

342

To his dear Drive home from
Camp William James
Dec. 20, 1940 EPH.

YOUTH AND AUTHORITY

BY

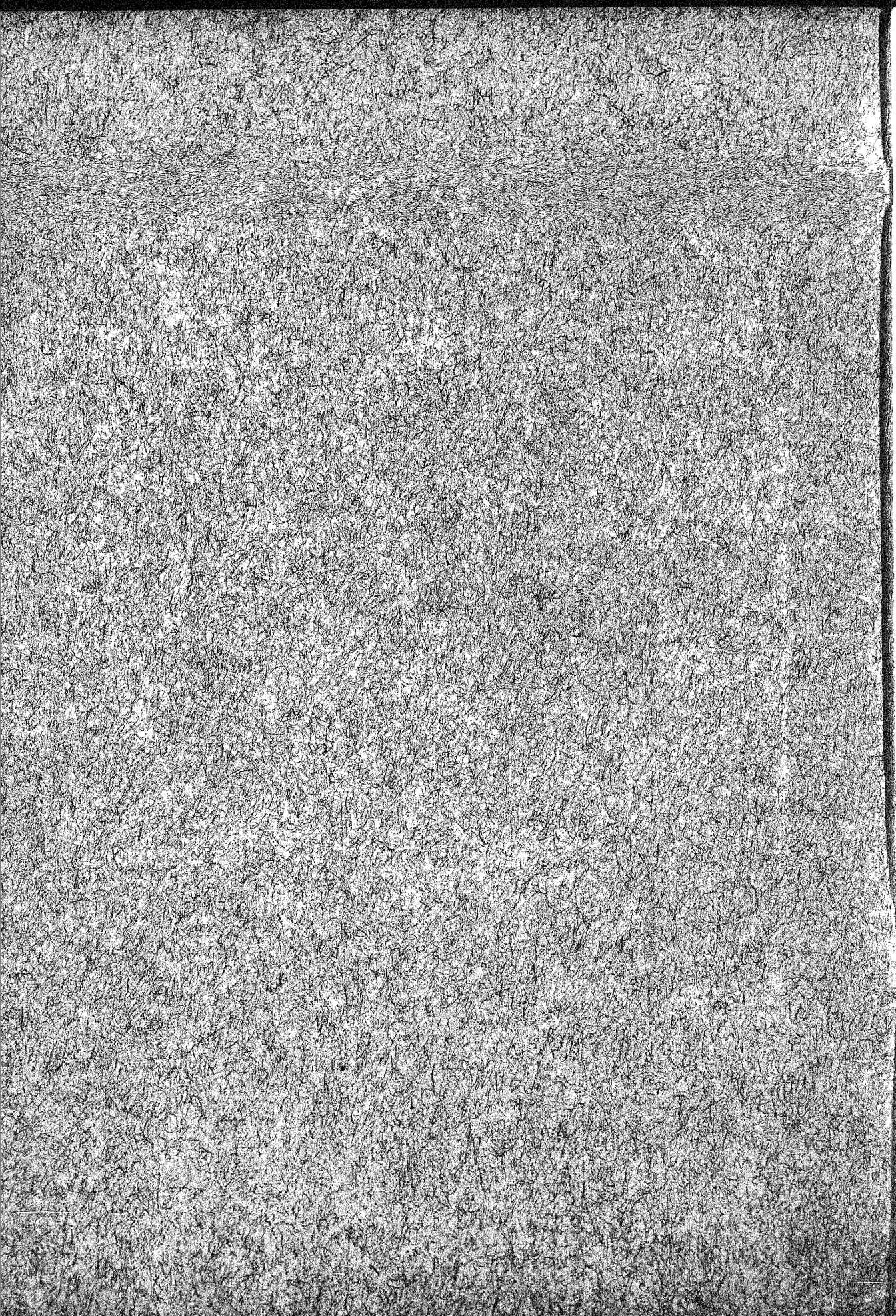
EUGEN ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY

Reprinted from

AMERICAN YOUTH

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS

1940



I

YOUTH AND AUTHORITY

Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy

FOR Americans, the title "youth and authority" is a strange pair of words. Authority has no natural place in American tradition. Authority? Europe reveled in authority; America was the El Dorado of non-conformity. In the United States, eighty-four different churches were organized, and twenty-eight separate denominations mustered over one hundred thousand members each. Authorities became as plentiful as blackberries; they were not taken too seriously. Certainly there was little use in taking them with the same deadening earnestness as they were taken in Europe, where one single authority usually held sway over a whole territory to the exclusion of all others.

And what was true in the past seems to be true again today. Again, it is Europe and not America where authority is enthroned. The theme "youth and authority" is timely because of Fascist and Communist trends in the older worlds. Hence, perhaps, yesterday and today differ only in the fact that this time the cry for authority has validity for America also, because of our membership in the Commonwealth of World Humanity. If and when we find that the Mene Tekel from across the Pacific as well as the Atlantic has bearing on a universal and pan-human situation, we may, although reluctantly, have to play ball. However, before we

admit that the topic has meaning for America, we will have to see how heretofore in this country of non-conformism social authority or social discipline has taken shape.

And this is what I propose to do.

Three times America has been faced with the danger of anarchy. Up to the Industrial Revolution, it was religious anarchy. Later on, the danger of educational anarchy had to be overcome. And, in the last decade, we had to make a new start in fighting social anarchy. Hence we may divide our diagnosis into three parts; first, the phase of religious anarchy and dissenters' authorities; second, the phase of educational authority; third, the phase of new social fears. The answer to the latter we shall have to discover as we go along.

FIRST PHASE: DISSENTERS' AUTHORITIES

In welding more than one local group together, the energy called authority is indispensable. Its function is to unify different local groups in one spirit. Authority is the power that allows people in different ways of life to turn to one and the same source of inspiration. Since it is a fact that despite our differences in age, color, creed, work and occupation, nation and country, we may be inspired to unanimity, we know of the existence of authority; and perhaps, without the existence of these contradictory qualities, we would not have any use for it. As it stands with us, authority secures the *coöperation of people who differ*, and, for this reason, it is indispensable.

When sects settled on these shores, the question of authority had to be met. After all, these groups of rebels

in religion and politics did not live as lone wolves but as congregations and neighborhoods and companies. All the churches mentioned above administered more than one local center of worship. This they could not have done if they had not wielded some measure of spiritual authority. Personal influence may be held responsible for the cohesion of a purely local group; and being purely personal it may be discounted as a social force, in this connection. The quest for authority gave birth in America to a great variety of types. The father of a Unitarian family, the moderator of a New England Town Meeting, the Irish priest in Lowell, they all had to have different qualities, and all, in turn, differed from the leading "Friend" in the Religious Society of Friends. There was a plenitude of possibilities for authority.

And yet, there were authorities. The history of non-conformism is, in fact, a grand scheme of evolution. All possible forms of authority evolve in one majestic sequence. Each species depended on the specific moment and on the particular social structure of the group in question. When we survey the various authorities of non-conformism, we notice a meaningful Virginia Reel.

The established church of England being the stumbling block for their dissent, the groups that came here first all claimed to be the universal church, too, as Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Congregationalists. Later, however, the groups that immigrated — Moravians, Menmonites, Quakers, Wesleyans, Baptists, Unitarians — were less catholic. They represented the effort of the merchant and the craftsman and the farmer to give expression to their particular callings. No professional way of life remained without satisfaction, in this steady flow of non-

conformism. Although unable to conquer a whole territory to the exclusion of rival denominations, these newer sects enlivened every stratum of society with innate leadership and "intraparietal" authority. Every stratum, thereby, proved its right to mould the life of the spirit.

Now please note that all religion was expressed by Dissenters' authorities in this country. This means that in America even the Greek Catholics and the Roman Catholics are Dissenters when properly understood. The adults that came to these shores did not claim universal acceptance of their particular form of authority. And if the day should come when a religious group in this country forgets the covenant under which it was allowed to establish itself here, and tries to domineer, it will be this group's undoing.

On the other hand, before the Industrial Revolution, these same Dissenters naïvely conceived of their children as having to perpetuate the way of life of their parents. We do not understand Dissenters' authorities without envisaging the combination of dissent among adults and consent between parents and children, within one sect.

I know of a great minister who, in 1934, on his death-bed, in a Pennsylvania village, called for his son, his successor in the ministry, and told him: "My son, we came to this country, two hundred-odd years ago, because we opposed war; it may come to pass that in this country we no longer can live according to our standards; and I hold you responsible for keeping our congregation strong enough so that they, at such a moment, will move on again, to another country." This old minister had not abdicated his absolute authority over his children in religion. We see the fire of the Dissenter

based on the absolute solidarity of generations of fathers and sons, all upholding the same faith, through the centuries.

This combination of dissent and consent was the peculiar way in which the dangers of religious anarchy were overcome. The complete identity of fathers and sons gave such a mighty impetus to the work of the founders that the rivers and rivulets of non-conformism could spread over the whole continent, keeping the souls of men in communion over thousands of square miles of a New World.

With the Industrial Revolution, this flow was stopped. No longer did spiritual authority evolve in new denominational groups. Why was this so? The industrial classes are so uprooted and migrate so fast that they need ready-made institutions which can give them shelter at their arrival and which do not die when the men leave town. Hence, the Episcopal Church, the old stumbling block of the dissenters, can take care of the very poor in this country who are not reached by non-conformism. For successful non-conformism, a social minimum level exists; this level is given by some solidity or continuity of social existence. The churches in down-town New York, for instance, have seen six or seven congregations pass through the district during one century. These caravans of the wage earners of our days are no longer receptive of "dissenter authority." They are not the stuff of which a sectarian group can be made.

SECOND PHASE: THE EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITY

After 1850, then, the spirit of man took a new direction. Enthusiastically the people plumped for education.

There never was a more glorious time than this whole century, for the founding of colleges and educational institutions of all descriptions. The sacrifices made by parents to give their children an education became out of scale with economic circumstances. They mortgaged the farm, and Daniel went to college. This financial aspect was not all; in fact, it was the smaller achievement of these new and magnanimous generations of parents. The parents voluntarily stripped themselves of the authority to educate their children in their own faith.

With industry producing an ever-changing environment, parents made the sublime sacrifice: they pushed their children into a new environment where they could never join them. Liberalism is not appreciated as long as we do not perceive the truly spiritual quality of this act. It is less important to investigate the actual achievements of the colleges than to pause before the generosity of the parents.

It may be supposed that in many, many cases the children of John and Sarah Brown did not get their money's worth. However, the parents were rewarded for their faith. For they satisfied their spiritual hunger. They endowed the new temple of education, and they offered their children for service in this temple. Briefly, then, education in the last century took the place of non-conformism. Of course, there have been new sects. And some of them have achieved some success in the proper direction of religion, which is the same in every generation: to keep man the up-hill animal of creation, to oppose the peculiar temptations of the age, its foremost golden-calf philosophy, by voluntary sacrifice. In this way,

Christian Science opposed the cult of the Doctors, Theosophy fought against the arrogance of the White Man, as did the Bahai's. However, they could not hold a candle to the educational movement which was then under way and which became truly universal.

Instead of the Dissenters' many authorities in eighty-four churches, education has gone an appalling length toward conformity. This was possible because parents offered their children, in this first century of the Industrial Revolution, on the assumption that they delivered them *as* children, and as children only. Education had to do with the child. And the parents never, for one moment, doubted that the educational authorities would respect the freedom and independence of the future adult. The new faith in science made possible this surrender of educational authority because it seemed plain that the adults were safeguarded by scientific progress. Since science was going to demonstrate everything as clearly as the fact that two plus two equals four, education was not a danger for the later adult. The parents starved themselves of spiritual fellowship with their children, and gave up all external expression of their own faith in their family. This asceticism of the Liberal has real grandeur.

And in this manner, the temple of education was built and the educational authorities were allowed to rule over the whole youth of the country, despite American non-conformism. Nearly all colleges dropped their denominational requirement. Baptist, Quaker, Lutheran foundations were turned into schools and colleges pure and simple. The merger of educational authorities during

the last decades was as irresistible as the progress of trusts in Oil and Steel.

In a country of non-conformism, obviously a certain price had to be paid for this merger of educational authority. The price was paid by the parents. Their life-problems and they themselves were left out in the cold. Education restricted itself conscientiously to strictly non-parental and non-religious subjects. Educators had to promise not to influence children in any serious matter. With this stipulation, they took over the children of America for all non-serious matters.

This country, after the Civil War, became the country of sports and games to an unheard-of degree. The town meeting, with the authority of the moderator and the selectmen, had been typical for the first period, with its sectarian authorities. Now, from 1850 to 1929, we had the baseball and football authorities of the educational kingdom becoming universal. It is usually forgotten that these extraordinary authorities are of very recent date. But these powers are the logical outcome of a non-conformist society that must make sure that education is play. For otherwise the parents could not trust the new authorities.

Today, America is the country of nearly perfect educational Conformism. Education is the One Established Church of this country. In the famous story of the father who wished to develop characters it made no difference that he sent one son to Harvard, one to Princeton, and one to Yale (and so on and so forth). They all turned out alike.

This conversion to educational conformism is so stupendous that some observers believe the old spirit of

Roger Williams to have vanished completely. I think that the clear restrictions on educational conformism have in them the germ of a new development.

Parents built up the Moloch of educational conformism; they, however, made sure that his kingdom should keep the character of a playground in which nothing is quite serious except football. The innumerable flow of examinations in itself proves this. In any serious course of instruction, this infinitude of examinations would seem ridiculous. As things stand, these examinations are the minimum of seriousness, in a sheltered park of gaiety and games. And the alumni go there, and delight in playing golf and watching football.

The American alumnus has an enviable resilience; he is rejuvenated when he returns to the alma mater because he conforms to the play-character of the educational authority. On campus, all agree about the rules of the game. Outside, there is no authority. As an adult, as a parent, the alumnus lives under the excessive strain of "unchartr'd freedom."

THIRD PHASE: THE TEMPTATIONS OF FEAR

Today, two periods of American spiritual evolution ask for synthesis. The first phase experimented with all forms of spiritual authority freely, keeping the goal universal for all mankind. The second phase unified spiritual authority for the children. The reader is not expected to agree to our thesis that the second period is doomed. From the viewpoint of happiness and carefree health, American youth should go on in its innocent paradise. My thesis is only true in so far as the reader may agree that the American adult no longer can afford

to live in a spiritual void. Is the void for the adult becoming intolerable? Is the helplessness of our attitude in this world crisis significant? Do our clubs, conventions, conferences, lack inspiration? After all, authority comes from man's capacity of bowing to inspiration.

This capacity makes man man. And therefore, the whole issue is brought to a head in the case of the unfortunate hybrid whom we may label "the youthful adult," the tramp, the unemployed, the uneducated boy between fifteen and twenty-four. For in his case the two qualities of an uninspired adult and of an uneducated youth are fused. Physiologically, the boy could be in college but is not; and therefore he is not in the park of games; economically, though treated by society as an adult, he lacks all the rewards of a man at work, and thus he is caught in the situation of those whom the famous psychologist Jung described as "Men in Search of a Soul," which former generations might have called the limbo of the souls unborn.

Not for the sake of the child, but for the sake of the adult, serious authority and serious inspiration become a challenge again. Owing to this challenge cheap solutions are offered everywhere. We get Fascism for the adult (of which Communism is one variety). The adults are narcotized by good cheer as though they were boys on campus and at games. Our new *panes et circenses* means that the educational park is enlarged till it contains all and everybody. The opposite reform tries to place the college student in the same world as the adult. He is challenged, even as a freshman, to live in the debunked, skeptical void of non-inspiration, of "no authority," in which the average business man of fifty must

live at this moment. Students are told to work out their own salvation. This leads to suicide when it is carried out fully; fortunately, in most cases, the social activities on campus offset this overtaxing of the strength of youth.

The colleges that are wrestling with the process, and the political fronts that try to get the formation of some common will started among adults, labor under terrible handicaps. And I am not in a position to ridicule their endeavors, since I feel that Communism and Fascism, for the adult, and progressive education, for youth, both are symptoms of a real disease. The common will, the general will, public opinion, no longer work except in a negative way. Prohibition of liquor, prohibition of political inspiration, are the only potentialities for common action among the voters, it would seem. And, on the other hand, the playboy attitude begins to look frivolous in this unending outer and inner crisis, and the educational success seems somehow a social failure. And so some educators grow too serious.

My own conception differs from both these reforming groups, the authoritarian for the adult, and the individualistic, for the young; and, I trust, the reader's conception may differ also, now that he has looked back upon the two previous periods and their achievements. We cannot extinguish them, and we cannot stop at them. And when we face the past bravely, we usually find that it asks neither for repudiation nor for repetition. We are faced with a new problem that never bothered our forefathers; hence the solution must be new, too. Our situation is neither one of educational zest nor of ecclesiastical organization as it was for the college founders and the Dissenters. Ours is a world in which the adult is living

in a spiritual void. This spiritual void becomes especially transparent in the case of the youthful adult, the unemployed youth. When we concentrate on this weak point of our civilization and explore its potentialities, the two patent solutions — political totalitarianism for the adult, educational loneliness for the child and adolescent — will not tempt us. We won't find them on our way, at all. The man who says "All children play in uniformity; therefore, all adults must work in uniformity," does not know of the sacrifice made by the parents of the last century. He wants to strip parents of the last remains of personality which are left, after their abdication from parental authority. The man who says "Let every child become serious, and discover the world all for himself and work out his own salvation," surely does not know of the sacrifices made by the Dissenters for having communion with kindred souls. He does not exploit the social energy of inspiration.

Both groups are symptomatic for crisis since they react against the existing work and education; however, they seem to me, despite their genuine commotion, too much overcome by fear. They are reacting, not responding. The only difference between mechanic reaction and spontaneous response in this law-governed universe seems to me to consist in our privilege of overcoming our blind fear that everything is lost. We may open our eyes instead of going blind. Of course we are in a certain kind of world that is not of the making of our generation: there is no doubt that we are not free to choose our world. In this sense, we, too, are obliged to act under the impact of the new social disorder. Yet, a response differs widely from a reaction. Whereas the Fascist or Communist or

progressive educator hates the new facts — insecurity, unemployment, lack of spiritual authority — and tries to extirpate them by violent measures either in economics or in education, the response to a new situation exploits the potentialities of the new situation. Instead of deploring it as merely negative, the response transforms a seemingly negative situation into the basis for a new position and a reconstruction. A response, instead of a reaction, must welcome the fact that we do our work with fewer workers, it must cease to see in the unemployed person a man cursed by fate, unappetizing, to be pitied and to be put on relief. A response must take the first tentative steps toward making the disease of the times the cornerstone of a healthy future. The unemployed are an asset, and not a liability.

Shaking off our animal fear that everything must be lost, we may immediately realize one outstanding fact. In the youth of the country we also have the future adult. The primitive idea that children should be treated like adults, or adults like children, is the superstition of an era that tried to think of man as having one constant nature. The progressive educators wish to think of man as reasonable and creative always; the Fascists love to picture him as mass-man and unreasonable only. This black-and-white psychology is just like saying that man is always awake or that he is always asleep. Our human problem, obviously, is that we do wake up and do fall asleep, at regular intervals. And the simple fact that the child is the father of the man, or that the man is the son of the child, should help us in our new synthesis. This synthesis can never extirpate one half of our nature in favor of the other.

Since we discover that in every human being, at any moment, two generations are present, their contemporaneity — the transition from one into the other phase, their proper balance — becomes essential. We must be childlike and manlike, both, through life.

As the potential adult, the college student or any youth of twenty cannot be satisfied either with his being treated as a child or with his being treated as an adult, only. His great problem is transition, growth, transformation. And the laws for growth and transformation have nothing to do with science or logic or economics or reason. As an animal of constant transition, man has to be trusted — without the blinds of the scientific age, and without the prohibitions of a patriarchal age.

As the future adult, the adolescent cannot be satisfied, for instance, with the spiritual authority of playground education. Campus authorities have no authority over later life because the athletic association umpire has become their god. They train people to find arguments in favor of anything.

This viewpoint actually is the basis of modern teaching. Some call it scientific. In the fifth century B.C., it was called sophistry. This is the time of the Sophists again because teaching is a mere imitation of the sports. The academic life of today, though borrowing its name from Plato, is as antiplatonic as possible.

What else can the modern teacher do but conform to the rules of the educational game? And that means that he must remain non-committal. He must degrade his living word to a means for the student's pleasure. Some months ago, in a student paper, the professor was attacked in these terms: "Where the Word has power,

education must suffer." This is the best expression of the students' fear that ideas might gather momentum and authority over them. They understand by education: playing with ideas. What a horrid phrase! This is the self-abuse that emasculates our teaching.

The result is that for the playboy in the student the inspiration comes from his social sports and games, not from teaching. But whence does the inspiration come for the boy who is father to the man?

The fortitude of the parents of the last century consisted in their putting up with spiritual starvation, for their children's sake. Once these children are revealed as potential parents themselves, this solution (Solitude for the adult + Educational conformity for the child) becomes meaningless. For the child, too, is deprived of something in this sacrifice of his elders. His own status as an elder is compromised when society relegates every adult into a private religion and a private opinion.

We remember that the parents were led to their surrender of communion with their children under the pressure of scientific progress. We are no longer sure that science is a leader, in an era of poison gas and air raids. Our faith in science has been tempered by disillusion.

We consider the child as trying to grow out of his neutral, unhistorical stage into public life, public spirit, and public responsibility. Or, as Étienne Gilson has put it eloquently: "Twenty years is an age that thirsts after certitudes; it is an age when one wishes to devote oneself to an ideal; and to find an ideal to which one can devote oneself. We are at the crossroads: we must reestablish a real order or succumb to a dictatorship, whether Communist or Fascist."

What Gilson calls an order to be reestablished is nothing but the proper relation between the generations in a people.

In any community, the hearts of the parents and the hearts of their children must be turned towards each other, by a special effort. Because the spirit of the times estranges us from each other, this is neither natural nor easy. It was, in fact, deemed so exceedingly difficult that it was proclaimed at the end of the Old Testament the last and final social program. The last words of the last prophet say that this problem must be solved, or the world will decay.

Since that time this mutual regard has formed the problem of every generation in history. The Christian Era has been one campaign for relating parents and children, the young and the old, in the proper way, again and again. And we relapse out of this era into paganism when we no longer try to solve this same problem for our times.

In our era, more and more liberty has been given to the inspiration of the young. The son, again and again, has been put up against mere paternal authority or patriarchal tradition. We are emerging from a period in which progress ran away with us quite literally; and that meant that the parents abdicated in favor of their children. They became satisfied with being their children's best friends. Now, whatever the merits of friendship, friendship stresses the contemporary element in human relations. A friend, the more he is my friend, is synchronized with my own life-experience.

Unfortunately, parents are dis-temporaries of their children. And children are dis-temporaries of their par-

ents. The children are full of faith when the parents are — or should be — full of knowledge. The young keep the world young by their faith; the old keep it in shape by their having come to know it.

This partnership is hard to establish to perfection. However, in the last three generations, the slogan of friendship has overshadowed the problem of peace between different generations who pass through their experiences at different times, and yet must make these experiences with full vigor. It has made the old childish, and the young skeptical.

We have reached the turning point of the Christian Era, in which the son must rise not against his father but against his being condemned to be a son always. The sons — the unemployed, the proletarians, the college students, the clerks at their desks, the employees in their workshops — must ask for opportunities to come of age, to become parents. And daughters must become mothers. We strip the son and the daughter of their office and dignity when we label them boy and girl too exclusively. Daughters and sons must become mothers and fathers; girl and boy may stay childish forever.

And we become parents in a mental sense when we are expected and enabled to carry out the inspiration of our youth, and to transform the faith of our youth into our acts and knowledge of later years.

EMERGING AUTHORITY

We must provide for the future adult an education that makes him experience "emerging inspiration," emerging authority. He must experience the power that binds together a man's youth and old age because it is more

powerful than the expression that it finds in either youth or old age. Old age must see its ideas incarnated, and youth must hear its faith reflected in old age's thought.

This reciprocity between the contributions of two "dis-temporary" generations, faith by youth, and thought by old age, is in sharp contrast to the principles of the Age of Reason. The Age of Reason overlooked the division of labor between the generations in a nation. They actually tried to bind old and young together on the basis of rational principles shared by both.

However, any man, at any moment, may convince himself in the outside world that youth and old age have contrasting attitudes towards time which rightly are called faith and knowledge, and which make it natural that a young and an old man fulfill the same social function — one when he acts on faith, the other when he acts on science. For instance, a youthful person will give his time more lavishly because he still has time. The adult will try to save time because his faith in the future has shriveled up. The adult's life is encumbered with his plans and actions from the past; his future is more or less dependent on his knowledge gained in the past. For the youth, faith in the future colors everything which he brings into life from his background. To him, the future may change the meaning of his whole past. He is free to disown or to disavow parts or all of his past.

The relation between science and faith in a people is, then, much more organic than the scientific era knew. The young feel, and the grown up think, about the same problem. And both groups are equally near to it, but through different organs of grasping.

Unemployment is as real and as immediate to the young

as it is to their teachers or employers. Woe to the parent generation that does not think as ardently as the young feel, in this impasse. But woe to the young generation, too, that is advised to play at games or — the other extreme — to play “Youth Congress” like adults.

To proclaim the immediate relation of every generation to the aims of mankind is rank heresy to the mind that takes its cue from science. Here, faith in the progress of science has taught people to think of the generations of scientists as following each other in a straight line, in which the next generation picked up the problems exactly where the last generation left off; and so the young had better play 'round, and wait till their day came. This kind of progress or tradition is true to a certain extent, within one separate profession, such as carpentry, or chemistry. It is quite untrue when a whole civilization is at stake, as is proved in any great emergency, be it war, flood, or fire.

Then every one must play his part, according to his generation.

Hence, if we should model the behavior of youth in society after the behavior of the scientific apprentice, we would blunt its sense of justice and its faith in the future and its creative power of response. But why say that we “would” blunt? Actually, these senses are blunted today, by our education. Actually, we do tell our children that the evils of society will have to be solved one day by scientific exploration and reasonable debate. Of course they never will be solved this way.

Each generation is immediate to God, and in every generation we must come in touch with inspiration — as youths in the form of faith and enthusiasm, as adults in

the form of action and knowledge — and because there actually is a third generation, as old people in the form of wisdom and teaching.

The young have to fight the battles of society in the form that is adequate to their age, by service and devotion; the adult do the same, by expert knowledge. Now the scientific era excluded the children from the field of action because it was thought that all human action should wait till it could be based on expert knowledge. There is one flaw in this system of the past era. Expert training may not be acquired except by exposing our heart muscle to experience. Experience that is valuable comes from empirical processes that get started in us by the imperatives of our hearts. Young people are as near the social danger zone that forces man to grow as are the old. And they must train their instincts, their heart, their "response," by claiming for their faith contemporaneity with the expert's science. Because many scientists have neglected this interplay, their sciences are far behind the times. Youth *feels* as wisely about economics as old age *thinks*.

Of course, this attitude of mere feeling is very one-sided; it is instinctive. However, without these instincts, society would be just as certainly doomed as without the expert knowledge. In fact, expert knowledge that remains uninstructed about the right feeling by the young, and that, as it does today, declines this instruction, will turn out to be sterile. And it will lead us into blind alleys.

To train feeling and to trust the faith of the young is as important as to trust in reason and to train for science. And the training ground for feeling is service. Thirty years ago William James lifted his voice to talk about a

moral equivalent for war. His essay foresaw some service that would knock the childishness out of our bones, that would verify the instinctive feeling for society by a distinct experience in society. *La Enciclopedia Italiana* quotes this essay by James as the most remarkable prose document of American literature. Yet, till today, the people to whom he spoke have not heeded his challenge.

Service in youth, spontaneous service, without the orders of any visible authority, has been the privilege of volunteers, in any period of history. These volunteers have always made history. And rightly so. For the repetition of cause and effect, in society, is purely mechanical. And in this cycle of birth and death, there is no place for inspiration, no need for authority. Authority is absent from a society in which everything is recurrent. Authority is indispensable when we must *rebuild* society. The volunteers are the ones that heed the new voice first, the new authority, long before it is in the telephone book. They receive it into their system, by a voluntary response to an emergency, to a social scandal, a social evil that they know must be conquered. And nothing that has not been started by volunteers enters the halls of human history.

Youths may become the equals of their parents, through voluntary service. Voluntary service of the college student would compel the experts to ascribe value to the instinctive faith of youth. And in this way, the experts would be forced to shelve obsolete problems which today keep thousands of teachers of the "social sciences" in mental slavery.

Because the volunteer serves before any authority is established by law, it becomes clear that the authority

that commands his service is no legal authority. The response of the volunteer guarantees to our laws and organization their true origin in inspiration. If the Constitution and the laws and the customs of a civilization were all destroyed, volunteers could restore them, without visible authority, just like that; and thereby they would prove the justice, the health, the reincarnative character of their society.

The contribution of youth to authority, this time, widely differs from its role in the past. Then, Dissenters could introduce children and grandchildren into their pattern of life, under ancestral authority; and later, educators could stamp their equalizing mark on all contemporary children of America, class after class.

Both times authority moulded the young. Now, however, the parents have lost their faith in any authorization. They do not feel authorized to prescribe anything to their children, in faith or values. The young must trust their faith, their belief in a future in America and of America, by service on a colossal scale. To serve means to extend our feelers. And so the relation between the feeling of youth and service becomes clear. After the impoverishment of youth's feelings by the Age of Reason, service enables them to restore their power to feel and their confidence in feeling.

I think that this sketch answers the anxious question whether this country must turn Fascist or Communist. There is nothing in American tradition or in the American present that will give these forces a chance unless the trust in feeling and volunteering remains choked, among the young. This country steers towards the re-discovery of the spiritual origin of all authority. The

pundits of science or the pedants of religion may block this for a time, but not forever.

Authority is the electric current that connects all ages. The Age of Reason served the reason of one age only; and authority became meaningless. Before this age, however, for six thousand years sons served in armies while daughters served at home, and through their services in war and peace social anarchy was conquered.

Modern society must put its economy on a mature footing to the extent that the young become an asset as volunteers instead of a liability as job-hunters. Experts may quench the scorching flames of a social fire. But it is the young who will have to water the scorched earth; and in turning their hearts towards the worries of their dispirited elders, the young will restore the meaning of authority.