every way." "It's men who take care of people." "Justice is peace." "It's to do right by the pupils." "When you're brought before." "It's to take charge." "It is to be of high birth." "It's not to tell lies."

Obviously it is not possible for individuals at this stage of development to become indignant at social wrongs, to espouse abstract causes, or to appreciate religious principles. One who supposes that *justice* means "to be of high birth," will not spend time brooding over human wrongs.

By the time these same children are three or four years older, they will no longer define abstractions as they did previously, but will give much more generalized replies, such as:

1 L. M. Terman, **The Measurement of Intelligence,** Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1916.

Pity: "Pity is sympathy." "The desire to help some one in trouble" "It's to be kind to those that are hit." "It's a painful feeling you have, when some one gets what he doesn't deserve." "To be sorry for some one."

Justice: "It's a square deal." "It's to play fair in everything." "To see that each gets what he deserves." "To see that he's punished if he's guilty, or let go if he's innocent." "To get your rights." "The correct operation of law."

It is easy to see the growth that has taken place over the status of the prepubescent. The concepts at fourteen or fifteen are not as perfectly formed as they will be at twenty; but we can plainly see that the young adolescent is already capable or trying to reach out after an abstract understanding of life.

This same growth may be illustrated by the power to generalize from fables. Take, for instance, the old fable of the fox and the crow, presented as follows to children eight, nine and ten years of age:

A crow, having stolen a bit of meat, perched in a tree and held it in her beak. A fox, seeing her, wished to secure the meat and spoke to the crow thus: "How handsome you are! And I have heard that the beauty of your voice is equal to that of your form and feathers . Will you not sing for me, so that I may judge whether this is true?" The crow was so pleased that she opened her mouth to sing, and dropped the meat, which the fox immediately ate. What lesson does this teach *us?*

Typical replies of average children of the ages mentioned above are:

"Teaches we should not eat much meat." "Teaches we should not climb trees." "We should first chew it before swallowing." "Teaches if you have a thing to eat, eat it quick." "Teaches we should not think of our beauty." "Teaches not to talk with foxes."

By the time the same children are fourteen or fifteen years old, their typical replies will be very different, and may be exemplified as follows:

"Teaches not to listen to flatterers." "Never do what a flatterer asks you to do." "Be on guard against soft talk." "Pay no attention to flattery."

Here again the increased power of abstraction is clearly apparent. It is also clear that the pre-adolescent is by no means wholly incapable of generalization. Intellectual abilities are present in incipient strength from the earliest years of life, and develop *gradually* as the child goes on living. There is involved no sudden change that takes place over night. The condition is analogous to that found in the case of physical growth. All members of the anatomy are present from the earliest years of life. The hands and feet, for instance, are there from the very beginning. But a *gradual* growth takes place, so gradual that from one day to the next there seems to be no change at all. Yet the hands and feet of the adolescent are so different in strength and skill from those of the infant that they hardly seem to have been the same at all. So it is with mental power.

Wishes as Symptomatic of Intellect

Nearly every one is familiar with the story of the three wishes vouchsafed by the good fairy to the poor foresters, and with the inability of the latter to take advantage of their opportunity. "I wish I had sausages." "I wish the sausages were on your nose." "I wish the sausages were off your nose again." This ancient fable embodies profound truth about the intellect of the average adult.

A very interesting approach to understanding of an individual's intellectual calibre is to elicit his wishes. Adolescents, whose respective mental ages had been determined by standard tests, were subsequently asked to tell what they would wish for, if they could have three wishes granted.[1] The mental ages

1 J. N. Washburne, **Correlation between Intelligence and Wishes,** unpublished.

of these adolescents ranged from six years and two months to that of a slightly superior adult. Several of the most stupid among those questioned were unable to think of three wishes. A few examples of the relationship between intelligence and wishes uttered will suggest to what extent these adolescents would be likely to interest themselves in religious strivings or in moral reforms.

A boy, mental age 8-0, intelligence quotient 59, wishes for (1) a taxi, (2) new coat, (3)?

A girl, mental age 6-2, intelligence quotient 60, wishes for (1) sweets, (2) a ring, (3) a bracelet.

A boy, mental age that of slightly superior adult, I.Q. 122, wishes for (1) good health, (2) health for fame, (3) good income.

A boy, mental age 13-10. I.Q. 109, wishes for (1) a castle, (2) to be a prince, (3) to have the fastest dog.

A girl, mental age that of the average adult, I.Q. 120, wishes for (1) good health, (2) good education, (3) talent of some sort.

The dullest adolescents are capable only of "childish" wishes, for concrete objects, such as coats, bracelets, and so forth. Even those of superior intelligence confine their wishes to abstract goods of a strictly personal application. Wider investigation is being carried on in this matter, and will probably show that very few adolescents include among their three wishes any expression of longing for the abstract good of the human race.

It is, in fact, true that a very high degree of intelligence is required in order to entertain the abstract thoughts that lead to anxiety about the future and to ethical considerations.

The Need for a Religion

It has been made clear that those who develop to or beyond that degree of intelligence which is represented by the intellectual capacity of the average twelve-year-old child (and which we call, therefore, "a mental age of twelve years"), have a more or less genuine need of a settled belief about the nature of the universe. Only a small percentage of adolescents, however,

become deeply involved in such matters. The needs of the majority are readily met by orthodox confirmation and the acceptance of established beliefs. The religious explanation of the universe, as worked out by the thought of the past, appeals to the majority of adolescents. Thus, we have the adolescent phenomena of religious conversion and confirmation. These phases of adolescence have been studied and described at considerable length by students of human nature.

Modern adolescents of intellectual equipment enabling them to reach high school in the United States, say that the problems of religion enter much into their thoughts. A large number of adolescents questioned by the North Central Association of College and Secondary Schools would like a course in high school that would deal with the fundamentals of religion and morality.[1]

It has been derived from questionnaire studies that religious conversion is distinctly an adolescent phenomenon.[2] From eleven to twenty-three years the great majority of conversions take place. Those converted report a number of psychological experiences connected with the conversion. They report feelings of distress, despondency and anxiety; a sense of incompleteness; a fear of imperfection; the yearning toward an ideal. The following are extracts from the testimony of adults, asked to recall their experiences of religious conversion:

A woman says: "When fourteen I had a pitiable struggle to do what I thought I ought. I often got out of bed and prayed for reconciliation and peace of mind."

A man says: "From sixteen to twenty was a period of struggle. I came upon higher ideals, and did not live up to them, even approximately."

Another says: "When about eighteen I studied and thought long on the question of sanctification. The experience I sought was not the conquest of marked evil habits, and on the whole

1 **Proceedings of the Twenty-ninth Annual Meeting of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, Division V,** 1923-24, p. 71*f*.

2 E. D. Starbuck, **The Psychology of Religion,** Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1899.

was rather vague. Two or three times with nervous apprehension I took the start, saying, 'Now I claim as mine perfect holiness'; but I found nothing very different save a trying nervous strain of anxiety and painful scrutiny lest some shade of thought should prove false my claim to perfect sanctification."

Other phases of the religious strivings of adolescents are the feeling of sin, fear of eternal punishment, morbid conscientiousness, ideas of emulating the saints, struggles against sex interests.

A woman says: "When eleven I began to think about the future. I became restless. Everything I did seemed to be wrong. Then I would make fresh resolves."

A man says: "When I was seventeen I began to seek salvation. I felt hopeless and convicted of sin."

The fear of eternal punishment is no doubt inculcated by religious indoctrination, and is associated with the thought of death, which seems to be very much in evidence during adolescence. Adolescents often suffer greatly over the problem of death. This is probably because now for the first time they grasp the fact and something of the nature of death, and because by now some one intimately associated with the adolescent since childhood is likely to have died. It is doubtful whether preoccupation with death has any mysterious connection with rapid physical growth, as some students of the subject have inferred.

As a result of the religious and ethical struggles of adolescence we may find brooding, depression and constant introspection. Weeping, reading the Holy Scriptures, and self-inflicted tortures may be observed.

A woman says: "I joined the church on probation when I was twelve. I went home and cried, for I didn't feel happy. I did everything I could to appease my conscience; read the Bible, told mother everything, put away my jewelry."

Another woman says: "From thirteen to fifteen religious

enthusiasm and mysticism ran high. I had read my father's books on the mystics. I practised fasting and mortification of the flesh. I secretly made rough shirts and put the burrs next my skin, and wore pebbles in my shoes. I would spend the night flat on my back on the floor without a covering."

Of course, all these performances, if detected by mature elders, seem to be at the very height of folly, especially since the adolescent usually refuses to explain, or else offers some false reason for his conduct, such as that he can sleep better on the floor.

The age of confirmation in our churches recognizes the psychological facts which have been stated. The age of pubescence is generally, for most churches, the age of confirmation, and the child thereafter joins the congregation of adults at worship, goes to confession, and enters into the activities of the church.

Doubt

In cases where religious feeling has developed, and has been acted upon, as by joining the church, and later doubt comes into play as a result of wider reading and observation, we find very serious and painful mental conflicts. If proper adjustment cannot be made, such a conflict may lead to great unhappiness for the individual, even to suicide. Such a state of affairs is most likely to arise when an adolescent of unusually good intellectual gifts is brought into contact with systematic knowledge, which appears in contradiction to previously accepted doctrines. The study of biology, of history, of geology, for instance, may induce a conflict in a religious adolescent, which in turn may lead to chronic tension, from which the mind must escape by some means or other. Some who are placed in this painful situation adopt implicit belief in the traditional religion. Others gradually work out a personal religion. A very few are able to adopt as a permanent adjustment the attitude of suspended judgment, resting with the conclusion that they do not know the explanation of the universe.

The unknowable is, however, likely to be extremely painful,

especially for the emotionally immature person, whose intelligence is well developed at an early age. In those very years when the ego is being so keenly realized, when the self is being "found," it is especially painful to admit that the ultimate place of the "self" in nature cannot be known. In some cases the emotions generated by the conflict with the unknowable are so acute that the youth commits suicide to escape them—to escape the sense of futility which an agnostic answer gives, or to find out what is beyond life.

Much is said to-day of the need for a new religion. Progressive clergymen recognize that those youths who will replenish the intellectual class in the rising generation are not accepting literally the beliefs of the established churches. The modern mind is fashioned by the impact of scientific methods and facts in a way that was not possible in previous centuries.[1] The modern youth, scientifically trained, perceives man as an animal, created by a natural process called evolution. He understands his world as mechanism, his existence as chemistry. The anthropomorphic god and the concepts of special creation and of posthumous reward for moral conduct no longer meet youthful need, among those from whom religious leaders were in a former day recruited.

Yet, although the modern educated youth of fine intelligence sees himself as a mechanism in a mechanistic world, his ego is as rebellious as was the ego of the youth preceding him, against personal extinction. His need for sense of his importance in the scheme of things is as great as ever. This state of affairs sets many hard problems for theology. Perhaps the only possible solution will be the development of personal religion, each thinker building for himself whatever system of ethics and whatever explanation of life he may be able to devise and adopt emotionally.

Adolescent Philosophy

The most intelligent adolescents become concerned not only with those aspects of the universe that relate most intimately to

1 J. H. Randall, **The Making of the Modern Mind**, Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1926.

the fate of the ego, such as the problems of creation, of death, and of immortality. They become interested also in its less personal aspects, such as space, time, reality, infinity, economics, natural objects, ethics, and the like. These adolescents develop a great zest for the interchange of ideas, and for verbal contests. Debates are carried on, both privately and publicly, on the freedom of the will, government ownership of railroads, whether it is just as bad to steal a pin as to steal a large sum. When it was customary to have each high school graduate deliver an essay or "oration" at commencement, reference to old programmes would frequently reveal topics such as "Right versus Might," "The Ideal Man," "The Marvels of Nature," "Labor Omnia Vincit," "The Ideal State," "The Mystery of the Heavens." There is a tendency to choose subjects in which some large aspect of life is explored.

In his effort to get a grasp upon his world, the adolescent not infrequently undertakes to read an encyclopaedia through, word by word; to read the Bible; to "read every book in the world": to compile an encyclopaedia of his own making. Astronomy or geology is often found extremely interesting. Sometimes the life-work of the adolescent is discovered through these youthful pursuits of mystery, and a philosopher, a scientist or a novelist develops in maturity. More often, perhaps, such interests are left behind after a few years, when the pressing economic interests of maturity claim time and attention.

Reforming the World

Having achieved a satisfying and illuminating point of view upon life as a whole, either through the acceptance of an established religion or through some other mode of thought, the adolescent of good intellect may feel moved to share his enthusiasm with others by converting them. He may decide to become a missionary, either in the future or in the present. Young evangelists in their teens occasionally reach the pulpit, and reformation of members of the family is frequently undertaken. Such reformation may relate to religion, ethics, economics or even to dress and manners.

The impulse to reform society is probably not typical in the sense that it is not felt by the majority. Careful study of the matter would probably show that only a minority ever at any time become interested in social reform; but for this minority adolescence is the period when the impulse is most likely to be conspicuous in conduct. The years when it reaches its maximum appear to be between eighteen and twenty-two.

CHAPTER VII

Finding the self

The Life Plan

When a "mental age" of about twelve years has been reached, the question spontaneously arises: "What shall I do with the years that lie ahead of me?" This question is now formulated for the same reason that religious questions arise. The intellect is sufficiently developed to ask it. It is not known at what mental age children first become able to ask the question, but the person by the age of twelve years certainly has at least an approximate idea of the lifespan. He now realizes that human life is not one year long nor a thousand years long. He knows he has a certain limited number of years, approximating the years of those whom he sees around him as old people, in which to live. He begins to ask himself what he will do in his lifetime.

In the majority of adolescents and of adults, this question forces itself upon the mind from time to time, but receives no definite, positive and consistent answer. The majority do not in youth formulate a thoroughly planful disposition of the future, and proceed to build upon the plan. Adequate guidance for this is usually lacking in youth. Then, too, the charting of a life plan, which is in all respects consonant with the youth's individual powers, and which allows for a harmonious balance of all his drives, is very difficult. To make a plan and follow it through all life's chances and temptations is one of the rarest of all human achievements. The youth resolves vaguely upon a plan, but all sorts of accidents are allowed to exert influence. A chance opportunity presents itself, is accepted and followed without reference to the total plan. An unexpected friendship is

permitted to determine the course of events for a time. A love affair occurs, and changes the plan, and so forth, in almost every life. Reactions to these accidental circumstances determine life, chiefly by determining the expenditure of time, but also by modifying the point of view. The typical life drifts rather than is steered; and this need not be deplored. The plans of the majority are so vague and shifting that no serious unhappiness is caused by the ultimate failure to realize them fully in practice.

Nevertheless, vague as it may be, with the goal lost to sight again and again, the life plan exerts some unifying influence on him who formulates it. In middle age the wholly aimless person is likely to be very unhappy, for time has then elapsed and no goal has been reached. Many middle-aged persons who have formulated no plan in youth, are unable to adjust themselves to the lot which they have achieved, and are seen misdirecting their energies toward rejuvenation instead of toward adjustment, in the futile hope that life will grant them a second adolescence.

The lack of a life plan may thus bring psychological calamity, but so may the formulation of a too idealistic or too inflexible plan. A plan in excess of capacity to perform may lead to ineffectual day-dreaming and other forms of disintegration. A plan that cannot accommodate itself to unforeseen circumstances which no one can avoid, such as death or war, is likely to bring unhappiness. Thus, many people went to pieces mentally after the war, because their life plans did not provide for adaptation to such an emergency.

In attempting to help a youth in formulating a plan of life, we must remember that what would satisfy ourselves may not be suited to another. This is a principle often forgotten or ignored by parents, who may be seen trying to force their children into the life plans which they themselves have cherished but have been unable to realize in their own persons, or in which they have themselves been conspicuously successful. "Carrying on father's business," "going into father's office," "studying music because mother had so wanted to study music," are phrases commonly heard. The plans thus outlined may, of course, in many cases be quite congenial to the young involved, but close scrutiny

will reveal that often the plan is merely that of the parent, in which the offspring has no spontaneous interest.

For the great majority of adolescents, plans involving the simple pleasures or ordinary occupations of family life and of orthodox religions are the most satisfactory. Plans including efforts beyond these are for the majority too unreal, and if adopted end only in disappointment. Extraordinary and romantic plans can be carried to fruition by very few persons and can end in satisfaction only for those who are by natural extraordinary endowment fitted for living experimental lives.

The making and following of a plan for producing the wished-for self, involves the management of desires.[1] Human life is so complicated, our capacities are so numerous, our opportunities are so various, that it is a physical impossibility for any one to achieve all of his desires in the lifetime allotted. Obvious as this may seem, few realize it, especially in adolescence; so that it is often the cause of serious discontent. Since all desires cannot be selected for gratification, those of most worth to the person should be chosen, if it can be determined what the most worthy are. A guiding principle is to choose those which seem to leave open the most avenues to future satisfactions. If one had only youth to live, if the life span were twenty-five instead of seventy years, certain choices might be made, which must be rejected if middle age and old age are also to receive consideration in the scheme. Or, if life could be expected to last five hundred years, choices could be made differently.

It is necessary therefore to establish a *hierarchy of desires*, in which there shall be a chief aim in life, with other aims conforming to it. This establishment, both in wish and deed, of a hierarchy of desire is *the finding of the self*.

The Self

What is the self? Various attempts have been made to answer this question. When people wish to indicate "myself," they usually point to the centre of the chest, or else make an outward

1 T. V. Moore, **Dynamic Psychology**, J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1924.

curving gesture with the arm. These characteristic movements are often accompanied by a slight inclination of the body. People do not usually, for example, point to the feet, the eyes, the forehead, the neck, or into the open mouth when indicating "myself."

Of all psychologists who have discussed the self, William James[1] has spoken most penetratingly. He arrives finally at the conclusion that the "innermost self" resides chiefly in a series of movements in neck and head—this in spite of the fact that people do not point to these parts of the anatomy when indicating the self.

The "innermost self" has also been thought of as a nucleus of *experience*, which for each is unique, and which remains relatively stable from year to year, from the beginning of the individual life, taking on gradually a more complicated and definite form as maturity approaches. Centring about this "innermost self," or "self of selves," there is for each of us a medley of subsidiary selves—the physical, the sartorial self, the social self, the moral self, the occupational self, and so forth. Each of these is in turn complex. In the larger sense, a person's Self is the sum total of all his ideas of what he can call *his*, the *ensemble* of all his selves. His idea or picture of himself is his representation of how he appears, thinks, feels and acts. What is appropriate for him to wear, to say, to own, to feel and to eat will all be determined by his idea of the Self.

The self is, of course, very gradually evolved from nebulous beginnings in earliest childhood. By the end of adolescence it is shaped into the essentials of its life-long pattern, selected, determined, or, as we may say, *found*.

During adolescence the individual becomes acutely self-conscious. He often spends much time looking into the mirror, flexing arms and legs, observing how others address him, poring over advertisements of what are alleged to be proper accessories, and day-dreaming about the kind of person he will eventually become. This consciousness of self is most conspicuous, because most visible, in connection with the physical and sartorial selves.

1 William James, **Psychology**, Vol. I, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1907.

The adolescent typically examines his physique minutely, and makes trial-and-error efforts to correct its deficiencies and beautify it. Thus, one boy of fifteen years spent all spare moments opening and shutting his fists vigorously, in order to develop them into large and powerful members. As he walked along the streets, his hands were constantly opening and closing in the privacy of his coat pockets. Some similar exercise or device for enhancing the body will be observable in the case of almost every adolescent girl or boy. Advertised methods of physical culture, lotions for heightening the complexion, pomades for modifying the hair, all have a strong appeal at this period of life.

Almost as important as the body itself are the clothes that adorn it. The adolescent probably heads all groups of those who gladly torture the body for the sake of the "right" clothes. When whalebone corsets were in style, girls wore them, even to sleep in, that they might achieve tight-waisted garments. The "choker collar" was borne with fortitude. Tight, "spike-heeled" shoes are worn to-day with grim courage as a "flapper style." Boys, too, endured the once modish "tooth-pick shoes," and they still endure stiff collars and heavy coats as summer fashions. To have the "wrong" clothes is one of the keenest tortures to which an adolescent can be subject.

In fact, failure in sustaining any of the various selves which the adolescent may have adopted as his own is acutely painful. Since some of these incipient selves are likely to be out of harmony with natural endowment or with external conditions not yet fully realized or met, failures which lead inevitably to forced revision are common, and are the sources of many adolescent emotional outbursts. When the revision has been accomplished, the emotional instability subsides; for "to give up pretensions is as blessed a relief as to get them gratified."

The Conflict among Potential Selves

Now, it is a fact nearly self-evident that every adolescent has the possibility of developing into any one of a considerable variety of selves. But for lack of time, only one of the numerous

possible selves can be realized. A given adolescent cannot develop simultaneously into a banker, a physician, a journalist, an artist, a bachelor, a married man, a baptist and a freethinker. He cannot dwell at the same time in the city and in the country, nor can he be both partisan and non-partisan in politics. Yet all these and other mutually exclusive selves may attract the adolescent, pulling him this way and that, producing emotional strain and contradictory behaviour.

The writer knows of an adolescent girl who for about a year was torn by a struggle between the self who might be a deaconess and the self who might be a circus rider. She used to spend mornings reading the Bible and sewing. The afternoons she employed in riding an old horse bareback around the pasture. This conduct was sorely puzzling to her family, who feared she might be "crazy."

William James has described the conflict among all of his own potential selves. He sets forth that he would fain have been a priest and a pirate, a dandy and a professor, a philosopher, and a lady-killer, but that these were incompatibles. "The philosopher and the lady-killer could not dwell together in the same tenement of clay." The life of James shows that he actually did try out a number of possible selves, and did not construct till near middle-age that by which he is most widely renowned. It is not reserved for many to construct a new self as late in life as James did. Typically, the self must be "found" during the years of adolescence, if at all. In the subsequent years of maturity the self may undergo development and expansion, but it must be "found" in youth, because if it is not found then, too much of the total time available for the carrying out of life plans will have been consumed in drifting.

Some Major Obstacles

In the groping search to find the self, certain circumstances, if they are present, constitute particularly difficult obstacles. Such a circumstance is that of being "half-bred." A child who has a father of one race and a mother of another race; a father of one religion and a mother of another; a father who speaks one

language and a mother who speaks another, is liable to peculiar confusions. In adolescence the individual who is the product of mixed marriage often needs especially careful guidance in his struggle toward selfhood. On the one side he is drawn to identify himself with his mother's people, on the other side with his father's people. When the influences from both sides are about equal in strength, the conflict between the mutually incompatible selves may become so chronic and so painful that the self is finally completely lost, by psychosis, by delinquency, or by suicide. The same may by true of an adolescent whose parents are divorced and inclined to disparage one another.

Perhaps the hardest struggles of all arising from marked dissimilarity of parents in some important respect are those which come from having parents of widely separate races. The community in which the individual thus situated lives will hardly ever be one in which both races are esteemed equally. The individual will naturally aspire to incorporate within himself the half which holds the superior status, while the force of social pressure will be in the opposite direction. Thus, very painful struggles may be set up. Perhaps the father's status has more power in determining the self of offspring than does the mother's, other things being equal.

Again, the circumstance of being a half orphan, or of feeling mystery about either parent, may become a major obstacle to finding the self. The idea that there is something irregular or queer about origin may keep the personality from accepting freely all the influences towards growth, which in the ordinary situation are readily received, so that the individual is likely to experience unusual difficulty in building up a normal self.

The condition of being a twin is sufficiently unusual to constitute an influence in many cases where it occurs. If the twins concerned are "identical," that is, cannot be distinguished from each other by ordinary observation, the selfhood of either one may include the person, clothing and activities of the other to such an extent that the two become "inseparable" duplicates. Under these circumstances if one of them violates the dual self thus built up, as by falling ill or by dying in adolescence, the

other may find himself shattered and compelled to begin a new self at a time when normally the self is nearing completion. On the other hand, we occasionally find a twin who bitterly resents the fact that a duplicate of his physical self is abroad in the world, called indiscriminately by his name, praised for deeds performed by himself, and not to be distinguished from him by those whose affection he especially wishes to win exclusively for himself. For instance, at the age of about twelve years one of a pair "indentical" boys began to rebel against his similarity to his brother. He refused to wear any garments like those of his brother. He formulated the policy of waiting till his brother made a choice, then deliberately choosing something different for himself. If his brother wore a cap, he would choose a hat. If his brother ate much, he would eat little. If his brother learned to play tennis, he would refuse to learn the game. Here is obviously an instance of marked influence upon the development of the self.

A difficult situation is likely to arise when twins are very dissimilar, one being markedly superior to the other in beauty or in mental capacity. The inferior twin is likely to suffer special handicap in his struggle to find himself. The comparison between twins is much more crucial than between other fraternal pairs. Discrepancies are not to be explained, for instance, by differences in age. Discrepancies glare. For example, a pair of twins consisting of a highly intelligent, handsome girl, and a puny, comparatively stupid boy, presents probabilities of difficult progress for the latter. Also in the case of twin boys, the superior one of whom has chanced in infancy to become his father's namesake, while the inferior one has received by chance an indifferent name, the latter has emotional hardships to meet which would not have arisen except for being a twin.

Physical deformity of any kind places a major obstacle in the way of finding a good self. In fact, any circumstance that tends to impair confidence and produce extraordinary uncertainty tends at the same time to impede progress in finding the self. It must be understood that these obstacles do not become suddenly operative at adolescence. They are at work all through childhood, but do not loom into full prominence and force until in-

telligence is developing toward its maximum. The obstacles which have been mentioned here are but some of the more conspicuous found in dealing with adolescents who present serious problems of confused conduct. There are other major circumstances which in effect are fully as hampering as those chosen here for description, and which may be identified in daily life by analogy with them.

Finally, it should be said that disaster may result from failure to make a definite choice among the numerous potential selves; from spending life trying to be a number of different and mutually exclusive selves. We can observe persons about us almost any day who have been unable to arrive at the necessary definite choices.

Minor Stumbling Blocks

Just when the adolescent is in the thick of his groping toward the self, parents often add unintentionally to the confusion by saying on one day, "A great big girl like you shouldn't go barefoot," and on the next day, "A little bit of a girl like you should be seen and not heard." Is she big or is she little? Is she child or woman? Consistency of parental attitude, though hard to maintain during this ambiguous period, will go far to aid a successful search for the self.

Parents and others may also influence the search adversely by talking of the supposed or actual resemblance borne by the adolescent to some relative who is disliked, or who is a bad model. "Sarah looks so much like her Aunt Jessie," or "Peter acts just like his grandfather, who died of brain fever," may be unfortunate remarks, especially when often repeated.

Furthermore, the manners of the parents, or of other relatives, may add materially to the difficulties. Inaptitudes on the part of parents, especially as displayed before adolescent companions, are extremely embarrassing to the youth, because the parent represents the origin of the self. The parent who undertakes to be "young with the children," and to participate as a "chum" in adolescent parties, would do well to scrutinize the situation carefully with a view to determining just who derives pleasure

from these activities. Only the exceptional parent is likely to be a genuine success from the offspring's point of view when participating as a member of adolescent society. To persons under twenty years of age, all who are above the age of twenty-five seem old and more or less unsuited to gaiety. Moreover all such appear homogeneous as to age, youth distinguishing but roughly between those who are thirty and those who are fifty years old. In view of these illusions of youth, the parent who tries to leave his or her rôle for that of "brother," "sister" or "chum" is liable to become an embarrassment to the adolescent, rather than an aid in finding the self.

We have already spoken of the parent who undertakes to determine by main force the occupational self of his child. Such an undertaking, of course, exemplifies what amounts to a major hindrance, for no self can be genuinely "found" in this manner. Each person must evolve his own self, just as he must evolve his own bodily tissues. The artificial self breaks down whenever strain is put upon it. This applies also to parental attempts at determining the self in minor ways. For example, a woman long cherished the fiction, imposed upon her by her father, that she was musically inclined, and was bored by hundreds of symphony concerts before she finally threw off the disguise. Another believed for many years that she could not eat cabbage, because her mother had always kept it from her on the ground that such a coarse vegetable could not be assimilated by her digestive apparatus. At the age of thirty-five, tempted by the appetizing attributes of cabbage, she asserted her true self and ate cabbage then and thereafter with none but good results.

Guiding Lines

In his tentative and often very painful groping toward the formulation of his idea of self, the boy or girl seeks cues from the environment, and tries to infer what kind of person he or she is from the way others behave toward him or her. Suggestions and models are secretly sought from among those with whom the individual comes into contact. Guiding lines are caught from adults in the vicinity, from reading and from pic-

tures. Models are adopted. Emulation becomes one of the characteristic attitudes of youth.

The choice of models is a very important element in this development of the self. The high school age is marked by active devotion to ideals, and by the conscious selection of traits to imitate. It is during this period, therefore, that there is special need of providing suitable models, historic characters, characters in fiction, and living persons of desirable qualities. Instead of the idolatrous adoption of one model, whether of fictitious hero, or of teacher or parent, the ultimate imitation should take the form of intelligent selection and approval of *traits* and *principles*. Thus, the courage of one person, the honesty of another, and the physical endurance of a third may be chosen.

In *Heroes and Hero Worship* Carlyle treats of this great influence of admired persons. "We cannot look, however imperfectly, upon a great man, without gaining something by him. . . I consider hero-worship to be the grand modifying element in the ancient systems of thought. . . . No nobler feeling than this of admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. . . . Hero-worship endures forever while man endures."

In this connection it is a valuable exercise for an adult who is dealing with adolescents to reflect upon the character which had the greatest appeal for him during youth, and try to analyse this appeal and the influence it may have exercised upon conduct. It is true that many ludicrous actions on the part of adolescents are traceable to hero-worship, as well as many of the more constructive phases of conduct. For instance, a boy of fourteen years began to appear in his classes, and at meals, wearing his hat. He steadily refused to remove his headgear at the request of parents and teachers. This idiosyncrasy caused his anxious mother several sleepless nights. Eventually a teacher more discerning than others obtained the lad's confidential account of his peculiar action. He would not remove his hat because William Penn (his model for the moment) had refused to take his hat off in assemblies!

Still another boy, seventeen years old, caused great worry and excitement in his family by setting the alarm clock and rising

on successive occasions for a walk about the park at one o'clock in the morning. He had read that Goethe (his hero for the time being) was accustomed to indulge in a stroll about one o'clock at night!

Although the incidental rather than the essential is thus sometimes seized upon, the fact still remains that biography, history and fiction are among the most important means of character formation that can be placed in the adolescent's way. By the time a mental age of fourteen years is reached, the interest in biography and fiction may be developed. It should be carefully noted that *mental age* (not necessarily birthday age) of fourteen years is required. There are hundreds of fourteen-year-olds who cannot be interested in any of these things, because they have not achieved (and never will achieve) the mental level represented by the typical fourteen-year-old. On the other hand, many young children become deeply interested in biography, because of having achieved a mental age of fourteen years.[1]

In the same way, dramatics among adolescents may be utilized in character formation. The performer will tend to identify himself with the rôle assigned. Tactful assignment of rôles must be made if dramatics are to be utilized for this purpose. A boy or girl already somewhat villainous should scarcely be assigned to the rôle of villain in the play!

This brings us to consideration of the fact that disaster may result from choosing a bad model, for choice does not necessarily fall upon good models only. An attractive thief, a thrilling bandit, may be chosen by certain natures, in certain environments, as a guiding line. Much criticism has been directed against the moving pictures for the kind of models which they present to the young. Cinema actors and actresses attain great influence as heroes, to judge from the way in which young people try to imitate them in dress and manner, sometimes even changing their names to that of the admired "star."

Studies of adolescents intelligent enough to have reached

1 L. S. Hollingworth, "Introduction to Biography for Young Children Who Test above 150 I.Q.", **Teachers' College Record, 1925.**

high school,[1] show that these boys and girls attend the cinema with sufficient frequency to make this form of entertainment an important factor in their lives. Boys attend more frequently than girls. Preferred persons are chosen among performers of both sexes.[2] High school pupils, however, are somewhat critical of the cinema as it exists to-day, their most frequent adverse comment being that the pictures are "slap stick" in too many instances. A study of the reactions of adolescents of the same age, who are not in high schools, would probably yield rather different results. The cinema pictures are aimed at the majority, rather than those who attend high school. The majority of adolescents might not find the criticism of "slap stick" valid.

Among living persons in the environment, the parents are of first importance as models for the child. Happy is the adolescent who has admirable parents. A volume could and should be written dealing with this one phase of guidance toward selfhood, namely, the influence of parents in modelling the lives of the young. The young child tends strongly to seek guidance from the characters of the first adults with whom he comes into close contact, and these usually are his parents. The parent of the same sex thus has first chance to become the child's model. When the parent is a bad model, the child will either reject the parent emotionally, or accept the bad model for himself. Which of these undesirable alternatives may be adopted depends upon the total situation, including especially the original nature of the child himself.

Next in importance to that of parents is the rôle of the teacher in the tacit guidance of the child by daily example. Adolescent opinions of teachers have been collected and studied by several investigators. The following were elicited from those who had been out of high school for three or four years, when asked to describe their best teachers.[3]

1 A Perry, **The Attitude of High School Pupils toward Moving Pictures,** National Board of Motion Pictures, New York, 1923.
2 C. W. Kimmins. "The Child and the Cinema." **Proceedings of the British Psychological Society,** January 1, 1923.
3 I. King, **The High School Age,** The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, 1914.

1. The teacher of my high school days who appealed to me the most was the principal under whom I worked for the entire four years. The quality that impressed me most was his ability to maintain dicipline. The school was not an easy one to handle, and yet he always had good order, not merely in his classes, but throughout the whole school. . . . This principal also impressed me with his power as a teacher. He taught me history and mathematics in such a way that I still take a great interest in both subjects.

2. My best teacher was always fair and just, both in regard to our work in class and our conduct in assembly room. She was kind when we tried and made mistakes, and never discouraged us by sarcasm (a fault very common to teachers, I think). She was always tastefully dressed, both in school and for outside affairs. All of these characteristics, along with her ever-readiness to help and encourage in everything that concerned us, made a sort of model for all of us. We used to say, "When I grow up, I am going to be just like Miss K—"

3. A certain teacher interested me very much, and I tried to imitate her in every way. She was a young person, lively and pretty, and I grew to love her intensely. I could see no faults in her, and disliked to hear others speak ill of her.[1]

Reports have also been secured from pupils still in high school as to the qualities most valued in teachers. These reports as well as those of persons who have been out a few years show the sensitiveness of adolescents to the personalities of older people around them. They respond positively to teachers who show a personal interest in them, provided this interest is shown in a dignified and genuine fashion. They dislike teachers who hold aloof, teachers with mannerisms, sentimental teachers, teachers who assume attitudes and poses, and those who lack poise, humour or patience. Shams and affectations are quickly discerned. For instance, one young man undertook to consoli-

1 E. Leigh Mudge, **Varieties of Adolescent Experience,** The Century Company, New York, 1926.

date his position as teacher in a large high school by growing a goatee, to lend dignity. The beard had not developed far before all the boys in the school appeared one morning each wearing a false goatee. Peculiarities and oddities of manner and dress greatly impair a teacher's usefulness. It takes much scholarly ability and strength to offset such a trait.

There is also to be considered the guidance derived from abstract thought, expressed in poetry or philosophy. For most adolescents the influence of a person is strongest, but for a few impersonal sentiment is very influential. "Preferred quotations" make their contributions as guiding lines of conduct. The contemplation of thought as expressed by the masters of language has always been recognized as of value in character formation. In some departments of English in high schools, quotations are memorized from masterpieces read. Lines which have an inspirational quality, which guide toward the integration of a noble self, are cited by adolescents when asked for their preferred quotations.

The Influence of Companions

It is usually assumed that companions of his own age wield a vital influence in the shaping of the adolescent self. This assumption is in part justified. When an adolescent group or "set" of companions has been formed, as so readily happens, such a company cannot but exert some power over the self, for the boy or girl makes every effort to maintain his or her position as a member of the "set" or "gang."

The company kept is, however, not so much a determinant of adolescent personality as a sign of what that personality already is as a result of development through childhood. Companions are, as a matter of fact, usually selected on the basis of mental similarity, when numbers available permit of free choice. It has been found by test, for instance, that chums resemble each other markedly in intelligence. Therefore, instead of spending all his energy in blaming bad companions for an adolescent's troublesomeness, a parent would do well to direct some attention toward the study of those companions with a

view simply to learning what kind of a person his child has become. That "birds of a feather flock together" has been fairly well borne out by the evidence derived from psychological research.

At the age of adolescence, companions are much more likely to be independently chosen and insisted upon than in childhood. Parents must thus utilize the pre-adolescent years for influencing taste in friendship, for it is too late at adolescence to exert much pressure without arousing destructive antagonism.

Among adolescents of good quality the group of companions is usually bent chiefly upon pleasures described as "social." The "club" gives dances, goes on picnics, arranges all sorts of affairs calculated to serve the social interests of youth, especially as concerns acquaintanceship with members of the opposite sex. The group also fosters conversation and discussion of matters which ordinarily are not talked over with older persons. The members exchange experiences, and "draw each other out."

However, among adolescents of the quality later represented by the delinquent classes, groups are sometimes organized for plundering, fighting, or other anti-social purposes. Such a group is usually called a "gang." It is in early adolescence especially that gangs are likely to be formed, most often in cities and among boys. Girls are, of course, not allowed to roam the streets and roads, or to stay out after dark, to the same extent as boys, which in itself limits "ganging" among the former.

When an adolescent has become a member of a group of undesirables, it usually does no good to admonish or reproach him. The fault usually lies with his own quality or up-bringing. Where the fault is weakness rather than positive viciousness, the influence of the bad companions may be broken up by the substitution of a good group for a bad, but in most cases this involves a complete change of school or residence.

The normal boy or girl craves congenial companions of his or her own age, of both sexes, and circumstances which deprive the adolescent of this aid to development should be overcome if possible.

Unfamiliar Surroundings as an Aid

One of the best ways to find out new aspects of the self, and to gauge the self, is to leave habitual surroundings for a visit of some weeks away from home. In unfamiliar settings the self is revealed with a clearness impossible when only customary situations are being met. For the adolescent who is shy, or who has some element of unfortunate reputation to overcome, the visit may have special value, while for any adolescent whatsoever such an experience is likely to be helpful in finding the self.

We have already mentioned the value of the strange as an element in popularity with those of opposite sex. The timid and unpopular girl or boy has a chance to gain more confidence by being the "new" girl or "new" boy among an unfamiliar crowd on a visit at the home of some relative or friend at a distance, where there are adolescents in the family.

Again, in unaccustomed surroundings deficiencies in the self not previously noticed may appear, and be overcome. Also, gifts not elicited in the home environment may be brought out. There is a particular value in being placed for a time in a community where the individual has no established expectations to meet, no recognized reputation to sustain, and no automatic responses ready for those whom he meets.

Such visits as those suggested here should be carefully planned by the parent, with an eye to whatever individual circumstances may exist. A shy and homely girl should probably not be sent to visit in the home of a cousin who is a belle. The naturally social and company-loving boy should probably not be sent to the lonely house of a solitary bachelor uncle. The parent should know quite well what the environment is in the community to which the proposed visit is to be made. The homes of relatives or of life-long friends usually offer the best opportunities for helping to view the self in safe though strange surroundings. Several such visits should, if possible, be undertaken during adolescence. When one who has been visiting returns home, acquaintances and relatives often notice that "she has blossomed out," or "he has found his tongue."

In a former century it was the custom for the son of well-to-do parents to travel for a while during adolescence, with his tutor. We have already noticed the custom whereby the débutante is taken away at the end of her "first season," for travel abroad. These customs doubtless have their origin, at least in part, in the intuitive recognition of the value of the visit away from home. In modern times, the Boy Scouts, the Campfire Girls, and the summer camp, as developed in the United States, all serve as valuable aids in promoting the sojourn in strange places under competent auspices.

The Separate Room

Part and parcel of the normal sundering of the self from the rest of the world, and especially from the family, is the delight of the adolescent in having a room of his own. The separate room is of developmental significance in much the same way as the camp or the visit away from home, but it has additional potencies not inherent in these other sundering influences.

In many of the adolescent diaries studied the "own room" is intimately mentioned and described. Here the developing self is master, can relax from vigilance, can live entrenched, and can elaborate peculiar interests and ideas pertaining to decoration, hobbies, and so forth. Taste, that indefinable component of selfhood, can grow here by experiment. Anatole France makes Le Petit Pierre say of his own room, "It separates the me from the universe."[1]

Unfortunately for psychological development, the separate room for the adolescent is expensive, especially in cities where so large a proportion of modern population dwells. Only families which are fairly well-to-do can afford to set aside a whole room for the exclusive use of one son or daughter. Among poor people crowding is sometimes such that children continue to sleep even in parents' rooms when they are full grown. The development of personal autonomy is certainly seriously hampered under such restrictions of shelter. Indeed, so far as the parents' room is concerned, it is highly undesirable that this should be shared by

1 Anatole France, **Le Petit Pierre**, Calman-Lévy, Paris, 1918.

children of any age. Students of child psychology are becoming more and more insistent upon the ills which result, especially as regards ideas of sex, when a child sleeps in the parents' room. However, a room may be hygienically shared by two or more children during the years of chidhood, but it becomes especially desirable at adolescence that each one have his own room, if possible.

Where a separate room cannot be given to the adolescent, autonomy may be approximated by assigning at least an "own" chest of drawers, or a corner of a room, where the self and its belongings are entrenched against the complete invasion of privacy.

Diaries

We have spoken of the study of diaries written in adolescence, and of the light cast by such records upon the psychology of the period. In the processes of self-realization, some kind of written account of feelings and aspirations serves various useful purposes. The diary is a sort of silent confidant, to whom anything can be told without reproach or shame. It affords an outlet for the emotions. It assists the adolescent to verbalize and thus define his vague ideas, and to dramatize himself. Moreover, the continuity of the diary helps to keep the tentative self together, since the writer can critically review from time his own recorded experiences.

The following are found typical of the reasons assigned by adolescents for keeping a diary. A seventeen-year-old boy (who later became a doctor of philosophy) writes in his diary, "When I have once written down something that bothers or angers me, then I am rid of it. I find it necessary to think every thought to the end, until it is completely clarified, and so I occupy myself with writing out what I cannot easily manage. This diary is therefore of great importance to me."[1] A girl's diary, kept from the fourteenth through the seventeenth year, says, "I write in this book in order to rid myself of confessions. . . . I have no one

[1] Charlotte Bühler, **Das Seelenleben des Jungendlichen**, G. Fischer, Jena, 1923.

with whom I can share what truly concerns me. For when I do that, and the person in whom I have confided has gone, there remains in me a void which I can but gradually fill again."[1]

It seems probable that diaries are typically the work of those who are unusually intelligent, especially perhaps of such as are cut off by circumstances from intimate conversation with others of their own age or are otherwise impeded in ordinary forms of self-expression. Of the diaries studied by Dr. Bühler, for example, all but one were written by adolescents who in adult life became learned persons. It would be of interest to discover what proportion of the immature chosen at random keep diaries, and what reasons appear for those which are kept.

Reminiscence plays a small part in the diaries of the young. The present and the future engage attention. The adolescent is pointed forward, so to speak, and what lies ahead is of primary concern to him.

Day-dreams

Although only a limited number of adolescents put their daily hopes and fears into writing, probably nearly all of them indulge in reveries about themselves and their cravings.[2] These day-dreams originate in self-seeking. Study of them shows that the dreamer himself is practically always the central occupant of his castle in the air. This is true of day-dreams at all ages, not at adolescence only. In reverie man is his own hero, carrying out his secret wishes which are denied realization in the actual world.[3] The nature of this actual world is such that most of the adolescent's cravings are denied satisfaction, for he does not yet know enough of human life to loose himself from extravagant desires. Thus it is the adolescent more than any one else who is likely to become pre-occupied with imaginary situations.

Adolescent day-drams centre chiefly around love, achievement

1 Charlotte Bühler, **Tagebuch eines jungen Mädchens**, G. Fischer, Jena, 1922.
2 Lorine Pruette. "What's Happening in the Day-Dreams of the Adolescent Girl?" **Journal of Social Hygiene**, 1924.
3 J. Varendonck, **The Psychology of Day-Dreams**, Allen, London, 1921.

and security. The dreamer sees himself in the rôle which he would like to play in life. In his dream he may be a conquering hero, rising superior to all hindrances and wrongs; or he may be a suffering hero, planning suicide, or wearing the facial expression of a noble martyr, to evoke the sympathy of a harsh world. These reveries, when they lead to no appropriate action, may grow into a fixed habit of retreat from life's rebuffs. Their influence in such a case becomes baneful, for action, and action alone, can give a satisfying sense of genuine mastery over circumstance.

On the other hand, when day-dreams are accompanied by well directed action they lead to constructive attack upon the environment, thus aiding in the establishment of an adequate personality. Worthwhile careers are initiated in day-dreams, and are furthered by "the play of imagination." Opportunity for action is the essential condition under which the day-dream becomes valuable.

Much of the literature intended for young people appeals to the propensity for day-dreaming. The "Cinderella" story and the "Ugly Duckling" story never fail in their charm for the thousands of adolescents whose cravings are postponed or denied by the conditions which life imposes.

Dreams during sleep are similar in their psychology to day-dreams. Secret fears and wishes find expression in both instances.

Adolescent Instability

Much has been said and written about the emotional instability of adolescence. These accounts have been greatly exaggerated. To read some of them, one would picture the typical adolescent as in a constant condition of emotional turmoil. A few days of quiet observation of the adolescents about us will soon convince us that this is by no means the case. Adolescents, like persons in other stages of development, are usually to be found going about their appointed tasks in comparative complacency of mood.

However, there are obviously provocations to emotional upset

at this period, which are not so strongly present previously or subsequently.[1] We have seen that the environment of modern civilization is peculiarly baffling to the adolescent, because he has to delay his natural drives, and remain in a condition of prolonged infancy after he is biologically ready for participation in adult life. We have seen also that he has peculiar problems of habit-revision ; and a change of habit is always likely to be accompanied by gloom and depression. Also, the uncertainty of the future, the fact that he is not "established," is a cause of anxiety. The adolescent is thus subject to thwarting, to change and to uncertainty which would arouse emotion in any one, not in an adolescent only, if they were to be experienced. There is sufficient here to explain such emotional instability as we see in young persons. There is no need to suppose that a peculiar phenomenon called "adolescent emotion" suddenly develops and as suddenly disappears. Adolescent instability vanishes as the thwartings, changes and uncertainties of youth disappear, with the establishment and unification of the vocational, economic, social and sexual selves. If the Self does not become established this emotionalism remains through adulthood.

It has been suggested that there is something in the nature of the glandular secretions at this time that is peculiar to the period, and is productive of characteristic (adolescent) instability. Possibly the introduction of new glandular elements, namely, those from the sex glands, into the physiological economy may have the effect of producing a temporary emotional instability which is organic in origin. This remains to be proved. It seems far more likely that adolescent instability is an instability of social-economic status, rather than a physiological instability. Dissatisfaction with the present and uncertainty of the future are likely to produce emotional uprising in any person, regardless of the age of his glands.

The established adult who feels himself ready for this or that, or who is dissatisfied, can adjust himself on his own initiative, but the young adolescent, still dependent, is the victim of his circumstances. He cannot command his own surroundings, and

1 H. L. Hollingworth, **Mental Growth and Decline**, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1927.

therefore can only react emotionally when thwarted or disgusted by them.

Failure to Find the Self

In the complicated mazes of the entrance into adult life there are obviously many chances to end in blind alleys, to lose the way, to fail in finding the self. The failure to find the self may end in any one of a number of different forms of social disaster, the most conspicuous of which are delinquency, insanity, spurious invalidism and suicide.

The majority of criminals lose their way socially while they are still in adolescence, that is, they suffer their first arrest and arraignment before they are twenty-one years old. In the English-speaking countries children and young adolescents are no longer araigned in courts with adult criminals, but are classified as juvenile delinquents and are handled through juvenile courts. The age of legal responsibility for wrongdoing varies at present, and has varied much from time to time in the history of law. On the whole, however, mankind has come by common observation to appreciate the fact that knowledge of right and wrong develops slowly, and is very inadequate in childhood. In Roman law the child was entirely exempt from penalty up to its seventh year, and between this stage, called *infantia*, and puberty there were two further stages—*infantiae proximi* and *pubertati proximi*. Circumstances and the nature of the act decided whether the punishment should approximate to that of the child or to that of the adult, when a wrong was committed by one in these stages of development. In old English law the boy was regarded as legally reponsible at twelve years. Old Italian law fixed the age of legal responsibility at eight years; German law, at eleven. French law decreed that when an offender had not yet reached the tenth year, it should be especially investigated whether or not he acted with discernment. Later, Germany advanced the age of legal responsibility to twelve years.

At the present time sixteen or eighteen years is the usual age at which persons may legally be said to commit crime, in parts of the United States and Great Britain. In New York City offenders under sixteen years of age must be tried in the juvenile

court as juvenile delinquents. Adult punishments may not be inflicted upon those so arraigned. In Chicago, the same limit is placed at eighteen years.

Authorities agree that the age of responsibility for crime and liability to legal procedure should be placed as late as is compatible with social welfare. Legal regulations are now so numerous and complicated that it takes a long time to learn what they are, and well developed intelligence to understand and remember them.

Within the two decades just past, the psychology of individual differences has begun to exercise a real influence upon penal procedure, by showing that birthday age is untrustworthy as a criterion of legal responsibility. Misdemeanants are, as a group, stupid and ill-balanced. They lose their way in the struggle toward selfhood, not because they wish to, but because they have not sufficient intelligence and stamina to find the approved roads to all the necessary adjustments which we have discussed here. This does not mean that *all* offenders are stupid, or nervously inadequate, but a large majority are ill-endowed by original nature for the struggle toward adequate adulthood.

A large percentage of adolescent delinquency is due to misdirected effort at *self-support.* Stealing, begging, peddling without a license, violating employment laws, are frequent charges against those arraigned. Disorderly efforts at *mating* account for another large percentage of cases. Girls are more frequently arrested for sex offences than are boys. This does not, of course, necessarily mean that girls are more prone to unruly sex conduct than are boys, but probably means only that such conduct is regarded as more serious for girls. Prostitution, which is often a mixture of maladjusted efforts at self-support and at mating, is entered upon far more frequently at adolescence than at any other period of life.

Delinquencies technically classified as "incorrigibility" often uncover failures of *psychological weaning.* Running away from home, for instance, is often a result of failure on the part of parents to carry out the processes of psychological weaning in such a way that the boy or girl may leave home in a normal manner. Burt, from his study of London offenders, concluded

that defective home discipline during childhood is the most frequent and conspicuous concomitant of adolescent delinquency.[1]

When the previous development of personality has been such as to culminate in delinquency during adolescence, the outlook for reform is not encouraging.[2] Of youths arraigned in the juvenile courts of Chicago and Boston, and made subject to the best available advice for reform, a large majority were found ten years later to have reappeared in the courts or to be leading unprofitable lives. The habits formed during the years of immaturity in organisms of the quality thus involved are the permanent determiners of conduct. It should be added that the chance for reform varies markedly with the intelligence of the offender, being much greater with the more intelligent (who, however, seldom appear in the first place).

Delinquency is not the only pit into which the adolescent may stumble and lose himself. He may as a result of failure to solve his problems become *insane*. That is, he may, fall into emotional condition which incapacitates him for social-economic responsibility. Certain temperaments are peculiarly liable to solve the problems of life by withdrawal from them. Such natures do not develop their peculiarities at adolescence. The traits are present from childhood, as the histories of cases show. They culminate in the condition which is called insanity (literally "unhealthiness") at adolescence, because it is then that the first really serious call is made upon the organism to assume responsibility for its own existence.

The form of insanity which occurs most frequently at adolescence is called *dementia praecox*, or *adolescent insanity*. The earliest manifestations of the temperaments liable to deteriorate into *dementia praecox* are extreme reticence, seclusiveness, stubbornness, brooding, pouting, sensitiveness, suspicious attitudes, together with "odd" bits of conduct. Such peculiarities have a tendency to grow more instead of less marked. The child grows into them more easily than he grows out of them. It is not sur-

1 C. Burt, **The Young Delinquent,** D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1924.

2 William Healy and A. F. Bronner, **Criminals and Delinquents: Their Making and Unmaking,** The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926.

prising that such temperaments, humoured during childhood in their own bent by undiscerning parents, should be found unprepared when the new adaptations of adolescence are required. The pain of severing family ties, the rebuffs of the impartial economic world in the first search for a "job," the approach to the opposite sex and the rivalry for favour, are too difficult for such natures to endure. They take flight from the rudeness of reality, into a world of day-dream and symbolism. Responsibility is repudiated by ignoring it. The adolescent sits all day in what looks like a stupor of indifference, or indulges in a series of acts that have no effective bearing upon the direct solution of the problems confronting him. He is then classified as a case of dementia praecox, and typically finds lodgment in a hospital for mental diseases. About one-fourth of all the inmates of hospitals for the insane are classified as dementia praecox. The most frequent age of segregation falls between fifteen and twenty-five years. The future outlook for those thus segregated is very gloomy.

It would seem that a recognition of the "praecox character" in childhood would make it possible to prevent some of these breakdowns. Particularly, an open-minded and healthy initiation into the facts about sex is important. An analysis of a hundred consecutive cases of dementia praecox as to their delusions and other symptoms showed sexual conflicts and trends in a majority of cases. Attitudes in regard to sex were distinctly unhealthy, and this was especially the case with the girls and women included.[1]

Careful habit formation along lines of self-reliance and self-sufficiency in the face of difficulties, with an appreciation of the limits of strength, is a foundation stone in the integration of these characters. They should be taught if possible a healthy fighting of their own battles, and the facing of their own responsibilities from infancy to adulthood. Special attention should be given to their psychological weaning, which is likely to prove unusually difficult. Such cases are often unfortunately complicated by the emotional inadequacy of one or both parents; for

1 F. L. Wells, **Mental Adjustments**, D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1916.

there is, on the whole, a considerable degree of resemblance between parents and offspring. If a parent and child are both of this unfortunate temperament, it is usually impossible to do anything for the child unless he or she can be removed from home.

Psychology teaches that there is a continuity between these extremes, cases which come to be described as insane, and the milder forms of emotional inadequacy which we variously call "nervousness," "neurasthenia," "hysteria," and so forth. Our ill-balanced adolescent may not go so far as to develop total social irresponsibility, and yet may grow up to suffer all his life from moodiness, depression, anxiety, tantrums, unfounded suspicions, ideas of persecution, and other warped mental attitudes. Such people may "break down" only occasionally, and for the most part may manage a fairly normal existence not requiring segregation. However, they always suffer greatly from the failure to find themselves, and so much of their energy is consumed in this suffering of frustration that there is not enough left for a full and free pursuit of any adult interest. They are the persons who have failed in one or all of the major adjustments of adolescence; who remain unweaned, who fail to find suitable work, who do not develop a normal heterosexual attitude, or cannot achieve a unifying point of view. They have not "found themselves."

Occasionally the pain and depression of the losing struggle for adulthood becomes so intense as to nullify all interest in life. The adolescent prefers death to the torture of his uncertainties and thwartings, and takes active steps to destroy himself. Suicide among youths of both sexes is usually motivated either by disappointment in love, by homesickness, by maladjustment in work, or by intellectual doubt and anxiety. Suicide is sometimes attempted by "spoiled" adolescents, who have no serious intention of succeeding at it, for the purpose of bringing parents or others to terms. When it is seriously and successfully undertaken, it constitutes, like dementia praecox, a withdrawal from the pains of growth. The self is lost irretrievably, not being able to win through to maturity.

Habits of drunkenness and of drug addiction are formed during adolescence more frequently than in any other decade of life. They offer an easy means of escape from ordeals. Adiction to

alcohol, heroin, cocaine and similar drugs sometimes, perhaps, arises from other motives, such as conviviality, curiosity, or desire to do as others do. However, it is no longer supposed that addicts are an unselected group of persons, physically and mentally. The weaker succumb, usually no doubt as a withdrawal from the emotional hardships of their lives.

Finally, many baffled and confused adolescents lose themselves by trial-and-error in some spurious form of chronic invalidism. The mysteriously frail, who suffer from vague and obscure heart troubles, weak eyes, nervous complaints, "not understood" by physicians, include among them an army of those who have discovered that it is possible to remain respectably in the dependent and irresponsible condition of the child by being sick. These hysterical or spurious invalids have found progress through adolescent trials too difficult, and have retreated from the search for an adult self.

CHAPTER VIII

The Meaning of Maturity

When is a Person Mature?

It is not at all easy to say briefly what maturity is. Usually the idea of maturity is based upon growth, so that the word signifies the end of growth. It is said that a person is mature when he has stopped growing.

Growth is so familiar to every one that it is taken for granted, and arouses no special wonder, yet when closely considered it is very mysterious. Why the human organism, or any organism, should continue of its own accord to grow larger and more elaborate for a certain number of years, and should then cease, and thereafter remain static in size is one of the problems of biology. The microscope as taught us that the tissues of the body are composed of cells. Growth takes place both by the formation of new cells and by increase in the size of cells already formed. It is now expected that fundamental knowledge of growth will come eventually from research in physiological chemistry.

If we define maturity as cessation of growth, then the human being does not mature all at once. Physical maturity, intellectual maturity, and emotional maturity must be severally considered. Moreover, each of these is a complex phenomenon. Taking physical maturity as an example, the growth of the skull, of feet, and of the spinal column respectively, proceeds at very different rates, and terminates variously. The concept of human maturity thus becomes very complicated.

Another point of view with regard to maturity might state that a person is mature when capable of performing all functions which typical adults perform. This definition in terms of function rather than in terms of structure, releases us from the attempt

to determine exactly the limits of increase in size. It leaves us, however, with the difficulty that maturity then becomes largely a matter of a changing civilization. In order to know whether an individual is mature, we have to inquire with regard to his community: How long does it take to complete schooling? What is the price of an ordinary house? How numerous and expensive are the badges of respectability among those who will be his associates ?

Perhaps the best we can do at present is to combine the two points of view which have been expressed into an approximate definition, and to say that a human being has achieved maturity when increments of size and power from inner growth have ceased, and when he or she can perform the duties typical of adults in the community where the individual resides.

Physical Maturity

Of all the aspects of human development, that which has been most carefully studied is rate of physical growth. Remote and immediate ancestry seem to decree for every person an ultimate size and shape. Individual differences are very great, both in rate of growth and in size attained. The general conclusion of students of this subject is that the size and shape of human beings are difficult to modify by training or other environmental influences. The ancients observed this fact, asking as a rhetorical question, "Can a man by taking thought add one cubit to his stature?"

It has been proposed, however, that though it may be impossible to add a cubit to one's stature, it may be possible to subtract therefrom—by malnutrition, by overwork, or by poisoning. The crucial experiments which would answer this question have never been performed upon members of the human species. Such an experiment would consist in taking two groups of infants, all from the same stratum of parentage as regards social-economic status, keeping race and sex constant. The two groups should be matched in size and age at the outset of the experiment. One group should then be treated in whatever way is supposed to influence growth adversely, the other being

treated in whatever way is assumed to promote growth. A series of such experiments if prolonged would eventually furnish answers to all questions about the influence of the environment, but it is not probable that they will be undertaken, because they would not be regarded as humane. Experiments upon the lower animals prove that rate of growth and ultmate size can be influenced within limits by dietary regulations, particularly by the supply of foods containing vitamins.

Such measurements as have been of stature, cranial diameters and circumference, finger-length, and other bony structures indicate that the human skeleton ceases to grow at about the age of eighteen years, on the average. In fact, at sixteen years the ascending curve of growth turns nearly upon the level, the annual increments previous to that age being marked and typical in amount.

Although the skeleton seems to have stopped growing on the average before the twentieth birthday, nevertheless we cannot say that the person is then wholly mature in physique. Tissues other than those of the bones may continue to develop somewhat later. For instance, the wisdom teeth push spontaneously through the surrounding tissues as late as the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth year, typically. This should doubtless be regarded as progress toward maturity.

The typical human being, then, quite ceases to grow sometime in the early twenties, and "has his growth" in almost all aspects of physique before he reaches the age of twenty. Increments of size are small after the eighteenth birthday. We know more about increments of size than we know about increments of power. Strength, speed and endurance probably reach maturity simultaneously with size, but we cannot state this positively until the matter shall have been more carefully studied.

Sexual Maturity

Also, we do not yet know exactly when the reproductive functions are fully matured. There have been attempts to determine this by studying the quality of offspring in relation to age of parents. These studies have yielded no definite informa-

tion in regard to human beings because of the fallacies of selection in the groups observed. Children born exceptionally early or exceptionally late in the lives of their parents may be expected to deviate from the generality, not because the maturity of their parents has influenced their quality, but because parents who are exceptional in the matter of reproduction are likely to be constitutionally exceptional, physically and mentally.

For instance, the progenitors of great men may be shown to have among them many individuals who were elderly when the offspring subsequently eminent were born. This does not necessarily mean, however, that sexual maturity of parents is a factor in the case. The age of parents as such probably has no influence upon the quality of offspring; but parents who are constitutionally able to procreate gifted children (at any age), marry later, defer reproduction longer, and are probably reproductive to a later age than is the case with parents generally. On the other hand, persons who, under modern conditions, have children during adolescence are likely to be constitutionally deficient in the traits which we regard as desirable, such as intelligence, emotional control, and ambition. Thus, their offspring are likely to be inferior because of inherited constitution, not because their parents are sexually immature.

We do not know at present, then, whether the quality of the reproductive cells varies with age, or whether the cells liberated during adolecsence are of the same quality as those liberated in later life. Also, as regards the physiology of procreation, gestation, parturition, and suckling, there is the disagreement among observers which indicates lack of sure knowledge. Opinion tends to the belief that all of these functions are mature by the end of the teens.

Intellectual Maturity

The existing data about the termination of intellectual growth are relatively few and tentative. Present evidence suggests that intellectual growth begins before birth and continues till some point in later adolescence. Studies, so far made show a steady increase of intelligence to the age of about sixteen years for per-

sons in general, and little if any increase thereafter. It would appear that the nervous system, which is the organic basis of mentality, "gets its growth" at about the same time as the bony tissues do.

Certain data, especially those from the tests of adult American recruits, suggest that there is no increment of intellectual capacity from inner growth after the age of about fourteen years. Boys thirteen years and eight months old, in the elementary schools, did just as well as the average recruit in the army tests. On the other hand, tests of high school pupils show that intellects of the calibre found in secondary school increase in power up to the eighteenth birthday at least. Thus, in our present state of knowledge we cannot say more than that the average person arrives at his maximum intellectual capacity at some point between the thirteenth and the twentieth birthdays. Thereafter the increments of capacity from inner growth are negligible, if any.

This statement, that intelligence does not grow beyond the period of adolescence, does not, of course, signify that a person cannot continue to learn after that age. A person may continue to learn new facts and habits as long as he lives, or until he is extremely senile; but after adolescence these facts and habits will always be of a complexity not greater than that which was then learnable. A person's *education* may develop as long as he lives, but his *intelligence* ceases to develop when he is mature.

It is indicated by data now available that there may be a positive relation between degree of intellect and duration of the period of growth. The more intelligent a child is the longer he may continue to grow. Stupid children apparently reach their maximum of mental power earlier, on the whole, than bright children do. These facts, however, have not yet been established beyond doubt.

Emotional Maturity

Most difficult to discuss of all aspects of maturity is emotional maturity. What is meant by saying that a person is emotionally

mature? At what age does a person cease to develop in emotional power and control? No established answer exists for either of these questions, so that our discussion must be tentative rather than final.

In the ancient pubic ceremonies many of the most conspicuous tests of maturity (of fitness for manhood or womanhood) were tests of *capacity to suffer.* Both physical and mental hardships were inflicted as ordeals. The boy or girl who raised an outcry, who refused the ordeal, who yielded to fear or pain, failed of initiation. Such were found immature, childish, unready for the responsibilities of the adult. We see, therefore, the savage's recognition of the fact that suffering is one of the cardinal experiences of adult life, and the implication of the pubic ordeals is that emotional maturity consists in fortitude.

There is a course of growth of emotion, just as there is a course of growth of intellect, but psychologists have not charted the former as they have the latter, because methods of measuring emotion have not yet been devised. It is merely by common consent that we have come to recognize typical stages of emotional development. This may be made clearer by a concrete illustration. A two-year-old who kicks and screams because he has been refused a second helping of some desired food is regarded as behaving typically, and no one suggests any abnormality, or uses any special term to classify him. He is simply behaving like a baby. The six-year-old who does the same thing is regarded less complacently, and the special term "naughty" may be used to describe him. It is scarcely sufficient to say that he behaves like a six-year-old. He behaves like a "naughty" six-year-old. Let a nine-year-old now kick and scream in the situation indicated, and we are likely to use a term denoting deviation from the normal, and say that the child is "spoiled." A twelve-year-old so acting we will classify as "a problem child," while a twenty-five-year-old we will designate "hysterical" or "insane," if such emotional reactions occur when a second helping of food is denied.

Emotional control grows with the years, by increments of power from within. However, it is believed by many psychologists that emotional maturity is much more influenced by

training and circumstances than is any other phase of development. It is believed that the ultimate courage and patience of a person are more nearly determined by what happens to him during immaturity, than in his height, the thickness of his hair, or his capacity to learn algebra or music.

The direction which it is desirable for experience to take during childhood, in order to produce an emotionally mature person, will be indicated by considering further the criteria of emotional maturity. What are the "signs" that one is no longer childish?

In the first place, the emotionally mature person is capable of *gradations* or *degrees* of emotional response.[1] His is not an all-or-none reaction. If he pinches his finger, he does not yell and weep as loudly as he can. He suppresses the reaction which he feels impelled to make, at least in part. If some one insults him, he does not fly into a towering rage, but limits his anger to a certain degree of response; keeps it "within bounds."

But not only is the mature person able to make partial emotional response; he is also able to *delay* his responses. If he is frightened he does not jump and run on the instant. If he is angered he does not necessarily strike at once. He can check the motor phase of emotion, and may hold it in check for several years, or even for a life time . Children, on the other hand, are impulsive and typically "cannot wait" to express or satisfy their desires.

Another indication of maturity lies in the *handling of self-pity*. The human ego is such that any injury to it awakens an inner lamentation, which is out of all proportion to the pity felt by sympathetic onlookers and comforters. There is certainly a pity of onlookers. It exists and is manifested. But it is far from having the urgency of that felt by the injured person for himself. The "poor-you" attitude is quite different in force from the "poor-me" attitude. In childhood self-pity is unrestrained. The injury to the person strikes at the very centre of the universe. The mature person approximates the "poor-you" attitude in pitying his own injuries and mishaps. He tries to feel no sorrier for himself than others would feel for him.

1 W. H. R. Rivers, **Instinct and the Unconscious**, Cambridge University Press, 1920.

and strives against sinking into the "poor-me" attitude, with its childish appeal for a sympathy from others which they cannot sincerely give. The emotionally mature person does not prey upon the amiability of his fellow men.

These are three of the important standards of maturity as contrasted with childishness. The mature person is self-sustaining to a marked degree, emotionally as well as in other respects. When we come into contact with one who is adult in yeas, but is subject to tantrums, prone to self-pity, dependent upon others for constant sympathy, we say that person is childish.

It is, of course, conceivable that under conditions different from those which we call cultivated, adequacy in adults would consist in all-or-none, immediate emotional behaviour. When we talk of the adequate adult, we mean *adequate for life under conditions of culture.* Culture is a product of intellectual sagacity. Man differs from all other animals in the fact that his life is passed increasingly among artificial comforts produced by his superior power of learning. To be a responsible member of modern society means to be master of a thousand situations in which skill acquired either by formal education or by ingenuity is indispensable.

Childish (unrestrained and immediate) emotional conduct, as by sobbing, yelling, bawling, clamouring, impairs responsibility. A person cannot aim, dodge, guide, steer, listen or solve successfully under intense emotion uninhibited. Emotion drowns sagacity. Even savage man invents bows, arrows, traps and other tools, the use of which calls for steadiness unconfused by emotional outburst. Temperamental people, however intelligent, seldom behave sagaciously in emergencies. Animals which have learned how to solve given problems become upset in technique, and temporarily lose their acquired power, under the influence of excitement.

Furthermore, in modern life unrestrained clamour is a public nuisance, because it usually has the effect of calling to aid those who are powerless to assist. Such useless drains on sympathy are resented, and the one who cannot refrain from them becomes intolerable. For instance, if one has toothache in a modern

community, to lament childishly is a nuisance, because it merely calls about one a group of miscellaneous disturbed sympathizers who have no power to alleviate the situation. If clamour would call dentists, and dentists only, it might contribute to adequacy; but since it does not, it is the mark not of an adequate adult but of an intolerable nuisance. Those who cannot control emotional expression are therefore called irresponsible, and must live like children under the supervision of others.

The age at which the typical individual arrives at the degree of emotional control which will permanently characterize him is not known. It seems as though people in general become more and more able to control emotion, so that the average forty-year-old is more mature in this respect than the average thirty-year-old. Just what the facts are, however, remains to be determined.

The Adequate Adult

What kind of person is it, then, who emerges successfully from the period of adolescence, with all of its major problems solved? Such a person will be an adequate adult, fit to engage in the trials of maturity and of old age without a "nervous breakdown."[1]

The adequate adult is able, in the first place, to sustain himself or herself physically. This means economic competence. He is in condition to wait upon himself or to pay directly for the services of others. It is in this fundamental respect that women have had and still have the greatest difficulty in meeting the conditions of adulthood. Because of their part in repro-

1 There are nearly as many mental patients in the public institutions of the United States as there are students in its colleges and universities. About one person in ten throughout the population as a whole spends some time during his life under treatment for "nervous breakdown." As ascertained recently by the American Medical Association, there are about as many beds in hospitals and other institutions for mental illness as there are beds in hospitals for all other kinds of sickness combined. Every bed is occupied of those provided for mental sufferers. Fifty thousand new cases enter our hospitals for the insane every twelve months. These figures refer only to the most extreme, i.e., the institutional aspect of mental disorder. For each one who enters an institution, there are several slightly less disturbed, who manage to do without hospital care.

duction, women have been dependent on men for subsistence instead of being themselves in direct contact with the source of supply. Thus, childishness must be expected more commonly in women than in men, for fewer women have been able to achieve self-sustenance by direct effort.

Intellectually, the adequate adult arrives at his own opinions and follows his own conclusions in handling life's difficulties. He does not seek counsel indiscriminately, and is not at the mercy of suggestions which come from the people about him. In short, he is not a dependent upon constant advice or admonition. It will be recalled that an ordeal frequently imposed in the primitive coming-of-age ceremonies is the solitary journey, the test of *ability to go alone.*

In the sphere of emotion, the adequate adult is independent of coddling. He or she can suffer without raising an ostentatious lamentation, and without draining the sympathy of others. It is interesting and significant that in the ancient pubic ceremonies we find novices tested to determine *capacity for silence.* "No talking is allowed . . . the boys sit still throughout the hot day."

The major persistent problems of adolescence are, as we have seen them, to get away from the family, to achieve self-support, to develop a hetero-sexual attitude, to formulate a point of view on life. When all these major adjustments have been successfully managed, the adolescent has achieved psychological adulthood. He has attained emotional maturity. He has arrived at a condition of self-control and of self-possession, unified and wholesome.

It is true that subsequently the person may still develop and "ripen" in the solution of all these problems; but if he goes wandering on into the years beyond the teens with some or all of them essentially unsolved, he will lack the self-command which underlies adult responsibility. Such a person, in popular phrase, is in danger of "going to pieces," of "going up in the air," of "having a break down." Sometimes it is said of him that he "is not all there." In short, that integration of all the various selves into a united Self, which we find in the well matured adult, has been missed. The person continues to behave like an

adolescent, or even like a child, for many years or perhaps throughout life.

These perennial adolescents are fairly numerous in society at large, and very troublesome. They are always seeking guidance in their personal affairs; always looking for a listener to their complaints; always trying to elicit sympathy and aid from stronger people as they elicited these from parents at home. No doubt inherited constitution plays a chief rôle in these failures of adolescence. Some of them would be inevitable because of insufficient stamina in the person. Nevertheless, unfortunate circumstances, wrong training, unsympathetic treatment and want of knowledge at the time of adolescence play chief rôles too. Many failures could almost certainly be averted if all of the essential major adjustments which we have described could be carried out under enlightened guidance, rather than under the conditions of blind struggle which at present so largely prevail.

Such enlightened guidance is, in fact, now being attempted by educational authorities in certain cities like London, New York and Detroit. Here are attached to boards of education experts in child welfare, whose work is not to teach subject matter, but to guide children and adolescents in respect to problems of development and adaptation. This is not done in classrooms, but in what are called psychological clinics, habit clinics, or child guidance clinics. This work seems to promise much for the solution of social difficulties, even though parents are at present in most cases merely advised, and are not compelled to act in accordance with the advice given.[1]

1 Thomas, W. L. and Thomas, D. S., **The Child in America**, A. Knopf, New York, 1929.

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