

The Vanguard American

"Every man gives his life for what he believes."— Maxwell Andersen: "Joan of Lorraine."

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Skin Deep

OBSERVATIONS MADE ON A TRIP SOUTH.

By NANNA GOODHOPE.

While waiting for a bus at Kansas City recently, my attention was arrested by a young couple with a small child. The reason for my interest in this particular couple was that the mother and her young son were extremely fair skinned, with blue eyes and blonde hair, and the man with them was so dark skinned that I at first took him to be a Negro. But I soon discovered that his fine-cut features were rather of the Spanish type. He was a handsome and charming chap, with congenial manners. As we later traveled on together, the young couple told me their story.

They were on their way to Central America, where Tony's father owned a ranch. There they planned to make their future home; and June, the young wife, was going to renounce her birthright as an American citizen to become a citizen of Mexico. Her people and her friends had driven her to it, she said, because they had refused to accept Tony as one of them.

June had first been married to a young man of Scandinavian ancestry. He was the father of Bobby, whom he had never seen, for the father was killed on a battlefield in France before his son was born. June had struggled on alone with her young son until she met Tony, who had also been with the American forces overseas, and had for meritorious service been awarded several medals.

June and Tony fell in love. Tony also fell in love with Bobby, who in return showed great affection for Tony. Bobby loved to cling close to Tony and rub his face against the soft oily skin of Tony's face, and to look into the smiling pools of his dark liquid eyes. This to Bobby was pure delight and satisfaction; for Bobby had not yet become contaminated by the discriminatory race prejudices held by his elders of kin.

Because Tony had convinced June that race prejudice was practically unknown among his people, she had chosen the course she was now taking.

It came as a surprise to me that the further south I

traveled the fewer colored people I saw. I did not at first realize that this was due to the segregation of the races in the deep South.

One day toward evening I entered a bus on which I was to remain throughout the night. The bus was not crowded and I was about to take a seat, when it occurred to me that the wide seat across the back of the car if not occupied, would, with the aid of a pillow I had just procured, make a good bed for at least part of the night. The seat was vacant and I proceeded to make myself comfortable.

I had remained there for an hour or so when the bus stopped and two men entered. I could see that they were Negroes, and well dressed.

They made their way down the aisle together with firm, even strides and did not stop until they reached the back of the bus. When they saw me lying outstretched on the back seat, they eyed each other for a moment, then each grabbed a strap, and they remained standing there facing each other without saying a word.

Their strange action at first surprised me. Why didn't they sit down when there were plenty of vacant seats around them? They looked like educated men, I thought. In fact, I took them to be professional men.

Of a sudden, the reason for their seemingly strange action occurred to me. I arose quickly, gathered up my few belongings, and, facing the two men I said, in a voice which must have revealed reluctance and regret, "Excuse me, gentlemen, for not remembering that I'm in the South."

The two men bowed politely, and in a voice which seemed filled with sincerity they answered: "Thank you, lady, very much."

While sojourning near the Old Mexican border in a small, New Mexican city, I was befriended by one whom I regarded as a cultured woman. I liked this Southern lady,

especially, I think, because she seemed to be very kind to her servants, whom she treated with much consideration. She always spoke of them to me with praises.

When I remarked about it one day, she seemed pleased. And she told me that she LOVED the colored folks, especially the Negroes. This, she said, was probably because she had always lived with them. She then told me that her grandfather, whom she remembered well, had been the owner of a large plantation in Louisiana; that up till the time of the Civil War he had been a slave holder. And, when as a result of the war the slaves were offered their freedom, all but a few of her grandfather's slaves remained with him; because, she said, they loved and trusted him like a father.

The Mexican people she also liked, she told me; for the few she had in her employ had proved themselves faithful and trustworthy.

On the Sunday following the preceding conversation, my friend invited me to attend church with her. I accepted her invitation gladly, for I had already heard fine reports on the young pastor who served the church. Like myself he was a pacifist, and he furthermore took much interest in the social welfare of the community.

As I looked around in that lovely, well-filled auditorium, I was surprised and disappointed not to find a single colored person, Negro or Mexican, in the church; especially as I knew that those groups comprised the majority of population in that area.

On our way home I voiced my disappointment to my friend, who turned to me with a look of surprise and disgust. "But don't you know," she said, "that my church is for white people; that the Negroes and Mexicans have their own churches?"

"I think it is well and right that they have their own churches," I replied, "but do you mean to tell me that no colored person can under any circumstances become a member of your church?"

"Certainly," she replied, with a tinge of acrimony in her otherwise pleasant voice; "why I'd rather be dead than see Negroes admitted into membership in my church."—By then her face was flushed a deep red.

Convinced that further discussion on the topic would be futile, I quickly turned the trend of conversation by commenting on the fine sermon the pastor had delivered that morning.—Strangely enough it was an explication on Gal. 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

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TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

We wish to thank the readers, who have responded to our request for renewal of subscriptions. There is still a number who have given no indication of their desire to remain on our mailing list, and we are hesitant about entering without a welcome. If you want us in will you let us know?

Disregard this if no notice of expiration is enclosed.

The Editors.

Comfort and Crisis

HOLGER J. KOCH.

The first desire of the new-born baby is to have its physical needs satisfied. It must be kept warm, well-fed and comfortable. Even mother-love is to the new-born a physical thing reaching it through its sensory nerves by the caressing touch on its skin. This is natural and necessary because the infant has no other means of contact with its environment. But isn't it remarkable how we cling to these early channels for absorbing pleasure? Isn't it so that we depend on our physical senses to bring us these moments of delight even through adulthood and old age? A high "standard of living" largely means a high degree of sense-satisfaction: ample food, clothing, shelter, good health, enjoyable exercise, entertainment,—every one absorbed through the senses. The difference between the comfortable adult and the baby gurgling and kicking in its crib is a difference in size only.

There is nothing evil in being comfortable; but if we limit ourselves to that area of physical sense-satisfaction, we are missing large chunks of living; in fact we miss the essence of human existence. Many people have had the experience of possessing the means for satisfying all their bodily wants and still being thoroughly unhappy. The only reason we have not all had that experience is that we have never had that much money. With a proper distribution of wealth we could all be bored to death. Or be thoroughly miserable because we could buy no pleasure not available to every one else! I wouldn't say that no one could be rich and happy—or at least contented—at the same time; but we must face the fact, that all contentment based on comforts and pleasures available to any one having the price, rests on the flimsiest of foundations; and, if not lost through misfortune, eventually turns to ashes with the dulling of the senses from old age.

While virtually all strive for the means with which to buy comfort and pleasure, few would deny that the deeply satisfying and enduring experiences of their lives have come to them through channels other than those opened with a golden key. In human relationships it is the unselfish devotion, the genuine kindness, generosity and friendship, the shared ideas, ideals, hopes and dreams, the shared defeats and victories; the beauties of melody, color and form, perceived spiritually; the inspiring majesty of poetic and prophetic vision and truth. Individually, the personal identification with great poetic purposes erasing the trivialities of a grubbing and plodding existence; the exercise of creative powers, the momentary taste of ultimate triumph. Of such stuff is the spirit of man. Thus he was meant to live.

THE MAGIC WAND.

Fairy tales seem unreal in our matter-of-fact world and our humdrum, prosaic lives. They are real enough, though; they only happen in a different sphere than the one in which we insist on slaving out the days of our lives. Take the Magic Wand, for instance; it is, of course, entirely

symbolic. In the fairy-tale it is used to create THINGS desperately needed at the moment for the happiness of the particular Cinderella. Taken literally this would do little good, because real happiness is never bound up with things. But let us say that it creates the MATERIAL of happiness—the stuff it's made of—which is clearly the idea. Few people are so poverty-stricken that they have not at one time or another been the beneficiaries of the magic of, say, human kindness. The term may be expanded to cover the whole range from a friendly smile to self-sacrificial suffering and death. If we could know and gauge the volume of happiness that has been created in human lives through the ages by souls, little and great, who in a moment of self-forgetfulness handed a stranger a glass of water or died that he might live, we should probably change our current low opinion of human nature.

I remember one little story: when Eugene Debbs was released from Atlanta Penitentiary, he was accompanied to the prison gates by an old Negro "lifer". As Debbs walked down the road, the old man, tears streaming down his face, whispered, "He's the only Jesus Christ I've ever known!" Or what made these people famous and beloved if not that same magic wand: St. Francis, Abraham Lincoln, Florence Nightingale, Mathilde Wrede? And millions, known and unknown.

We slave and scheme to contrive a little happiness—or forgetfulness—out of a handful of tarnished metal, but the wand in our hand we will not raise to CREATE it for others and ourselves without the cost of a penny.—Or will we? I heard one boy,—just out of the fox-holes—exclaim: "I would give the whole United States to end these wars!"

SOMETIME

in the future life is going to be different. We are going to stop this hopeless struggle to raise our incomes to the level of our wants. Such wants as our incomes can take care of will be few; for that reason we will have no trouble dividing the available goods, and all our problems of distribution will disappear. That will help some. The race will then enter upon a creative existence, supplying an abundance of the things we have enjoyed in such meager amounts until now: rich fare for the soul, food for our starved and flagging spirits; growing personalities as we now grow torsos. The poets, the prophets and the artists are going to be as common as are now the lawyers, the physicians and the grocery-men. There is nothing fantastic about the thought—it's what we want to do and it's what we want done, and who can stop us? All our talk of freedom, justice, righteousness and happiness belong only in that world, and sooner or later we are going to move into it. If we could only loosen our convulsive grip on the world of THINGS and stand alone, upright, the battle would be half won. Don't we recognize ourselves in the man who, in the dark of night, clung desperately to the branch of a tree, suspended over an abyss—supposedly. When daylight came, he found that the solid earth had been only six inches beneath his feet all the time.

TEMPERATURES AND TENSIONS.

For hundreds of centuries the ancient and honorable guild of pottery-makers have been watching the fire in

their kilns through the long, silent star-lit nights. We have no record that these fire-gazers from primitive man, who squatted before his little earthen oven, to us, his latter-day descendants, who fire the modern architectural clay-ware, have had a marked influence on the thinking of the period in which they lived. I suspect that the mental processes of the men who transformed the race's vessels and brick from dull, brown clay into colorful, vibrant objects of art and usefulness, have been of the quiescent or sluggish type, or we could have traced a definite rise of analytical, penetrating insight to those glowing light-caverns in the night where the potter kept his lonely vigil.

For a meditator he has been, this solitary figure, who watched while all the world was asleep and the star-legions in close ranks marched and marched across the sky—(did he, perhaps, first whisper the words: "fra Evighed til Evighed—world without end!")—maybe not even that; but he learned them! For in the endless hours when time moved silently, noiselessly as a gentle breath of air, as sand in the hour-glass, not chopped off jerkily in uniform bits as through the day, when the seething fire drew and held his gaze, his sight must have turned inward upon the soul of the world which had left its sleeping body and watched in him.

He was not a mere watcher, this man; his task was to produce heat. SUFFICIENT heat. The transformation within the glowing walls of the kiln took place at a certain temperature. Anything less than enough spelled failure and tragedy. So his eye gauged the heat of his fires from red to orange to white. He felt the heat in his very bones; not as the uninitiated spectators who basked in the glow and warmth: to him it was a struggle, a tension in his soul that rose with the color of the flame. His spirit was in that inferno with the ware, reaching, reaching for that moment when he knew with a great calm that the stuff inside never again would be dead, dull mud, but forever bell-toned vibrant pieces.

Life is like that. Only an adequate intensity of feeling opens the eye to its great poetic purposes, unseen when the eye is adjusted to dull, trivial things. To list the names of the men and women who through terrific spiritual tension and struggle scaled the heights of human existence and beheld and described "the shape of things to come" would be to call the roster of all the race's poets, prophets, seers and visionaries from the beginning of time. Only in times of great stress, national or individual are new, greater horizons perceived; and though few attain the status of prophets and seers, the truth is applicable to the least of us, that spiritual vision and activity is in direct proportion to the tension of crisis and conflict permitted to arise in our lives. For that reason Kirkegaard devoted his life to "agitation toward ardor." Life devoid of ardor becomes of necessity superficial, flat and meaningless.

I hold no brief for poverty. I have never sought it, though thousands of my superiors have—for the good of their souls. But I am not unmindful of the fact that its struggles and crises have been instrumental in creating the tensions in the lives of men and women who became artists and thinkers and reformers. Is it entirely a coinci-

dence that we who live in "the bread-basket of the world", well-fed and comfortable, can't write a line of profound poetry, but are obliged, for instance, to turn to such as lived in slavery and squalor for "spirituals" of intense, if not very articulate, feeling? I fear the more we seek to eliminate tensions and uncertainties from our lives by hedging about our entire existence with social and economic security measures, the more we shall be obliged to fall back upon prize fights, competitive sport orgies, gambling and even card playing, to create a phony substitute for an essential and necessary condition for high spiritual living.

Even the primitive firer of pottery knew, that unless he contrive the proper temperature, mud is still mud.

NO AMOUNT OF LITTLE THINGS

add up to great things. A thousand Genoan fishermen paddling around in the Ligurian Sea would not have discovered America in a million years. In his mind's eye Columbus visualized the coast of Cathay—due West—and he set his course by it. To the fishermen such thinking was not realistic; to Columbus, nothing else was. The human race always stands on the shore of some ocean trying to visualize what lies beyond. It persists in projecting its hopes into the unknown and then steers its course by them. That's how we came to be where we are.

A great many people—Americans and otherwise—sneer at the idea of an American Dream: the belief that some day the American people will rise, not in righteous wrath, just in plain righteousness, and lead the peoples of the world into paths of peace and freedom. Millions of Americans believe nothing of the sort, and can prove (by their own narrow-minded selfishness?) that such a thing can never come to pass. But a hundred million Americans can be just as wrong as a thousand Italian fishermen. American men and women have set their compass by that star, and you can bet that some day the ship will scrape its bottom on that distant shore!

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Play

By ELAINE TRUKKEN.

Play and Recreation are defined as a time for relaxation and a way of amusing one's self. Both are large fields. Therefore, I shall center myself on the angle of Play as I feel it more important, though it seems to be the least considered.

The need for play has become of great importance in our present day. This may be due to our having experienced another World War, as it was during World War I that Play became publicly popular. Supervised Play and recreation were first introduced in our large cities but have of late moved into our urban and rural communities also. Some credit must be given to the machine industry as it is due to this that we have more time for relaxation and play activities.

Attitudes toward play and recreation have changed considerably the last twenty-five years, due to the fact that people have discovered that play is valuable, as well as necessary to good health. Indirectly our standard of living

has been improved, as many now allow for leisure time activities in their family budget. Too, churches and schools have expanded their activities so as to allow for recreational programs for all age groups; likewise the YMCA, YWCA, and other social organizations.

As in all other fields leisure time brings with it good and bad things which is noticeable when observing the youth of today. A point for the good side is that it may result in social and intellectual development which will certainly help to solve a few of our many pressing problems of today. On the other hand leisure-time gives opportunity for brooding over the numerous problems of our post-war age which in turn may lead to a so-called social revolt. However, with careful planning on the part of Play leaders the good points will surely outnumber the less favorable ones.

My concern with Play is chiefly in connection with the adolescent and school-age group. Perhaps this is because of my having worked with both of these groups. Regardless of reason, I do feel that the responsibility for profitable leisure-time activities falls on the community as well as on the home, school and church.

One incident which prompted my interest in this field, and also gave me a great deal of encouragement, is an experience told by Professor Neva Boyd of Northwestern in 1936. I cite it briefly here.

In 1920 the principal of a public grade-school employed a Play Leader in preference to a Physical Education teacher for the purpose of creating better social relations among the children. The first grade of this particular school had a little boy who had been unable to complete his first grade work in two years. Upon suggestion of the Play teacher this little fellow was permitted to join the other first grade children in a twenty minute play period. He labored under two handicaps: poor muscular development and coordination as well as mental retardation. His reaction indicated utter frustration. After three months he began to "wake up" and actually take the initiative in the games and in turn showed interest in classroom activities. Before the end of the school year he was playing intelligently and running as fast as other first grade children, though he still showed signs of poor coordination. By the end of a three year period it was evident that he had overcome his physical and mental handicaps as he was doing better than average academic grade work for children of his chronological age.

Other types of persons, who have been helped by leisure time play activities, vary in number as well as cases. There is the case at the Lincoln Illinois State School and Colony where seventy boys, who sat hour after hour in idleness, are now able to play basketball well enough to play in competition with teams from local high schools. Likewise, the case of girls whose intelligence quotients ranged from 40 to 49, but mastered dance steps which are taught to high school girls of normal mentality. The work at the Lincoln School proves that the Play program for the mentally deficient differs only slightly from that of normal children except that it takes more patience and time. Though they will, of course, have to play games which have a less intellectual content yet, their ability is efficient enough when playing games of or within their mental range.

Games are chiefly group play-behavior patterns, and therefore serve a unique purpose with respect to a child's social development as well as under some circumstances

physical. Games or play activities may be classified as to types by various factors. For example: those which deal with bodily skills, social organization, cooperative interaction, team play, and intellectual content. A classification as this reveals the fact that a complex game may embody a great many factors which coincide with the abilities of the players. Thus it is that the potential capacity and individual equipment determines how much the players put into and profit by the game.

When the fundamentals of a game or play are kept stable, even though the ability of the players is variable, all are disciplined by being held to a pattern of behavior which makes up the rules and regulations of the various games. This discipline (due to the rules) contributes to the stabilization of the nervous system as well as to the social adjustment of the players.

Dancing can certainly be accredited with contributing to the physiological, psychological as well as social effects with respect to behavior patterns. They are a very popular leisure-time activity. The folk-dance is perhaps the most closely related to the games as it shows the spirit and characteristics of the various peoples. The folk-dance really originated as games in the various countries and were later adopted as dances.

In using these play-behavior patterns via the dance and games in the free style which characterizes most folk-dances and games we unconsciously bring forth organized and orderly group behavior which in turn stimulates the functions of the player in regard to group behavior and relations. This reacts inevitably on the person's nervous system and also gives order and unity to group behavior. Therefore, it is up to the Play leader to plan a program which will coordinate with the growth and development of the play; also to raise the behavior patterns to higher levels—this can be accomplished via the dance and game.

What is really the psychological condition which makes games and dances PLAY instead of dull routine or bore-some activities? Many learned men and women have been in a state of wonderment in this regard. One answer which has been suggested is that a Play situation is an artificial one which is temporarily set up, and a game is that type of play situation which is determined by rules and roles. Figuratively, rather than literally speaking, the act of playing is psychologically picking oneself up from a real situation and setting one's self down in the artificial one and acting according to the situation. That is complying with the rules and regulations of the game as well as cooperating with the group playing the game. As soon as the game is finished the entire structure (psychological) becomes dissolved. This is similar to a dramatic cast on the stage; the audience forgets itself entirely while watching the play and as long as the actor plays the part. When the curtain falls on the final act the cast as well as audience are themselves.

Competition plays an important role in games as well as in life itself. Too often competition creates hatred, jealousy and envy. Rather it should be taken as a challenge for greater achievements in cooperation with and in groups. Competition should not have as its main goal a reward for one winner; to win should make the player feel that he has reached a goal not just trying to outdo someone else.

Another phase of play or leisure-time activities which doesn't create as much competition as some games is that of working with arts and crafts. The difficulty with regard to arts and crafts is that the majority of play leaders are not able to instruct crafts which consequently brings forth extra expense insofar that a skilled craftsman must be secured. Therefore, I feel anyone working with youth groups should try to be "jack of all trades." Then if one thing is unsuccessful perhaps another will be successful as in the case of the little first grade fellow.

Play can be introduced at any time and bring good results. For instance in an arithmetic class it has from experience been very helpful. This perhaps is due to the group as a whole having become relaxed and forgetting their immediate trouble thus being able to concentrate more easily. One recent incident which has again proven the success of play is that of Karen, a 12 year old girl who has physically been retarded in school. She became very listless one afternoon when working with arithmetic; unconsciously I suggested we play a game with arithmetic—giving combinations as 2 plus 5 multiply 4 subtract 3. After I had given her several she volunteered to give me a "hard" one—100 plus 100 and 200 subtract 100. Much to my delight Karen was "wide awake" for the remainder of the period. This gave me a desire to find more "accidental" ways of giving her enthusiasm, for when a child shows some interest even once in a great while there is a possibility of her becoming enthused in more things.

The problem which confronts many of our recreation and play leaders as well as hosts and hostesses at social events is the question of having to have organized entertainment at all times. Is it impossible to get together for an unorganized leisure time? To illustrate my problem I'll use the case of one hostess. Mrs. Q. has invited a group of friends in for a social evening. She is puzzled as to how to entertain them—should she plan games, other than bridge or pitch, for the entire evening or take the chance of one of her guests being the "life of the party"? Frankly speaking, if her guests are at ease as everyone should be when going to a party Mrs. Q. need not worry about her guests having to be entertained for a friendly chat should prove to be enlightening and not "dull" as too many seem to feel it is. Too often a get-together proves to be boring and stiff if every minute is taken up with games, contests and the like.

Definitely speaking, I feel that more emphasis will be given to play and leisure time activities in our post-war world than at any other time in the history of our country. Already it is being practiced in therapy hospitals in order to give the men back from the fighting fronts strength and courage to overcome their many troubles, mental as well as physical. It is for this reason that I feel more than ever that everyone, teachers, youth leaders, parents and religious workers also should be conscious of the need for Play as there are opportunities everywhere for using it to good advantage. My motto seemingly is "jack of all trades—master of none." I still feel it advantageous in many fields.

In closing I feel that we cannot stress sufficiently the importance of leisure-time activities and play. There is no limit to the extent to which this can and should be carried out—classrooms, homes, churches, hospitals, and so on down the line. My only hope and wish is "more power to parents and community leaders in this field."

A Word About the Folk School

Dear Holger:

I share your concern for the American community as well as your faith in the future of an American folk school. I read with more than passing interest your challenging article, "Into the Future"; and may I say a word about it?

The folk school, by definition, has never been and can never become a dormant, stereotyped institution with an immutable pattern. It will always by its very nature and character be molded by its leader, or leaders, and by the community in which it is rooted. A pattern will, and should, emerge, but it will be living, vital, and flexible. It will always meet, and be modified by, the ever-changing needs and problems of the community.

Consequently, I am a bit afraid of, and rather surprised by, the dogmatism expressed in your sentence, "in my opinion the school must be completely disassociated from the struggle for economic security", and the whole tenor of your subsequent argument. This may be your vision of the future folk school, and I have no intention of interfering with its successful consummation, but it isn't mine. I question that the future American folk school necessarily must follow the pattern you have outlined.

Let us look at the folk school in America as it is today; for it seems to me urgent that we cease theorizing about the future folk school and recognize that an American folk school is not merely a vague dream to be realized in the distant future, but that the folk school idea already is deeply rooted in American soil.

I need not say very much about the Danish-American attempts to build folk schools. You are as familiar with them as I am. Others may not agree with me, and on the surface there is very little to show, but I refuse to concede that the folk school idea is dead at Danebod, or at Nysted. There were times when these schools functioned as American folk schools—even when, years ago, the language was exclusively Danish!

Circle Pines Center at Cloverdale, Michigan, has operated since 1937. It is different in many ways from the old Ashland School, built in 1882, but it represents one man's, or one group's, vision of what Ashland, only 75 miles away, could have been had it left dead patterns behind and ventured into the larger American community and its needs.

Butterworth Farm School, a project sponsored by the Friends, does not call itself a folk school, but it does train young farmers in rural living, with many varied aspects. May that not be one way in which the folk school in America will express itself?

The Highlander Folk School at Monteagle, Tennessee, was built by a man who would certainly question your theory and the sentence I have quoted.

And the history of Mrs. Campbell's school at Brasstown, N. C., is so well known to readers of this paper that little comment is necessary. Mrs. Campbell did not theorize or philosophize. She saw a need and tried to meet that need. You may not recognize her school as a legitimate folk school. I most emphatically do.

It is true that "even with the obvious raising of the standard of living in this country, we have witnessed no corresponding elevation of moral and spiritual levels."

Everyone knows that; but since when has poverty been conducive to the elevation of moral and spiritual living?

I am realistic, as well as idealistic enough (for the terms are not necessarily antonyms) to know that poverty seldom, if ever, ennobles man. It is much more apt to develop bitterness, antagonism, and selfishness. I grant you that the wealthy are in need of spiritual security as much as the poor. But—that's just my point: an adequate folk school program may teach the materialistically "over-privileged" new and true norms and values, and the same vital forces may guide the "under-privileged" to reach economic levels that might make it possible for them to partake of and enjoy spiritual values.

To me, it is as paradoxical that a folk school should touch only on material and economic values, as for that same school to negate or ignore those values. The folk school, as I see it, deals with man; not exclusively the body of man and his environment, nor only the soul and spirit of man, but all of him!—his body and soul, his environment, his background, his present status as well as his future, his community and his country, his neighbor, his world, and his God.

The folk school is not a monastery or retreat. Its pupils and its teachers are neither angels nor ascetics. They are earth-born men and woman.

Hence I am afraid of a dogmatic postulate which declares that the folk school has no interest in poverty, or in wealth. If I were to build a folk school among wealthy people (and God knows that they need it) I should not ignore the problem of wealth. Nor should I close my eyes if I worked among the poor to their immediate plight. It was said once to the founders of the Christian church that they were to be in the world, but not of it. The same may be said of the folk school. It is not to be of the world—in its standards of values and norms; but neither is it to be isolated from it.

Your talk of "an area of spiritual security" is neither idealistic nor realistic. To me, at least, it seems escapist.

I cannot imagine a folk school which is blind to the needs of man, whatever those needs may be. For the primary purpose of the school, as I see it, is to meet those needs. In a rural community it may be imperative for the school to teach wealthy farmers to curb selfish greed and learn co-operative living; or it may be important to teach poor peasants better methods of farming. Both classes, in America, need to learn something about the sacredness of the soil.

ENOK MORTENSEN.

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We invite readers' comments on any question discussed in THE VANGUARD AMERICAN. We only ask that you discuss the subject and not the writer.

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"There is nowhere in the land any home so remote, so humble that it may not contain the power of mind and heart and conscience to which history submits its process."
—Woodrow Wilson.

* * * * *

"What is man born for but to be a reformer, a Remaker of what man has made, a renouncer of lies; a restorer of truth and good."—Emerson.

Lilienthal on Democracy

"My convictions are not so much concerned with what I am against as what I am for; and that excludes a lot of things automatically. Traditionally democracy has been an affirmative doctrine rather than merely a negative one.

"I believe—and I so conceive the Constitution of the United States to rest upon, as does religion—the fundamental proposition of the integrity of the individual; and that government and all private institutions must be designed to promote and protect the integrity and the dignity of the individual; that that is the essential meaning of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, as it is essentially the meaning of religion.

"Any form of government, therefore, and any other institutions, which make men means rather than ends, which exalts the state or any other institution above the importance of men, which places arbitrary power over men as a fundamental tenet of government, or any other institutions, are contrary to that conception, and therefore I am deeply opposed to them.

"The communistic philosophy, as well as the communistic form of government, fall within this category; for their fundamental tenet is quite to the contrary.

"The fundamental tenet of communism is that the state is an end in itself, and that therefore the powers which the state exercises over the individual are without any ethical standards to limit them. That I deeply disbelieve.

"It is very easy to talk about being against communism. It is equally important to believe those things which provide a satisfying and effective alternative. **DEMOCRACY IS THAT SATISFYING, AFFIRMATIVE ALTERNATIVE.**

"Its hope in the world is that it is an affirmative belief, rather than being simply against something else and nothing more. One of the tenets of democracy that grows out of this eternal core of a belief that the individual comes first, that all men are the children of God, and their personalities are therefore sacred, carries with it a great belief in civil liberties and their protection, and a repugnance to anyone who would steal from a human being that which is most precious to him, his good name; either by impugning things to him by innuendo, or insinuation.

"I deeply believe in the capacity of democracy to surmount any trials that may lie ahead, provided we practice it in our daily lives.

"And among the things we must practice is, that while we seek to ferret out the subversive and anti-democratic forces in the country, we do not at the same time, by hysteria, besmirch the very cause that we believe in, and cause a separation of our people; cause one group and one individual to hate another, based upon mere attacks, merely unsubstantiated attacks upon loyalty.

"And whether by administrative agencies acting arbitrarily against business organizations, or whether by investigating activities by the legislative branches—when ever these principles of the protection of an individual and his good name against besmirchment by gossip, hearsay and the statements of witnesses who are not subject to cross-examination, then, too, we have failed in carrying forward our ideals in respect to democracy.

"That I deeply believe."

The Community Drama In Adult Education

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Community drama, of all the arts, is probably the most appropriate to a program concerned with the enrichment of small community life. It is essentially an education in community response, and in these days of decaying, rural folk ways, disintegrating communities and declining family life, a program of education in community response is critically important. Drama of this sort need not be formal, certainly not professional, but always it must be expressive. It is a response to community experience. Both in its action and its subject-matter it may become important as the dramatic (or active) unity of community life as well as the community's articulate symbol. It reaches both adults and young people. Either as players or audience-participants they enter into that organic unity of human co-operation possible only in the small, face to face community.

In the work of The Montana Study this folk drama has become an important instrument in the effort to find ways to improve the quality of living and to establish rural community life as an enduring and valued focus of American culture. This three-year project, financed initially by the humanities division of one of the great foundations, and sponsored by the university system of Montana, is concerned primarily with the study of the critical decline in rural and small community life and values under the pressure of advancing urban customs. It is concerned, furthermore, with the ways, if any, in which true community life in Montana and America can be stabilized and enriched. A program of research, field work and publication has been carried on, of which the experimental field work in small communities in the state seems by far the most important. From these small communities has come a magnificent response. In study groups, in co-operative work with other agencies such as the U. S. Forest Service, in various artistic and educational activities of community interest, it has become clear repeatedly that the small community is our greatest and most neglected educational and artistic resource. In all this work the community drama, or some similarly active and co-operative art, has proved itself of outstanding value.

To be specific: what is community drama? how may it be made and developed? what are the methods and results? A description of the drama project at Darby, Montana, the first experiment of the sort by The Montana Study, will answer provisionally some of these questions.

Darby is a little mountain town of about five hundred people in the forest region, now largely cut-over, of the upper Bitterroot valley. It has a good high school, a forest ranger station, a one-street business district, several drinking places, an intermittent movie house, an auto camp, and the usual scatter of grocery stores, drug stores and dingy eating places that serve the American small community. The church-going part of the town, as in many Montana

communities, is not vigorous. Small farmers, lumberjacks, a few large ranchers, a few in-service trades, and the general hit-and-miss of American life support the town. It is far from wealthy. The people in general are generous minded, responsive and, if given even a little encouragement, co-operate vigorously in community projects. They have built a handsome log community house which is much used. If approached with the respect and good nature that most Americans deserve, the people's response is vigorous, hopeful and constructive.

At the request of the Darby planning council a ten week study group was organized by the staff of The Montana Study and carried through during the spring and summer of 1945. This study group, like others organized by The Montana Study, is a project in community self-analysis. It followed a carefully adapted program of social, economic, and generally cultural studies designed to probe the specific problems and interests of Darby on a background of regional and state-wide conditions. It led to several programs of action in the community. Even more important, it led to a far better understanding of the essential Darby community by all who took part. This study group work was considered essential and prerequisite to any later work in community projects in the arts and expression. It was, furthermore, carefully representative of the entire community, not of some special group or interest, and this led easily to an all-community participation in the drama project.

The drama itself was named "Darby Looks at Itself" and was written, produced and played by Darby people themselves. Bert B. Hansen, Professor of English at Montana State College at Bozeman and now doing full-time work with The Montana Study, was a moving spirit and consultant. Although his assistance was invaluable, he was in no sense the writer or producer of the play. The method used in this folk drama, it should be noted, was very different from the usual school or club play working over a purchased, professional script—often an outworn Broadway production—and directed with professional or pseudo-professional intensity and indifference to the normal community rhythm. A Darby woman, Mrs. Lydia S. Cole, directed the play.

The Darby drama was developed slowly after many discussions and organizational meetings. Finally plans were made to create what turned out to be a kind of modern morality play, consisting of a series of comparatively independent episodes in the pattern and dynamics of the community's life. These episodes were assigned each to a planning and writing committee and later to a producing and acting group who carried it through the final presentation. The first three episodes, for example, symbolized three different stages of the conservation problem so critically important in Darby's existence. In each the Devil appeared, first in conventional garb, later in civilian clothes, and urged the people on in a course of ruthless cutting of timber, soil degradation and destruction of wild life. And the people listened, until at last they saw through the Devil's wiles and threw him out the window. Other episodes dramatized the problem of returning veterans, health, a town clean-up. A humorous skit by high school students satirized the youth, age conflict. The austere and prestigious garden club, dressed in grab-bag clothes, put

on another humorous skit. The city council—in actuality—met on the stage and passed officially certain measures appropriate to the occasion.

And so on into the night the episodes followed one another to the delight of the audience and of the community in general. The work was far short of Broadway standards of technique. In fact it was what might currently be called "corny," but was immensely expressive. It was Darby speaking. If any man can find a more valid standard of significant drama, let him speak now.

Of Darby's population of five hundred souls, some one hundred twenty-six were in the cast. The rest, or most of them, babies, youths, middle-aged and the old, were in the audience, the largest, it is said, in Darby's history. In the cast were children of three years and old people of more than eighty. The cash outlay for the entire play (for mimeographed programs) was less than five dollars. Costumes and other properties were made by the sewing club and similar organizations. The songs were sung by the school chorus. Two songs were specially written for the occasion by neighbor Johnson, a composer of Bitterroot valley. The proceeds, based on an admission charge of fifty cents, went to a worthy local cause. The movie house closed for the event that night, and it is said, wonderful to relate, that two beer halls also closed. It is planned to continue the Darby drama year after year, and the movie and the beer halls no doubt will continue to close in its honor.

Darby has created a drama of its own. It has given expression, simply and engagingly, to its own problems and its own culture. Crude the work may have been according to the refinements and snobberies of much professionalized art, but it was expressive, vital and above all participative in the significant life of the community. In this important way it was superior as art to most of the perfected, highly refined but culturally superimposed art of the professional theater.

The success of the Darby folk drama has several factors in it that should not be forgotten. The drama, first of all, was not an isolated effort by one group in the community. It was an all-community affair, fully as much so as, say, the community chest program, and was developed at the conclusion of a ten-week study-group program and in the midst of, and as a part of, other significant community projects. The drama, again, was written and produced co-operatively by the community. It was original and native in this sense. It served an important adult educational function in becoming a co-operative community response to the living experience of the group.

Other projects, with local variants, are being carried on by The Montana Study in this field in other communities. A historical pageant-drama, around the early Montana mission at Stevensville, is underway for autumn presentation. A county fall festival with western dancing in the streets and feasts and shows of local origin is being planned in Conrad. In other communities projects similar in function and effect but different according to the resources and interests of the communities are under way. In all of them the dramatic factor—namely the dynamic symbolization of the community's life and problems—should be, and usually is, an essential part of the program.

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