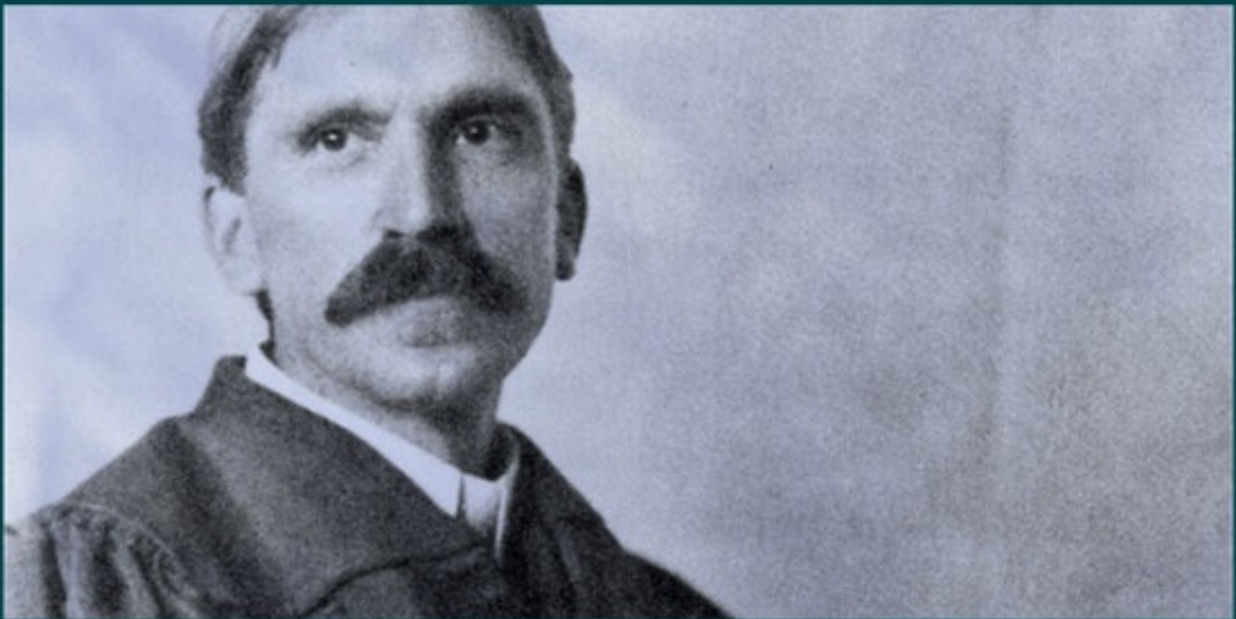




JOHN DEWEY



**PROBLEMS
OF MEN**



Problems of Men

John Dewey



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Notes

PREFATORY NOTE

The introduction which immediately follows this note was written expressly for this volume and has not been published elsewhere. The other essays in this book are reprinted from periodicals in which they originally appeared. Most of them have appeared, as is shown by the dates attached in the Table of Contents, fairly recently. One of them was written, however, half a century ago and has not been previously reprinted. Naturally, there has been some modification of my position in respect to various philosophical matters as the years have passed. The articles of recent date most nearly represent, of course, my present views. Considering the time which has elapsed, the older essay seemed worth reprinting as an anticipation of the direction in which I have moved during the intervening fifty years.

A few of the essays that are included are so technical that on their face they are not about *The Problems of Men*. But a place has been given them because they present aspects of that work of self-criticism, of purging, which, as I said in the Introduction, philosophy needs to execute if it is to perform under present conditions the role that properly belongs to it.

J. I.

INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEMS OF MEN AND THE PRESENT STATE OF PHILOSOPHY

A report was recently issued by a committee of an organization whose members are concerned with teaching and writing philosophy, *The American Philosophical Association*. It was invited "undertake an examination of the present state of philosophy and the role philosophy might play in the postwar world." The invitation came from and was financed by a non-professional body, The Rockefeller Foundation. This fact is an indication that the theme is considered to be of public, not merely professional, concern. This intimation is borne out by a statement regarding the task entrusted to the Committee. It was asked to inquire into "the function of philosophy ... in the development of free and reflective life in the community." It was also asked to discuss "the function of philosophy in liberal education." The title of the book is *Philosophy in American Education*.

This title suggests that the Committee confined itself to the narrower of the two tasks confided to it. With a few exceptions the body of the book bears out this impression. After asking "What are we trying to do? Where do we think we are going?", the Introduction to the Report goes on to say, "There is not in our contemporary situation an authoritatively accepted body of doctrine called 'philosophy' for which duly accredited spokesmen can pretend to speak. There are philosophies and philosophers and they *differ philosophically on just the issues with which we are called upon to deal.*" The Committee deserves every credit for the frankness of this admission. But as far as concerns interests outside the circle of philosophers, the words I have italicized are, I believe, more revealing about the present state and role of philosophy than anything else said in the whole volume.

This is a strong statement. The reason for making it is that the internal divisions which kept the Committee from dealing with the more important of the two tasks entrusted to it is the reflection of an intellectual form of confusions and conflicts by which the public community is divided. Before reproaching philosophers for failure to agree, we should recall that in the present state of the world agreement among them would be proof positive that philosophy is so technical as to be wholly out of touch with the problems and issues of actual life.

I propose, then, to discuss the present state of philosophy in its human bearings. Within the circle of professional philosophers and in the teaching of philosophy in institutions of learning, differences of opinion and the conclusions that constitute systems and isms have their place. But for the public, they are of slight importance compared with the question of what philosophers are trying to do and might do if they were tried. The interest of the public centers in such questions as: What is the distinctive purpose and business of philosophy anyway? How is it related to those concerns and issues which today stand out as the problems of men?

I

Discussion may well begin with the fact that there *does* exist at the present time one philosophy which holds that it possesses "an authoritatively accepted body of doctrine," having "duly accredited spokesmen" to declare its contents. The fact that representatives of this type of philosophy do not figure in the Report is itself indicative of a profound cleavage in present life. For that philosophy is that of an institution that claims divine origin and continued divine support and direction. Its doctrine

are held to be authoritative because of their source in supernatural revelation. The philosophies represented in the Report formulate a standpoint according to which philosophical doctrines should be formulated on grounds that are independent of supernatural revelation, and not requiring any special institution as their organ. The supernatural and theological philosophy took shape in the medieval period. The philosophies represented in the Report took shape in ways away from, largely in protest against, the attitudes and interests which controlled the formulation of the older philosophy.

Roughly speaking this division within philosophy represents a cleavage in life between older and newer factors in present life, between the supernatural and what by contrast may be called the secular. It is an expression of conditions which led Matthew Arnold more than a generation ago to speak of contemporary man as

wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born.

Nevertheless, an account of the present state of philosophy must note that, as far as concerns the *aim and office* of philosophy, there is one basic agreement between the philosophy of the theological type and at least some philosophies of the secular type. Rejection of the supernatural origin and foundation makes of course a vast difference. But the philosophical tenets that are presented in the Report cling largely, although not exclusively, to the view that the primary aim of philosophy is knowledge of Being or "Reality" which is more comprehensive, fundamental, and ultimate than the knowledge which can be provided by the organs and methods at the disposal of the "special" sciences. For according to this view, the sciences, with the possible exception of mathematics, deal with things that are temporal, changing, contingent, while philosophy aims at knowledge of that which is eternal and inherently necessary, so primary and so final that it alone can give sure support to the claims to truth put forth by the lesser forms of knowing.

It is the fact of a profound cleavage that is here important, not the question of which is right and which is wrong. The cleavage in life that has been brought about by "modern" departures from ancient revolt against older practices and tenets is so widespread that nothing is left untouched. In politics, it is manifested in the movements which in practically every country have resulted in separation of church and state. Developments in industry and commerce have substituted mobility for the relative static conditions of rule by custom which once prevailed. They have also introduced interests and enjoyments that compete with those made supreme in the period of medieval ecclesiastic control. With respect to natural and historical knowledge the rise of new methods of inquiry has profoundly shaken the astronomy, physics, biology, anthropology, and the historical learning with which the theological philosophy had identified itself. The cleavage that has resulted between theology and positive science, between the mundane and the heavenly, between temporal interests and those called eternal has created the special divisions which in the form of "dualisms" have determined the chief problems of philosophies that are "modern" in the historical sense.

Nevertheless, the most striking fact about these modern philosophies is the extent in which they exhibit the influence of the postmedieval movements in politics, industry, and science, but without having surrendered the old, the classic, view that the chief business of philosophy is search for a kind of Reality that is more fundamental and more ultimate than are or than can be the facts disclosed by the sciences. The outcome has been the controversies as to the organ of knowing that constitute the

philosophical isms of the last few centuries. Because of the view that the aim and business of philosophy is with Reality supposed to be behind and beyond the subject-matter of the various authentic knowings that form the sciences, the "possibility of knowledge," conditions of knowing set up before knowing can take place, became the chief "problem" of philosophy. The more actual knowings flourished, the more philosophies, mutually contradictory among themselves, occupied themselves with furnishing "Foundations for Knowledge," instead of employing what is known directly in discovering and performing its own tasks. The work that once gave its name to philosophy, Search for Wisdom, has progressively receded into the background. For wisdom differs from knowledge in being the application of what is known to intelligent conduct of the affairs of human life. The straits of philosophy are due to the fact that the more this available knowledge has increased the more it has occupied itself with a task that is no longer humanly pertinent.

For practical problems that are so deeply human as to be the moral issues of the present time have increased their range and their intensity. They cover practically every aspect of contemporary life, domestic, industrial, political. But during the very period in which this has occurred, philosophy, for the most part, has relegated them to a place that is subordinate and accessory to an alleged problem of knowledge. At the same time actual knowing and the applications of science in life by inventions and technological arts have been going on at such a rate that the alleged problem of its foundations and the possibility of knowledge are of but remote professional concern. The net result of neglect with issues that are urgent and of preoccupation with issues that are remote from active human concern explains the popular discredit into which philosophy has progressively fallen. This disrepute is in turn a decided factor in determining its role in the world.

For what can philosophies do which, in spite of change of conditions in science and in human affairs of basic import, go on occupying themselves with the problem of the conditions of knowledge in neglect of the vital problem of its consequences, actual and potential? Inquiry that should devote itself to systematic investigation of the consequences of science; of why they are what they are at present; of the causes of that limitation in which scientific method affects the conditions of life on earth through the medium of institutions to which scientific inquiry is *not* applied; to what the consequences of science *might* be were they so applied; such inquiry might hope to have some role, to play some part in development of attitudes in the community that are liberal, well tested, and grounded in fact.

II

Under present conditions scientific methods take effect in determining the concrete economic conditions under which the mass of men live. But they are not employed to determine freely and systematically the moral, the humane, ends served by engrossing practical conditions, the actual state of ends and values. Hence the more important things are left to decision by custom, prejudice, class interests, and traditions embodied in institutions, whose results are mostly fixed by the superior power in possession of those who manage them. Under these conditions, a recent movement in philosophy demands especial notice. It retains the notion that philosophy's concern is with superior reality, taking its cue in search for it, mainly from mathematics and quasi-mathematical symbolisms, but completely repudiating that aspect of philosophy that has gone by the name of search for wisdom. It converts the practical neglect by modern philosophies of political and moral subjects into systematic theoretic denial of the possibility of intelligent concern with them. It holds that the practical affairs of men which are of highest and deepest significance are matters of values and valuations, and that *therefore* they are by their very nature incapable of intellectual adjudication; of either justification or condemnation on rational grounds. The movement retains in the most emphatic form possible the

ancient Greek conception according to which "theory" is intrinsically superior to any and every form of practical concern—the latter consisting of things that change and fluctuate in contrast with the eternity of Being. But the movement in question goes, so to speak, the classic doctrine one better. The latter held that practical affairs were the material of inferior sorts of knowledge. The present movement holds that moral affairs, concerned as they are with "intrinsic" values, or "ends-in-themselves," are wholly outside the reach of any sort of knowledge whatever.

A distinguished member of this school of contemporary thought has recently written that "the actions of men, in innumerable important respects, have depended upon their theories as to the world and human life, as to what is good and evil." But he has also written that what men hold about "what is good and evil" is wholly a matter of sheer likes and dislikes. They, in turn, are so completely private and personal—in the terminology of philosophy so "subjective"—as to be incapable of judgment having "objective" grounds. Likes and dislikes are immune to modification by knowledge since they dwell in inaccessible privacy. Values that are "extrinsic" or "instrumental" may be rationally estimated. For they are only means; are not ends in any genuine sense. As means their efficacy may be determined by methods that will stand scientific inspection. But the "ends" they serve (ends which are truly ends) are just matters of what groups, classes, sects, races, or whatever, happen irrationally to like or dislike.

The actual or concrete condition of men all over the world with respect to their opportunities and their relative disadvantages of position, their happiness and their misery, their kind and degree of participation "in good and evil in innumerable respects" is now decided by things which, on this view, are mere means. In addition they are said to be totally arbitrary and irresponsible with respect to the ends they finally produce although these ends are all that mankind prizes! What is the probable destiny of man on earth if regulation of the concrete conditions under which men live continues to increase at its present rate, while the consequences produced by them are necessarily left at the mercy of likes and dislikes that are, in turn, at the mercy of irrational habits, institutions, and a class and sectarian distribution of power between the stronger and the weaker? However technical the "theoretical" view of this school about ultimate reality may be, the truth or falsity of this part of the doctrine is assuredly of public concern.

Were this philosophy to be generally accepted the movement for a "moratorium on science" would be greatly strengthened. For it is from science that are derived the values which are "means" and not ends, according to this brand of philosophy. According to it, there is no difference capable of intelligent use and test between use of energy due to splitting of the atom for destruction of mankind and its use in peaceful industry to make life more secure and more abundant. This fact does not prove the doctrine to be false. But it certainly gives ground for serious consideration of the grounds upon which it rests. The problem of values and valuations has been coming to the front of late in any case. The challenge here issued should make it the central issue for some time to come.

Meantime, such popular vogue as may accrue to this doctrine will operate, almost automatically, to promote supernatural theological philosophy. For the latter also holds that ultimate ends are beyond the reach of human discovery and judgment. But it also holds that revelation from on high has provided the all-sufficient remedy. In a time as troubled as the present, a philosophy which denies the existence of any natural and human means of determining judgments as to what is good and evil will work to the benefit of those who hold that they have in their possession superhuman and supernatural means for infallible ascertainment of ultimate ends, especially as they also claim to possess the practical agencies for ensuring the attainment of final good by men who accept the truths they declare.

Another phase of the present state of philosophy demands notice. It repudiates that which the latter named movement affirms and it affirms that which the latter denies. It breaks completely with that part of the philosophical tradition which holds that concern with superior reality determines the work to be done by philosophical inquiry. It affirms that the purpose and business of philosophy is wholly in accord with that part of the historic tradition called search for wisdom—namely, search for the ends and values that give direction to our collective human activities. It holds that not grasp of eternal and universal Reality but use of the methods and conclusions of our best knowledge, that called scientific method, provides the means for conducting this search. It holds that limitations which now exist in this use are to be removed by means of extension of the ways of tested knowing that define science from physical and physiological matters to social and distinctly human affairs. The movement is called, in its various aspects, by the names of pragmatism, experimentalism, instrumentalism. Not these names are important but the ideas that are held regarding the distinctive aim and business of philosophic inquiry and of how it should be accomplished.

The accusation brought against it of childlike trust in science omits the fact that it holds that science itself is still in its babyhood. It holds that the scientific method of inquiry has not begun to reach maturity. It holds that it will achieve manhood only when its use is extended to cover all aspects of all matters of human concern. It holds that many of the remediable evils of the present time are due to the unbalanced, one-sided application of the methods of inquiry and test that constitute everything that has a right to the name “science.” It holds that the chief present task of philosophy is with issues and problems that are due to this state of things, including the projection of liberal hypotheses as to the ways in which the required social change may be brought about.

This view of the aim and office of philosophy involves a decided shift in the meaning of such words as comprehensiveness and ultimacy in their application to the work of philosophy. They lose the significance that was given to them when philosophy was supposed to be an effort to achieve knowledge of “reality” superior to that with which the special sciences are concerned. There are issues in the conduct of human affairs in their production of good and evil which, at a given time and place, are so central, so strategic in position, that their urgency deserves, with respect to practice, the name of ultimate and comprehensive. These issues demand the most systematic reflective attention that can be given. It is relatively unimportant whether this attention be called philosophy or by some other name. It is of immense human importance that it be given, and that it be given by means of the best tested resources that inquiry has at command.

Reference to place and time in what has just been said should make it clear that this view of the office of philosophy has no commerce with the notion that the problems of philosophy are “eternal.” On the contrary, it holds that such a view is obstructive, tending to be of use chiefly in defense of the practice of continually rehashing issues which were timely in their own social condition but that are no longer urgent, save from the standpoint of historical scholarship. The latter is as important to philosophy as in any other humane field. But when it is permitted to monopolize philosophic activities it chokes out their life. Eternity that is permitted to become a refuge from the time in which human life goes on may provide a certain kind of consolation. But emotion and comfort should not be identified with understanding and insight, nor with the direction the latter may supply.

This movement is charged with promotion of “relativism” in a sense in which the latter is identified with lack of standards, and consequently with tendency to promote chaos. It is true that the movement in question holds since the problems and issues of philosophy are not eternal they should link up with urgencies that impose themselves at times and in places. The “state of philosophy” if it is to be in the present state must have to do with issues that are themselves actively present. The word “relativity” is used as a scarecrow to frighten away philosophers from critical assault upon “absolutisms.” Every class interest in all history has defended itself from examination by putting forth claim

absoluteness. Social fanaticisms, whether of the right or the left, take refuge in the fortress principles too absolute to be subject to doubt and inquiry. The absolute is the isolated; the isolated that which cannot be judged on the ground of connections that can be investigated. The kind “Relativity” characteristic of the movement in question is that which marks all scientific inquiry. For the latter also finds its only workable “standards” are provided by the actual connections of things connections which, when they are generalized, are given the name of space-time.

Dependence upon space-time connections now marks all the victories won by scientific inquiry. It is silly to suppose they terminate in mere particulars. On the contrary, they constantly move toward the general, provided only the generalizations have to do with wider and wider connections, so as not to swim in wordy vacuity. And so it is with a philosophy that employs the methods and conclusions of authentic inquiry as instruments for examination of values that now operate in regulating human habits, institutions, and efforts. No span of connections in space-time is too wide or too long, provided they are relevant to judgment of issues that are urgently here-and-now. Not “relativity” but absolutism isolates and confines. The reason, at bottom, that absolutism levels its guns against relativity in caricature is that search for the connection of events is the sure way of destroying the privileged position of exemption from inquiry which every form of absolutism secures wherever it obtains.

IV

The foregoing remarks need illustration. What special problems and issues does this philosophical movement substitute for those which it takes to be now so irrelevant as to obstruct philosophy from performing the role it might exercise in the present world? Were I to reply that, at the very least, philosophy should clean its own house, I might seem to be retreating from human issues and problems back into the more technical concerns of professional philosophy. This would be the case if the things in philosophical doctrines that need to be got rid of were not also obstructive and deflecting in the human situation. Here is one outstanding illustration. Separation of mind and matter, the elevation of what was called ideal and spiritual to the very summit of Being and the degradation of everything called material and worldly to the lowest position, developed in philosophy as a reflection of the economic and political division of classes. Slaves and artisans (who had no more political freedom than did outright slaves) were occupied with the “material,” and hence with mere means to the good life in which they had no share. Citizens who were free stood totally above the need of any share in these activities, which were only menial. Division between high knowledge which was rational and theoretical and practical knowledge which was low, servile, and a matter of mere routine, and the split between the ideal and the material followed as matter of course.

We have moved away from downright slavery and from feudal serfdom. But the conditions of present life still perpetuate a division between activities which are relatively base and menial and those which are free and ideal. Some educators suppose they are rendering a service by insisting upon an inherent difference between studies they call liberal and others they call mechanical and utilitarian. Economic theories of great influence have developed out of and are used to justify the isolation of economic, commercial, and financial affairs from the political and moral. Philosophy relevant to present conditions has a hard task to perform in purging itself of doctrines which seem to justify this separation and which certainly obstruct the formation of measures and policies by means of which science and technology (the application of science) would perform a more humane and liberal office than they now do.

This example of the kind of issue and problem with which present philosophy might well occupy itself suggests another problem so closely allied as to be, in fact, the same problem in another guise.

The distinction, current in present-day opinion, inside and outside of professional philosophy, between values that are intrinsic and extrinsic, final and instrumental, is an intellectual formulation of the separations set up between means and ends. This form of philosophic "dualism" is a further projection of pre-scientific, pre-technological, pre-democratic conditions into present philosophy in a way so obstructive as to demand total obliteration. Here again, philosophers have a difficult and exacting work to do if they are to take an active part in enabling the resources potentially at our disposal to use present science and technology to exercise a genuinely liberating office in human affairs.

It follows that the whole notion of ends-in-themselves as distinct from ends that are called means represents a perpetuation of earlier conditions that is now definitely obstructive. In its theoretical aspect it is a striking case of adherence to an absolute after *science* has everywhere substituted connectivities. The hold still exerted by the notion is shown when philosophies that regard themselves as peculiarly modern and emancipated—like the type previously described—retain in full flower the notion that there are actually in existence such things as ends which are not also means. Give up the notion and there vanish all the grounds that are offered for holding that moral ends are not, in theory, capable of the same kind of "objective" factual determination as are technological ends. Democratic abolition of fixed difference between "higher" and "lower" still has to make its way in philosophy.

Reference to this matter of values serves to introduce another example of the work to be done by philosophy that desires a role in the present world. One reason that is given for eliminating values from any contact with grounded judgment is their alleged *subjective* nature. No student of philosophy needs to be told how largely the dualism of subjective and objective has figured in modern philosophy. At one time, in the earliest days of modern science, this dogma was of some practical use. Science had many foes with which to contend. It adopted the device of setting up the "internal" authority of a knowing mind and ego over against the "external" authority of custom and established institutions. Maintaining the separation when the actual advance of science has shown that man is a part of the world, not something set over against it, is one of the chief obstacles now standing in the way of intelligent discussion of all social matters. Wholehearted acceptance in philosophy of the fact that no grounds now exist for fixed division of events into subjective and objective is prerequisite to philosophy's having a role in promoting inquiry in social matters.

The things just discussed are examples of matters in which philosophy has now to do a hard and, for many of us, a disagreeable job. This is the work of getting rid, by means of thinking as exact and as critical as possible, of perpetuations of those outworn attitudes which prevent those engaged in philosophic reflection from seizing the opportunities now open. This is the critical or, if one please, the negative, aspect of the task to be undertaken in the present state of philosophy. But it is not merely negative. It is one side of the positive and constructive work philosophy can, and therefore should, do. Philosophy cannot of itself resolve the conflicts and dissolve the confusions of the present world.

Only the associated members of the world can do this work in cooperative action—a work of which the institution of conditions of peace is sufficiently striking example. But intellectual instruments are needed to project leading ideas or plans of action. The intellectual instrumentalities for doing this work need sterilizing and sharpening. That work is closely allied with setting better instruments, and as fast as they take shape, at work. Active use in dealing with the present problems of men is the only way they can be kept from rusting. Trial and test in and by work done is the means by which they can be kept out of the dark spots in which infection originates. The fact that such plans, measures, policies as can be projected will be but hypotheses is but another instance of alignment of philosophy with the attitude and spirit of the inquiries which have won the victories of scientific inquiry in other fields.

Only a few centuries ago physical science was in a state that today is only of historical interest—so far away is it in method and subject matter from what we now call "science." Obstacles to creatio

and use of new methods were not once just theoretical. Old beliefs and old ways of knowing were connected with traditional habits and institutions that to attack one was taken to be an attack on the other. Nevertheless, a few men had the courage to engage in systematic adverse criticism not only of accepted conclusions but of the standpoint and methods that had obtained for centuries. In addition they projected new hypotheses to direct the conduct of physical inquiry from that time on. Some of these hypotheses were so broad in scope that today they would rate as “philosophical” rather than “scientific.” Nevertheless, in the end they, as well as the work of purging, played a definite role in leading inquiry into the paths along which dependable tested results have been secured.

Today social subjects, as far as concerns effective treatment in inquiry, are in much the same state as physical subjects three hundred years ago. The need is that there be now the kind of systematic and comprehensive criticism of current methods and habits and the same projection of general hypotheses as, only a few hundred years ago, set going the revolution in physical knowledge. The opportunity is as great as the need. The obstacles to undertaking the work in social questions are greater than they ever were in dealing, say, with the heavenly bodies. The initial step is to promote general recognition that knowing, including most emphatically scientific knowledge, is not outside social activity, but is itself a form of social behavior, as much so as agriculture or transportation. For it is something that human beings do, as they plow the earth and sail ships. On the critical, “purging” side, systematic rejection of all doctrines that associate knowing with “mind” and an alleged individual ego, as something separate and self-enclosed, is required. On the positive side, the initial step demands systematic observation of the natural, the biological and societal, conditions by the means of which knowing actually goes on.

This work is preparatory. On the whole, it is a case of philosophy cleaning its own house, together with doing a certain amount of refurnishing. The important work is to make evident the social conditions—economic, political, moral, and religious—which have restricted scientific inquiry to, largely, first to physical and then to physiological matters; conditions that have kept inquiry penned so that large fields of utmost human concern are treated as if they were sacrosanct, not to be contaminated by contact with concrete investigations. A deeply entrenched and fortified habit of treating economic affairs, industry, trade and business, as mere means having no intrinsic connection with “ultimate” ends which are moral, illustrates the penning-in theory and perpetuates it in practice.

The result is that what pass for moral ideals in the most important forms of social practices are “ideal” as to be utopian. They are treated as matters of personal exhortation supplemented with ultimatums and threats of use of force in reward and punishment. Separation of the “materialistic” and the “idealistic” deprives the latter of leverage and impetus, and prevents the things to which the former name is applied from rendering the humane service of which they are capable. The example of what physiological science and its applications have already accomplished in public health, limited as it is, is an instance of the kind of thing the method and results of competent inquiry might bring about in other aspects of human well being. The pragmatic philosophy, so called, has made a start in helping to break down in the field of education that separation of the “utilitarian” and the “liberal” which restricts alike the former and the latter. The belief that “vocational” education cannot be humane is an illustration of that which would be humorous were it not so disastrous in effect.

Political theory and practice provide another example. Liberalism once did a work of emancipation. But it was so influenced by a heritage of absolutistic claims that it invented the myth of “The Individual” set over in dualistic separation against that which is called “The Social.” It obscured the fact that these words are names for traits and capacities of human beings in the concrete. It transformed that which they actually name into entities by themselves. It thereby obscured, indeed prevented, recognition of the fact that actual realization of these traits and capacities depends upon the specific conditions under which human beings are born and in which they grow up. The work

individuality and *society* under this influence became names for something ready-made and inherent—not differing in substance from that belief in occult essences which the new movement in physical knowledge had to assault and eliminate before it could do its work.

V

In what precedes I have mentioned, by way of illustration, some of the tasks that lie open to systematic generalized inquiry. Any inquiry, whatever name be given it, which undertakes this kind of inquiry, critical and constructive, will not have to worry about its role in the world. In closing, I shall say a few words about the atmosphere and climate in which the work will have to be carried on. The passage taken from a writing of a distinguished American thinker, written well over a generation ago, will point a contrast. Josiah Royce wrote: “You philosophize when you reflect critically upon what you are doing in your world. And what you are doing is, of course, in the first place living. And living involves passions, faiths, doubts, and courage. The critical inquiry into what these mean and imply is philosophy.”

Provided that customs, arrangements, institutions, to which passions, such things as doubts, faiths and courage, are attached, are brought into this view of the office of philosophy, it is not far different from what I have been saying. But then another note is struck. The passage continued: “We feel ourselves in a world of law and significance. Yet why we feel this homelike sense of the reality and worth of the world is a matter of criticism. Such a criticism of life, made elaborate and thoroughgoing, is philosophy.” In this further passage it is assumed, as a matter of course, that the world in which man lives is of such significance and worth that we cannot escape the sense of its homelikeness. The work assigned to philosophy is thereby limited to the office of finding, by systematic and thorough reflection, justification for a fact which philosophy is entitled to take for granted.

Times have altered since these words were written. They probably express an assumption and attitude common to most classic systems of the past. But a peculiar hopefulness existing during the period when the words were penned made this assumption of worth, significance and unitary order especially easy. We now live in a situation when the world seems alien rather than homelike; in a period in which the tendency of scientific knowledge modifies the earlier faith in “overruling laws.” And in most practical matters there is no more widespread sense than that of insecurity. The type of philosophy which now tries to show that, all “appearances” to the contrary, the world in which we live is “really,” fundamentally, one of fixed order, significance and worth takes on the air of theological apologetics.

Philosophy still has a work to do. It may gain a role for itself for turning to consideration of why it is that man is now so alienated from man. It may turn to the projection of large generous hypotheses which, if used as plans of action, will give intelligent direction to men in search for ways to make the world more one of worth and significance, more homelike, in fact. There is no phase of life—educational, economic, political, religious, in which inquiry may not aid in bringing to birth that world which Matthew Arnold rightly said was as yet unborn. Present-day philosophy cannot desire a better work than to engage in the act of midwifery that was assigned to it by Socrates twenty-five hundred years ago.

January, 1946.

PART I

Democracy and Education

THE DEMOCRATIC FAITH AND EDUCATION

Not even the most far-seeing of men could have predicted, no longer ago than fifty years, the course of events that have taken place. The expectations that were entertained by men of generous outlook are in fact chiefly notable in that the actual course of events has moved, and with violence, in the opposite direction. The ardent and hopeful social idealist of the last century or so has been proved so wrong that a reaction to the opposite extreme has taken place. A recent writer has even proposed a confraternity of pessimists who should live together in some sort of social oasis. It is a fairly easy matter to list the articles of that old faith which, from the standpoint of today, have been tragically frustrated.

The first article on the list had to do with the prospects of the abolition of war. It was held that the revolution which was taking place in commerce and communication would break down the barriers which had kept the peoples of the earth alien and hostile and would create a state of interdependence which in time would insure lasting peace. Only an extreme pessimist ventured to suggest that interdependence might multiply points of friction and conflict.

Another item of that creed was the belief that a general development of enlightenment and rationality was bound to follow the increase in knowledge and the diffusion which would result from the revolution in science that was taking place. Since it had long been held that rationality and freedom were intimately allied, it was held that the movement toward democratic institutions and popular government which had produced in succession the British, American, and French Revolutions was bound to spread until freedom and equality were the foundations of political government in every country of the globe.

A time of general ignorance and popular unenlightenment and a time of despotic and oppressive governmental rule were taken to be practically synonymous. Hence the third article of faith. There was a general belief among social philosophers that governmental activities were necessarily more or less oppressive; that governmental action tended to be an artificial interference with the operation of natural laws. Consequently the spread of enlightenment and democratic institutions would produce a gradual but assured withering away of the powers of the political state. Freedom was supposed to be so deeply rooted in the very nature of men that, given the spread of rational enlightenment, it would take care of itself with only a minimum of political action confined to insuring external police order.

The other article of faith to be mentioned was the general belief that the vast, the almost incalculable, increase in productivity resulting from the industrial revolution was bound to raise the general standard of living to a point where extreme poverty would be practically eliminated. It was believed that the opportunity to lead a decent, self-respecting, because self-sufficient, economic life would be assured to everyone who was physically and morally normal.

The course of events culminating in the present situation suffices to show without any elaborate argument how grievously these generous expectations have been disappointed. Instead of universal peace, there occurred two wars worldwide in extent and destructive beyond anything known in human history. Instead of uniform and steady growth of democratic freedom and equality, we have seen the rise of powerful totalitarian states with thoroughgoing suppression of liberty of belief and expression, outdoing the most despotic states of previous history. We have an actual growth in importance and range of governmental action in legislation and administration as necessary means of rendering

freedom on the part of the many an assured actual fact. Instead of promotion of economic security and movement toward the elimination of poverty, we now have a great increase in the extent and the intensity of industrial crises with great increase of inability of workers to find employment. Social instability has reached a point that may portend revolution if it goes on unchecked.

Externally it looks as if the pessimists had the best of the case. But before we reach a conclusion on that point, we have to inquire concerning the solidity of the premise upon which the idealists and optimists rested their case. This principle was that the more desirable goals in view were to be accomplished by a complex of forces to which in their entirety the name "Nature" was given. In practical effect, acceptance of this principle was equivalent to adoption of a policy of drift as far as human intelligence and effort were concerned. No conclusion is warranted until we have inquired how far failure and frustration are consequences of putting our trust in a policy of drift; a policy of letting "George" in the shape of Nature and Natural Law do the work which only human intelligence and effort could possibly accomplish. No conclusion can be reached until we have considered an alternative: What is likely to happen if we recognize that the responsibility for creating a state of peace internationally, and of freedom and economic security internally, has to be carried by deliberate cooperative human effort? Technically speaking the policy known as *laissez-faire* is one of limited application. But its limited and technical significance is one instance of a manifestation of widespread trust in the ability of impersonal forces, popularly called Nature, to do a work that has to be done by human insight, foresight, and purposeful planning.

Not all the men of the earlier period were of the idealistic type. The idealistic philosophy was a positive factor in permitting those who prided themselves upon being realistic to turn events so as to produce consequences dictated by their own private and class advantage. The failure of cooperative and collective intelligence and effort to intervene was an invitation to immediate short-term intervention by those who had an eye to their own profit. The consequences were wholesale destruction and waste of natural resources, increase of social instability, and mortgaging of the future to a transitory and brief present of so-called prosperity. If "idealists" were misguided in what they failed to do, "realists" were wrong in what they did. If the former erred in supposing that the drift (called by them progress or evolution) was inevitably toward the better, the latter were more actively harmful because their insistence upon trusting to natural laws was definitely in the interest of personal and class profit.

The omitted premise in the case of both groups is the fact that neither science nor technology is an impersonal cosmic force. They operate only in the medium of human desire, foresight, aim, and effort. Science and technology are transactions in which man and nature work together and in which the human factor is that directly open to modification and direction. That man takes part along with physical conditions in invention and use of the devices, implements, and machinery of industry and commerce, no one would think of denying.

But in practice, if not in so many words, it has been denied that man has any responsibility for the consequences that result from what he invents and employs. This denial is implicit in our widespread refusal to engage in large-scale collective planning. Not a day passes, even in the present crisis, when the whole idea of such planning is not ridiculed as an emanation from the brain of starry-eyed professors or of others equally inept in practical affairs. And all of this in the face of the fact that there is not a successful industrial organization that does not owe its success to persistent planning within a limited field—with an eye to profit—to say nothing of the terribly high price we have paid in the way of insecurity and war for putting our trust in drift.

Refusal to accept responsibility for looking ahead and for planning in matters national and international is based upon refusal to employ in social affairs, in the field of human relations, the methods of observation, interpretation, and test that are matters of course in dealing with physical

things, and to which we owe the conquest of physical nature. The net result is a state of imbalance, ~~profoundly disturbed equilibrium between our physical knowledge and our social-moral knowledge~~. This lack of harmony is a powerful factor in producing the present crisis with all its tragic features. For physical knowledge and physical technology have far outstripped social or humane knowledge and human engineering. Our failure to use in matters of direct human concern the scientific methods which have revolutionized physical knowledge has permitted the latter to dominate the social scene.

The change in the physical aspect of the world has gone on so rapidly that there is probably no ground for surprise in the fact that our psychological and moral knowledge has not kept pace. But there is cause for astonishment in the fact that, after the catastrophe of war, insecurity, and the threat to democratic institutions have shown the need for moral and intellectual attitudes and habits which will correspond with the changed state of the world, there should be a definite campaign to make the scientific attitude the scapegoat for present evils, while a return to the beliefs and practices of the prescientific and pretechnological age is urged as the road to our salvation.

The organized attack made from time to time against science and against technology as inherently materialistic and as usurping the place properly held by abstract moral precepts—abstract because divorcing ends from the means by which they must be realized—defines the issue we now have before us. Shall we go backwards or shall we go ahead to discover and put into practice the means by which science and technology shall be made fundamental in the promotion of human welfare? The failure to use scientific methods in creating understanding of human relationships and interests and in planning measures and policies that correspond in human affairs to the technologies in physical use is easily explained in historical terms. The new science began with things at the furthest remove from human affairs, namely with the stars of the heavens. From astronomy the new methods went on to win their victories in physics and chemistry. Still later science was applied in physiological and biological subject-matter. At every stage, the advance met determined resistance from the representatives of established institutions who felt their prestige was bound up with maintenance of old beliefs and found their class control of others being threatened. In consequence, many workers in science found that the easiest way in which to procure an opportunity to carry on their inquiries was to adopt an attitude of extreme specialization. The effect was equivalent to the position that their methods and conclusions were not and could not be “dangerous,” since they had no point of contact with many serious moral concerns. This position in turn served to perpetuate and confirm the older separation of man as man from the rest of nature and to intensify the split between the “material” and the moral and “ideal.”

Thus it has come about that when scientific inquiry began to move from its virtually complete victories in astronomy and physics and its partial victory in the field of living things over into the field of human affairs and concerns, the interests and institutions which offered resistance to its earlier advance are gathering themselves together for a final attack upon that aspect of science which in truth constitutes its supreme and culminating significance. On the principle that offense is the best defense, respect for science and loyalty to its outlook are attacked as the chief source of all our present social ills. One may read, for example, in current literature such a condescending concession as marks the following passage: “Of course, the scientific attitude, though often leading to such a catastrophe, is not to be condemned,” the immediate context showing that the particular “catastrophe” in mind consists of “errors leading to war ... derived from an incorrect theory of truth.” Since these errors are produced by belief in the applicability of scientific method to human as well as physical facts, the remedy, according to this writer, is to abandon “the erroneous application of the methods and results of natural science to the problems of human life.”

In three respects the passage is typical of such organized campaigns in active operation. There is first the assertion that such catastrophes as that of the recent war are the result of devotion

scientific method and conclusions. The denunciation of "natural" science as applied to human affairs carries, in the second place, the implication that man is outside of and above nature, and the consequent necessity of returning to the medieval prescientific doctrine of a supernatural foundation and outlook in all social and moral subjects. Then thirdly there is the assumption, directly contrary to fact, that the scientific method has at the present time been seriously and systematically applied to the problems of human life.

I dignify the passage quoted by this reference to it because it serves quite as well as a multitude of other passages from reactionaries to convey a sense of the present issues. It is true that the *results* of natural science have had a large share, for evil as well as for good, in bringing the world to its present pass. But it is equally true that "natural" science has been identified with *physical* science in a sense in which the physical is set over against the human. It is true that the interests and institutions which are now attacking science are just the forces which in behalf of a supernatural center of gravity are those that strive to maintain this tragic split in human affairs. Now the issue, as is becoming clearer every day, is whether we shall go backward or whether we shall go forward toward recognition in theory and practice of the indissoluble unity of the humanistic and the naturalistic.

What has all this to do with education? The answer to this question may be gathered from the fact that those who are engaged in assault upon science center their attacks upon the increased attention given by our schools to science and to its application in vocational training. In a world which is largely what it is today because of science and technology they propose that education should turn its back upon even the degree of recognition science and technology have received. They propose we turn our face to the medievalism in which so-called "liberal" arts were identified with literary arts: of course natural to adopt in an age innocent of knowledge of nature, an age in which the literary arts were the readiest means of rising above barbarism through acquaintance with the achievements of Greek-Roman culture. Their proposal is so remote from the facts of the present world, it involves such a bland ignoring of actualities, that there is a temptation to dismiss it as idle vamping. But it would be a tragic mistake to take the reactionary assaults so lightly. For they are an expression of just the forces that keep science penned up in a compartment labelled "materialistic and antihuman." They strengthen all the habits and institutions which render that which is morally "ideal" impotent in action and which leave the "material" to operate without humane direction.

Let me return for the moment to my initial statement that the basic error of social idealists was the assumption that something called "natural law" could be trusted, with only incidental cooperation by human beings, to bring about the desired ends. The lesson to be learned is that human attitudes and efforts are the strategic center for promotion of the generous aims of peace among nations; promotion of economic security; the use of political means in order to advance freedom and equality; and the worldwide cause of democratic institutions. Anyone who starts from this premise is bound to see that it carries with it the basic importance of education in creating the habits and the outlook that are abundant and eager to secure the ends of peace, democracy, and economic stability.

When this is seen, it will also be seen how little has actually been done in our schools to render science and technology active agencies in creating the attitudes and dispositions and in securing the kinds of knowledge that are capable of coping with the problems of men and women today. External changes a great modification has taken place in subjects taught and in methods of teaching them. But when these changes are critically examined it is found that they consist largely in emergency concessions and accommodation to the urgent conditions and issues of the contemporary world. The standards and the controlling methods in education are still mainly those of a prescientific and pretechnological age.

This statement will seem to many persons to be exaggerated. But consider the purposes which as a rule still govern instruction in just those subjects that are taken to be decisively "modern," namely science and vocational preparation. Science is taught upon the whole as a body of ready-made

information and technical skills. It is not taught as furnishing in its method the pattern for all effective intelligent conduct. It is taught upon the whole not with respect to the way in which it actually enters into human life, and hence as a supremely humanistic subject, but as if it had to do with a world which is "external" to human concerns. It is not presented in connection with the ways in which it actually enters into every aspect and phase of present human life. And it is hardly necessary to add that still less is it taught in connection with what scientific knowledge of human affairs might do in overcoming sheer drift. Scientific method and conclusions will not have gained a fundamental and important place in education until they are seen and treated as supreme agencies in giving direction to collective and cooperative human behavior.

The same sort of thing is to be said about the kind of use now made in education of practical and vocational subjects so called. The reactionary critics are busy urging that the latter subjects be taught to the masses—who are said to be incapable of rising to the plane of the "intellectual" but who do the useful work which somebody has to do, and who may be taught by vocational education to do it more effectively. This view is of course an open and avowed attempt to return to that dualistic separation of ideas and action, of the "intellectual" and the "practical," of the liberal and servile arts, that marked the feudal age. And this reactionary move in perpetuation of the split from which the world suffering is offered as a cure, a panacea, not as the social and moral quackery it actually is. As is the case with science, the thing supremely needful is to go forward. And the forward movement in the case of technology as in the case of science is to do away with the chasm which ancient and medieval educational practice and theory set up between the liberal and the vocational, not to treat the void, the hole, constituted by this chasm, as if it were a foundation for the creation of free society.

There is nothing whatever inherent in the occupations that are socially necessary and useful to divide them into those which are "learned" professions and those which are menial, servile, and illiberal. As far as such a separation exists in fact it is an inheritance from the earlier class structure of human relations. It is a denial of democracy. At the very time when an important, perhaps the most important, problem in education is to fill education having an occupational direction with a genuine liberal content, we have, believe it or not, a movement, such as is sponsored for example by President Hutchins, to cut vocational training off from any contact with what is liberating by relegating it to special schools devoted to inculcation of technical skills. Inspiring vocational education with a liberal spirit and filling it with a liberal content is not a utopian dream. It is a demonstrated possibility in schools here and there in which subjects usually labelled "practically useful" are taught charged with scientific understanding and with a sense of the social-moral applications they potentially possess.

If little is said in the foregoing remarks specifically upon the topic of democratic faith, it is because their bearing upon a democratic outlook largely appears upon their very face. Conditions in this country when the democratic philosophy of life and democratic institutions were taking shape were such as to encourage a belief that the latter were so natural to man, so appropriate to his very being that if they were once established they would tend to maintain themselves. I cannot rehearse here the list of events that have given this naive faith a shock. They are contained in every deliberate attack upon democracy and in every expression of cynicism about its past failures and pessimism about its future—attacks and expressions which have to be taken seriously if they are looked at as signs of a man trying to establish democracy as an end in separation from the concrete means upon which the end depends.

Democracy is not an easy road to take and follow. On the contrary, it is, as far as its realization is concerned in the complex conditions of the contemporary world, a supremely difficult one. Upon the whole we are entitled to take courage from the fact that it has worked as well as it has done. But to that courage we must add, if our courage is to be intelligent rather than blind, the fact that successful maintenance of democracy demands the utmost in use of the best available methods to procure

social knowledge that is reasonably commensurate with our physical knowledge, and the invention and use of forms of social engineering reasonably commensurate with our technological abilities in physical affairs.

This then is the task indicated. It is, if we employ large terms, to humanize science. This task in the concrete cannot be accomplished save as the fruit of science, which is named technology, is also humanized. And the task can be executed in the concrete only as it is broken up into vital applications of intelligence in a multitude of fields to a vast diversity of problems so that science and technology may be rendered servants of the democratic hope and faith. The cause is capable of inspiring loyalty of thought and deed. But there has to be joined to aspiration and effort the formation of free, wide-ranging, trained attitudes of observation and understanding such as incorporate within themselves, as a matter so habitual as to be unconscious, the vital principles of scientific method. In this achievement science, education, and the democratic cause meet as one. May we be equal to the occasion. For it is our human problem. If a solution is found it will be through the medium of human desire, human understanding, and human endeavor.

DEMOCRACY AND EDUCATION IN THE WORLD OF TODAY

It is obvious that the relation between democracy and education is a reciprocal one, a mutual one, and vitally so. Democracy is itself an educational principle, an educational measure and policy. There is nothing novel in saying that even an election campaign has a greater value in educating the citizens of the country who take any part in it than it has in its immediate external results. Our campaigns are certainly not always as educational as they might be, but by and large they certainly do serve the purpose of making the citizens of the country aware of what is going on in society, what the problems are and the various measures and policies that are proposed to deal with the issues of the day.

Mussolini remarked that democracy was passe, done with, because people are tired of liberty. There is a certain truth in that remark, not about the democracy being done with, at least we hope not, but about the fact that human beings do get tired of liberty, of political liberty and of the responsibilities, the duties, the burden that the acceptance of political liberty involves. There is an educational principle and policy in a deeper sense than that which I have just mentioned in that it proposes in effect, if not in words, to every member of society just that question: do you want to be a free human being standing on your own feet, accepting the responsibilities, the duties that go with that position as an effective member of society?

The meaning of democracy, especially of political democracy which, of course, is far from covering the whole scope of democracy, as over against every aristocratic form of social control and political authority, was expressed by Abraham Lincoln when he said that no man was good enough or wise enough to govern others without their consent; that is, without some expression on their part of their own needs, their own desires and their own conception of how social affairs should go on and social problems be handled.

A woman told me once that she asked a very well-known American statesman what he would do for the people of this country if he were God. He said, "Well, that is quite a question. I should look people over and decide what it was that they needed and then try and give it to them."

She said, "Well, you know, I expected that to be the answer that you would give. There are people that would ask other people what they wanted before they tried to give it to them."

That asking other people what they would like, what they need, what their ideas are, is an essential part of the democratic idea. We are so familiar with it as a matter of democratic political practice that perhaps we don't always think about it even when we exercise the privilege of giving an answer. This practice is an educational matter because it puts upon us as individual members of a democracy the responsibility of considering what it is that we as individuals want, what our needs and troubles are.

Dr. Felix Adler expressed very much the same idea. I am not quoting his words, but this was what he said, that "no matter how ignorant any person is there is one thing that he knows better than anybody else and that is where the shoes pinch on his own feet"; and because it is the individual that knows his own troubles, even if he is not literate or sophisticated in other respects, the idea of democracy as opposed to any conception of aristocracy is that every individual must be consulted in such a way, actively not passively, that he himself becomes a part of the process of authority, of the process of social control; that his needs and wants have a chance to be registered in a way where they count in determining social policy. Along with that goes, of course, the other feature which is necessary for the realization of democracy—mutual conference and mutual consultation and arriving

ultimately at social control by pooling, by putting together all of these individual expressions of ideas and wants.

The ballot box and majority rule are external and very largely mechanical symbols and expressions of this. They are expedients, the best devices that at a certain time have been found, but beneath them there are the two ideas: first, the opportunity, the right and the duty of every individual to form some conviction and to express some conviction regarding his own place in the social order, and the relations of that social order to his own welfare; second, the fact that each individual counts as one and one only on an equality with others, so that the final social will comes about as the cooperative expression of the ideas of many people. And I think it is perhaps only recently that we are realizing that that idea is the essence of all sound education.

Even in the classroom we are beginning to learn that learning which develops intelligence and character does not come about when only the textbook and the teacher have a say; that every individual becomes educated only as he has an opportunity to contribute something from his own experience, no matter how meager or slender that background of experience may be at a given time, and finally that enlightenment comes from the give and take, from the exchange of experiences and ideas.

The realization of that principle in the schoolroom, it seems to me, is an expression of the significance of democracy as the educational process without which individuals cannot come into the full possession of themselves nor make a contribution, if they have it in them to make, to the social well-being of others.

I said that democracy and education bear a reciprocal relation, for it is not merely that democracy itself is an educational principle, but that democracy cannot endure, much less develop, without education in that narrower sense in which we ordinarily think of it, the education that is given in the family, and especially as we think of it in the school. The school is the essential distributing agency for whatever values and purposes any social group cherishes. It is not the only means, but it is the first means, the primary means and the most deliberate means by which the values that any social group cherishes, the purposes that it wishes to realize, are distributed and brought home to the thought, the observation, judgment and choice of the individual.

What would a powerful dynamo in a big power-house amount to if there were no line of distribution leading into shops and factories to give power, leading into the home to give light? No matter what fine ideals or fine resources, the products of past experience, past human culture, exist somewhere at the center, they become significant only as they are carried out, or are distributed. That is true of any society, not simply of a democratic society; but what is true of a democratic society is, of course, that its special values and its special purposes and aims must receive such distribution that they become part of the mind and the will of the members of society. So that the school in a democracy is contributing, if it is true to itself as an educational agency, to the democratic idea of making knowledge and understanding, in short the power of action, a part of the intrinsic intelligence and character of the individual.

I think we have one thing to learn from the anti-democratic states of Europe, and that is that we should take as seriously the preparation of the members of our society for the duties and responsibilities of democracy, as they take seriously the formation of the thoughts and minds and characters of their population for their aims and ideals.

This does not mean that we should imitate their universal propaganda, that we should prostitute the schools, the radio and the press to the inculcation of one single point of view and the suppression of everything else; it means that we should take seriously, energetically and vigorously the use of democratic schools and democratic methods in the schools; that we should educate the young and the youth of the country in freedom for participation in a free society. It may be that with the advantage of

great distance from these troubled scenes in Europe we may have learned something from the terrible tragedies that have occurred there, so as to take the idea of democracy more seriously, asking ourselves what it means, and taking steps to make our schools more completely the agents for the preparation of free individuals for intelligent participation in a free society.

I don't need to tell these readers that our free public school system was founded, promoted, justified about 100 years ago, because of the realization of men like Horace Mann and Henry Barnard that the citizens need to participate in what they called a republican form of government; that they need enlightenment which could come about only through a system of free education.

If you have read the writings of men of those times, you know how few schools existed, how poor they were, how short their terms were, how poorly most of the teachers were prepared, and, judging from what Horace Mann said, how general was the indifference of the average well-to-do citizen to the education of anybody except his own children.

You may recall the terrible indictment that he drew of the well-to-do classes because of their indifference to the education of the masses, and the vigor with which he pointed out that they were pursuing a dangerous course; that, no matter how much they educated their own children, if they left the masses ignorant they would be corrupted and that they themselves and their children would be the sufferers in the end. As he said, "We did not mean to exchange a single tyrant across the sea for a hydra-headed tyrant here at home"; yet that is what we will get unless we educate our citizens.

I refer to him particularly because to such a very large extent the ideas, the ideals which Horace Mann and the others held have been so largely realized. I think even Horace Mann could hardly have anticipated a finer, more magnificent school plan, school building and school equipment than we have in some parts of our country. On the side of the mechanical and the external, the things that these educational statesmen 100 years ago strove for have been to a considerable extent realized. I should have to qualify that. We know how poor many of the rural schools are, especially in backward states of the country, how poorly they are equipped, how short their school years are; but, in a certain sense, taking what has been done at the best, the immediate ideals of Horace Mann and the others have been realized. Yet the problem we have today of the relation of education and democracy is as acute and as serious a problem as the problem of providing school buildings, school equipment, school teachers and school monies was a hundred years ago.

If, as we all know, democracy is in a more or less precarious position throughout the world, and here even in our own country enemies of growing strength, we cannot take it for granted as something that is sure to endure. If this is the actual case, one reason for it is that we have been so complacent about the idea of democracy that we have more or less unconsciously assumed that the work of establishing a democracy was completed by the founding fathers or when the Civil War abolished slavery. We tend to think of it as something that has been established and that it remains for us simply to enjoy.

We have had, without formulating it, a conception of democracy as something static, as something that is like an inheritance that can be bequeathed, a kind of lump sum that we could live off and upon. The crisis that we have undergone will turn out, I think, to be worthwhile if we have learned through it that every generation has to accomplish democracy over again for itself; that its very nature, in its essence, is something that cannot be handed on from one person or one generation to another, but has to be worked out in terms of needs, problems and conditions of the social life of which, as the years go by, we are a part, a social life that is changing with extreme rapidity from year to year.

I find myself resentful and really feeling sad when, in relation to present social, economic and political problems, people point simply backward as if somewhere in the past there were a model for what we should do today. I hope I yield to none in appreciation of the great American tradition, for that tradition is something that is capable of being transmitted as an emotion and as an idea from one generation to generation. We have a great and precious heritage from the past, but to be realized, to be

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