

RELIGION AND PERSONALITY ADJUSTMENTS

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A very able young minister has recently made a study of his parish with special reference to the personality adjustments of his people. His findings may help to answer the questions; how religion enters into the common life of the American people, and how it affects their beliefs, their conduct, the organization of their personalities.

The parish in question is centered in a village of five hundred inhabitants in an excellent Middle Western farming section. Since there is but one church, the parish and the community are largely identical. As compared with other villages in this region, 'Springville,' as I shall call it, is considerably above the average in economic prosperity, educational level, community spirit and homogeneity. It is a small, face-to-face community of old American stock in which everybody knows everyone else. It is thus one of those 'primary groups' in which, according to Cooley,¹ human nature comes into being and in which the processes of social interaction can be studied to best advantage.

This minister had had two years of clinical experience in a good mental hospital and was unusually well-equipped to pass judgment upon personality adjustments. More than that, fine relations with his people enabled him to draw upon that common fund of information about the individual members of the community on the basis of which business is done and social intercourse conducted. Sometimes, as in much of the village gossip, this information takes on a malicious tinge; but it approximates the truth. Certainly the success or failure of the merchant or the banker will depend very largely upon the accuracy of the judgments as to whom he can and to whom he cannot give credit. And the executive, the leader, the teacher, will stand or fall in accordance with his ability to judge character. In any case the community judgments are something to be reckoned with. This young minister therefore took account of them but sought to go beyond them in accuracy and kindness.

TYPES OF ADJUSTMENTS

The Faithful

Going systematically through the village, he listed 322 persons over twelve years of age.² Of this number he placed 52, or 16 percent, in the group which he called the faithful. These were persons who in his judgment had taken seriously the loyalty represented by their parents, by the church, by organized society, and were growing in the direction of socialization and unification on a basis conceived of as universal and abiding. They were persons whom he and other community leaders could count upon to support worthy causes by their presence, their interest, their financial support; those whose lives were devoted to the service of something beyond themselves.

¹Cooley, Charles Horton, Social Organization; New York, Scribner's, 1927 (xvii and 436 pp.); p. 30.

²He did not, unfortunately, extend the study to include the farm homes, nor even complete the village. Samplings of the uncompleted section of the village, which contained about a fifth of the total population, indicated that its inclusion would not have changed the picture.

It is not to be inferred that these persons were free from faults. Of these they had plenty, but they were ready to face them and try to correct them--and they were able to maintain a reasonable degree of discipline. Here are thumb-nail sketches of some of those in this group:

Girl of 13, belongs to junior choir, regular in church school, doing well in school, liked by schoolmates. She is quiet, considerate, shows satisfactory development.

Girl of 15, in second year high school, attends church school 100 per cent. She is highly intelligent and industrious, accepts responsibility and sees it through. She is developing steadily into a fine type of womanhood.

Boy of 14, in first year high school, attends church school 100 per cent. He is a Scout patrol leader, good athlete, highly intelligent. He shows some traces of 'smart-aleckiness,' but is honest, active and growing.

Girl of 21, graduate of teachers' college, plays the organ in church, teaches in church school, deeply interested in church and community affairs. She has shown steady and satisfactory development.

Man of 28, superintendent of high school, is active in community affairs and attends church 40 per cent. His ideal of service is well-developed. He is honest, capable, meets problems intelligently and does something about them. He is doing an important job well.

Woman of 27, wife of high school superintendent, is well-adjusted, earnest, cheerful, very intelligent, a real educator's wife who understands what he is doing and helps him do it.

Man of 55, a farmer and truckdriver, is generous, honest, hard-working, ready to help any one in need, innocent of all theology but truly religious. Attends church 10 per cent, contributes liberally.

Woman of 27, wife of a mechanic, operates a beauty parlor. She is an extroverted, self-confident person with a good sense of humor. She is active in the community, interested in the church and ready to take responsibility, attendance 90 per cent.

Woman of 55, wife of farmer and truckdriver, works in a store. Church attendance 100 per cent, always on hand at church affairs; little other social participation. She is a pleasant, cheerful, motherly woman with a good mind and good judgment.

Woman of 28, works as stenographer in bank. She teaches a class in church school and is always on hand at church and community affairs. She is steady and reliable--has severe moral code for herself and frowns on those who depart from it. She is ready to assume any responsibility and see it through. She is unmarried but has dates.

Man of 22, a truckdriver and farmer, is a hard-working, honest fellow who gives everything he has to whatever he does. He came from a broken home and was handicapped at start but is growing in right direction. He serves faithfully as Cub Scout leader and attends church 10 per cent.

Woman of 23, graduate of a good college, has taught six years. She is tall, somewhat overweight, but a highly intelligent, out-going person who works

herself into exhaustion for a good cause.

Man of 50, a physician, does not attend church but practices what the church teaches. He is devoted to his work and is thoroughly honest with himself and with his patients.

Man of 75, a retired farmer, quite well-to-do, has a high index of civic interest. He had a considerable patrimony to begin with and has given a good account of his stewardship. He has been a hard worker and a good manager. He is friendly, cheerful and well-liked.

Woman of 70, wife of the retired farmer, is a very well-balanced, out-going, highly intelligent person with liberal views who has given freely of time and money in all good causes. Church attendance 100 per cent.

Man of 42, the largest farm operator in the county, has had one year in college. He is direct, honest, well-balanced, healthy in body and mind, public-spirited and efficient.

Woman of 39, wife of the farm operator, is a college graduate. She is very intelligent, dependable, forward-looking; the finest type of young matron, doing a 'corking job' with her two sons.

Man of 68, runs a small store, and is a cheerful, honest, public-spirited man; a devout church member who is conservative in his views but broad in his spirit. He is meeting courageously and with quiet faith the problem of failing health.

Woman of 65, wife of the small storekeeper, is well-adjusted, friendly, interested in community affairs and well-liked. She is meeting the problem of failing health serene and unafraid.

The Complacent

More than half the persons included in this study seemed to belong in the group which he called the complacent. They were persons who were fairly comfortable in their vocational, sexual and social adjustments but who apparently gave little thought to things that were beyond their immediate needs and duties and pleasures. Most of them would profess allegiance to the church and all of them would accept its standards. Their conduct would show no glaring inconsistencies, but they were not taking their religion very much in earnest. They were outwardly respectable persons whose best potentialities--in terms of their own ideals--were not in process of being realized. They were not of those who watch with their lights burning. Here are some of his characterizations:

Man of 44, a barber with high school education, is thrifty, cautious, conservative in his views, honest in his business dealings. He gives passive support to worthy causes. Church attendance 5 per cent. He is a substantial citizen with many good qualities.

Woman of 44, wife of the barber, shares her husband's conservative views and is an affectionate, cheerful wife and mother of narrow outlook and limited interests.

Boy of 17, a high school student who is making a good record in athletics is intelligent, well-liked, has no obvious maladjustments, shows no interest in church. He seems quite self-satisfied.

Man of 32, a mechanic with high school education, is genial, self-centered, easy-

going, capable of much better things, some social participation but no great interest. He attends church 15 per cent, but gives no financial support.

Man of 55, elevator operator and mayor of village, is pleasant, steady, honest, a fair mayor but no civic leader. He is conventional in his outlook but has made the most of an average endowment.

Woman of 45, wife of a carpenter, is complacent, obese, friendly, devoted to her children. She has no interest in church but is deeply interested in Legion Auxiliary.

Man of 55, is a quiet, good-natured, easy-going person, but steady and dependable. He attends church regularly and is a conventional Christian but makes no especially significant effort for God or country.

Woman of 55, wife of this good natured man, is a home-loving person, shy, companionable, likes to be sheltered; a clinging vine type.

Man of 70, is a day-laborer whose life has been one of uninterrupted, unimaginative hard work. He had no social interests but is steady and well-disciplined.

Man of 55, a carpenter, is shrewd, quiet, friendly, but inclined to be smug and self-satisfied.

Woman of 25, a teachers' college graduate, is married but has no children--a 'Main Street' type, interests secular, attitude complacent; church attendance 10 per cent.

Man of 55, is active in community affairs, morals above reproach except in politics, devoted to his children, contributes generously to church and attends 50 per cent.

Man of 55, a retired farmer, is hard-working, shrewd, thrifty, utterly self-centered; no interest in church or community; the lord of his household.

Girl of 21, daughter of a domineering father, is a graduate of a teachers' college. She is ambitious, loud, unreflective but is aware that she has some problems. She is conventionally religious and attends church 75 per cent.

Young man of 22, a student in a state university, is very intelligent, and wants to be an author. He likes to make people 'squirm' and is anything but well-liked. He is still thinking and growing but is adjusting on a self-centered level.

Man of 38, a barber with high school education, has no social participation, no interest in church. He is fairly pleasant to meet and is trustworthy and industrious.

Woman of 38, wife of this barber, belongs to church and attends occasionally. She is a plump, easy-going person with no interests beyond her family.

The Pagan

Twenty-nine persons, or about 9 per cent of the total number, were placed in a group which, for want of a better name, were called the pagans. This term was chosen to designate those who had either rebelled, or else had never learned to take seriously the authority of their parents and the standards of the community in which they were reared and had sought refuge in groups of easy standards where they

found social support for their antisocial and rebellious attitudes. It was, however, difficult to find any who exactly fitted that definition. Delinquent gangs did not exist in Springville. There were indeed several young people who were inwardly rebellious against a tyrannical father or a domineering mother, several also who were not taking any too seriously the accepted standards of the community, but none that had found much in the way of social support. Springville's pagans were for the most part older persons of the 'playboy' type who had gone their own way regardless of community opinion and seemed to be suffering no particular pangs of conscience. Although more or less ostracized by the respectable people of the community, they had found solace in the fellowship of the pool room and the barber shop. Closer examination raised the question whether even they fitted the definition. It was observed that most of them did not want their children to follow in their footsteps, but encouraged them to go to the church school. It seemed more in accordance with the facts to look upon them as persons who had failed to make good in terms of the community standards and who had finally acquiesced in the community judgments, accepting their assigned roles and deriving such comfort and social support as might be available. The somewhat caustic community judgments are epitomized as follows:

Boy of 17, is dull, backward, always in trouble in school, hangs around pool rooms and has reputation for petty thieving.

Girl of 25, easy-going, happy-go-lucky, has no interest in higher values.

Girl of 23, daughter of a dissolute father, is a friendly, not unattractive young woman who runs with men of questionable character and is suspected of sexual irregularities. She does not seem to mind.

Man of 30, with high school education, is a good mechanic who works when he feels like it. He is addicted to hunting trips and 'wet parties.' He has no sense of responsibility toward family or community.

Man of 45, is an unintelligent person whose fellowships and interests are on a negative social plane. He gambles, drinks, patronizes slot machines and does not 'give a hoot' whether school keeps or not. He is easy-going, cheerful, unambitious.

Man of 48, an aggressive, loud-mouthed salesman and small-town politician, is successful in business but unconcerned about the rights of others.

Man of 48, inherited a fortune of \$75,000 and has squandered most of it on gambling, drinking and women. He is a man of considerable native ability who might have been a leader but has affronted all decent community standards and is now a social outcast. As a boy he had been able to make his mother laugh when she started to punish him. He has been trying to get by on that basis ever since.

Man of 44, an easy-going, middle-aged playboy, violates community dicta without any sense of discomfort. He has rebelled against responsibility and routine.

Man of 45, a parasitic playboy, likes to get things with the least possible effort. He has spent much time 'chasing' the girls. He has 'kicked over the traces' and seems comfortable about it.

The Mentally Ill

Eighty-one persons, or 25 per cent, were regarded as more or less ill mentally. By this is meant that they had rather serious maladjustments, and instead of defying the community judgments or socializing their inferiorities among the pool room habitues, they subjected themselves to self-blame and self-punishment, or they re-

sorted to various devices of concealment in order to maintain self-respect and escape self-condemnation. Among them there were six who sought refuge in imaginary illness, three who indulged excessively in malicious gossip, eight who were over-particular about legalistic trivialities, eight who tyrannized over all who were so unfortunate as to be 'in their power,' seven who were chronically irritable, seven who were bitter and suspicious. Here are some of the community judgments:

Man of 45, is aggressive, domineering, self-centered. He has an ungovernable temper and tries to control every action of his children.

Woman of 52, an eccentric Christian, was ultra-conservative, but has now taken up vegetarianism. She is chronically uncomfortable both to others and to herself.

Woman of 65, wife of a well-to-do farmer, is the mother of a large family. She 'rules the roost,' nagging, crying, pleading, doing anything to have her way.

Man of 45, is headstrong, stubborn, aggressively ignorant, chronically uncomfortable, holds grudges and 'shoots off his face' at the slightest provocation.

Woman of 70, has low intelligence and bad temper. She sits in her rocking chair most of the day nursing grudges.

Man of 45, is startlingly lazy, a 'blow-hard' and braggart, and an 'alibi artist' who is keenly interested in the ladies.

Woman of 23, the daughter of a neurotic mother, is a divorcee, lives the life of a recluse and often goes to bed for weeks at a time.

Woman of 30, is a widow who lives a 'hermetically sealed' life, she talks constantly of a heart ailment, indulges in self-pity.

Woman of 27, daughter of a badly maladjusted mother, is of the clinging vine type, ready to talk of her troubles by the hour to anyone who will listen. She is irresponsible, lives in a world of phantasy and has frequent one-sided love affairs.

Woman of 44, is a domineering person with low output of energy who spends much of her time reading the movie magazines and maintains her self-respect by slandering her neighbors.

A woman of 48, is constantly complaining of her husband's infidelities and is quarrelsome and irritable at home and abroad. She enjoys and purveys malicious gossip.

A woman of 50, who had an explosion 3 years ago, left home, slept in the railway station, ate at the restaurant and was 'wild' enough to have been sent to a state hospital. She is 'down' on everyone--a smoldering volcano.

Woman of 60, with good education, lives alone since the death of her mother ten years ago. She believes that everyone is against her and that mysterious things are going on.

Woman of 35, is definitely paranoid since the birth of her second child. She never leaves home, is unsocial, hypochondriacal, apathetic toward her children.

The Defeated

There were sixteen persons who, in the face of accumulating difficulties and frustrations, had made little or no attempt to keep up the struggle, but had re-

sorted to such escape devices as drink or daydreaming and who, in whatever way, seemed to have 'thrown up the sponge,' The community judgments of a number of these follow:

Boy of 16 is dreamy and irresponsible, plays a fair game of baseball but otherwise participates little in social life. He is a potential schizophrenic.

Girl of 16, with borderline intelligence, has little drive and does much day-dreaming.

Girl of 21, is obese, immature, and unattractive, she has borderline intelligence and does considerable daydreaming.

Man of 36, son of a tyrannical, irascible father, is soft-spoken, subservient, without social interest. There seems to be much phantasy.

Man of 35, is shiftless, irresponsible, sexually lax, and a chronic alcoholic.

Man of 36, an ambitionless sneak thief, is drunk much of the time.

Man of 38, a periodic drunkard and wife-beater, spends most of his time and money in saloons. He is looked down upon by the entire community and accepts it.

Man of 40, a periodic drinker, is now in the state hospital. He is not without social feeling, and was at one time a leader in the community.

Man of 45, a W. P. A. worker, is shiftless, irresponsible, dishonest, quarrelsome, and alcoholic.

Man of 33, a vicious, shiftless, hostile alcoholic, blames the world for his misfortunes and 'takes it out' on his wife.

Woman of 27, a 'white rabbit' with borderline intelligence is a poorly organized person with two children of pre-school age.

The Distressed

There were twenty who were problems to themselves and knew it. They were characterized by severe intrapsychic conflict. Such conflict is not always an evil. It may be a pre-condition of reorganization, the outcome being dependent upon the nature and the relative strength of the contending forces and upon the favorable factors in the life situation. In cases where the conflict is between the desire for self-expression on the one hand and the authority of the parents on the other, there will be repressed hostility which is likely to explode into irregular or delinquent behavior. However, where the subject has accepted for himself some socially valued role and is struggling against unruly tendencies within himself or against environmental frustrations, the outcome is more likely to be constructive. Eight persons seemed to belong in the first group, twelve in the second. Here are some instances:

Boy of 21, son of an aggressive, domineering father, is outwardly submissive and easy-going, but there is much repressed hostility.

Woman of 34, with good education, is married to son of an over-dominant and tyrannical father. She is chafing under the domination of her father-in-law and is bird-like, nervous and self-assertive. She recognizes her problems and is trying to master them.

Girl of 17, is dreamy and irresponsible. She has a violent temper, and is rebellious at school and at home.

Girl of 24, daughter of a tyrannical father, is outwardly phlegmatic but boiling within. Her rebellion is expressing itself in the form of sex escapades.

Girl of 17, is intelligent, but loud-mouthed, 'smart-alecky' and independent. She is aware of her problems but is handling them the wrong way.

Woman of 26, daughter of dissolute father, has been sexually indiscreet but is not self-satisfied.

Boy 17, a small-town 'smart-aleck,' has a swaggering attitude, but is moody—is having 'growing pains.'

Boy of 15, who worships his father, is acutely conscious of his own small stature and uncertain of himself.

Girl of 20, is a recluse at home and in college, and is a 'bookworm.' She has no dates, no friends and feels the situation keenly.

Boy of 18, is a serious-minded, hard-working chap. He does not know where he is going but he is trying hard. He has few friends and is aware of his handicaps. He is thinking much about the future and has called on his pastor three times to talk over his problems.

Man of 23, with some college training, is engaged to be married but is having difficulty in securing work. He is doing a lot of worrying.

Boy of 20, is a student in college but still a 'sissy.' He is shallow, self-centered, going through a personality change in a struggle to grow up.

Boy of 19, is badly deformed and has a squeaky, high-pitched voice. He is ambitious, went to college, but has an extremely difficult situation.

The Re-organized

There are four cases of persons who in the face of mounting difficulties or threatening defeat have achieved some sort of reorganization.

One is that of a badly disfigured woman. Her solution has been found in religion of the Four Square Gospel variety. Through it she has found comfort and peace of mind. She enjoys talking about religion, and spends a good bit of time writing poetry.

Another case is that of an alcoholic who was converted twenty years ago. At the age of sixty-seven he is still going straight. The community, however, looks upon him as a religious crank. He is said to be bigoted, belligerent and hard to live with. This man attends church faithfully in another village.

A third case is that of another reformed alcoholic, now a man of fifty. He once held a responsible position, but lost it because of his excessive use of liquor. He is now 'on the water wagon,' and is saving his money. He has had to take a good bit of chaffing from the old crowd, and is said to be set in his opinions and harsh toward inebriates. To what extent religion was a factor in his reformation is not clear. His present job keeps him from attending church.

Another case is that of a mother whose life centered around an only son, a very able and well-liked man. When this son was stricken with a fatal disease, she turned to Christian Science, and against the protests of the family installed a Christian Science nurse. Although the son died, her faith in Christian Science has remained unshaken. She has stopped attending the community church.

THE OMNI-PRESENCE OF THE MENTALLY ILL

A review of the findings from another angle reveals even more clearly the seriousness of the mental health situation: two persons were definitely psychotic; two others had been inmates of a mental hospital and were still far from well; four were near-psychotic; six were psycho-neurotic; nine were seriously alcoholic, two of them having been in institutions for alcoholism. At least eight were mentally sub-normal. There was one drug-addict, one sex pervert, one cretin, one hydrocephalic and three seniles. Together with the difficult, the distressed, the outlaws and the no'er-do-wells, these persons constituted more than a third of the population of the village.

In interpreting these findings it is important to bear in mind that the American country village has today become a haven of refuge for many inadequate persons. With the passing of its importance as a trade center many families have moved away. Rents are therefore cheap and the houses are often filled by families that cannot make the grade elsewhere. For this reason the percentage of mental illness is probably higher than in the country as a whole. It is, however, to be noted that of those included in this study of Springville 75 per cent had been born and brought up in the community and only 18 per cent had moved in within ten years. It is also to be noted that 46 per cent were classed as of comfortable economic status, 39 per cent marginal and 15 per cent poor and on relief. These figures suggest that this explanation must be accepted with caution.

However that may be, several things stand out clearly. In the first instance attention is drawn to the number of persons living in this village who would not be permitted to remain at large if they were living in a city. This may, to some extent, explain the relatively low insanity rate in the country as compared with that in the city. Where urban communities tend to commit a large proportion of their mentally ill to institutional care, the country community carries most of its own burden. One will also notice the imperceptible shading off from the definitely psychotic to the less severe forms of mental illness. These findings suggest furthermore the explanation of the marked increase in hospital population during the past forty years. If the figures for Springville seem high, it is merely because a competent observer had here an adequate opportunity to observe. So also in the country at large, the increase in the number of patients in mental hospitals is due chiefly to the growing awareness of the problems which they represent.

THE STATIC CHARACTER OF SPRINGVILLE'S RELIGION

The religion in operation in Springville is clearly religion of the static, or epimethean³, type, not religion in its creative phase. This does not mean that progressive spirit is lacking. The fact that eighty laymen organized a community church notwithstanding denominational protests gives evidence of its presence. It means rather that the vision and enthusiasm of religion's creative stage has been transformed into custom and habit. The mores have become so firmly established that despite the new ideas which come flooding in through the radios, the movies, the newspapers, despite the increasing spread of education, there is surprisingly little disposition to question or to challenge the basic assumptions in matters of right and wrong and of theological belief. There were indeed not a few persons

³ Sheldon, W.H., Psychology and the Promethean Will; New York, Harpers, 1936
(x and 265 pp.).

whose conduct had been irregular and who were in consequence more or less ostracized. Some of these had reacted by charging church people with hypocrisy and even by disparaging the church and railing at things religious, but it was noted that most of them encouraged their children to go to the church school. It is therefore concluded that they were not really pagans, but rather persons who had failed to make good in terms of the community requirements and who had adjusted themselves as best they could to community judgments whose justice they inwardly accepted.

The static character of Springville's religion is further indicated by the fact that only four persons were found whose lives had been reorganized and not one of these owed that reorganization to the local church. One was an alcoholic who had turned over a new leaf, apparently without much religious help.⁴ The other three had had recourse to religion, but it was religion of another kind, in one case Christian Science, in the other two something of the Holiness variety. It is not necessary to place too high a value upon sudden conversions to regard their absence within the membership of the church as evidence that it is placing its reliance upon the processes of education and steady growth. The evangelistic zeal which has characterized most religious movements in their formative stages is not greatly in evidence.

HOW THE COMMUNITY STANDARDS ARE IMPLAINED

This resistance to the impact of new ideas may be explained by the consideration that moral and religious education is dependent not so much upon formal instruction as upon praise and blame for actual conduct on the part of those whom one admires and whose authority one accepts. The fact that Springville is a small, homogeneous community with abundant opportunities for working and playing together will undoubtedly go far toward explaining the acceptance of a common set of standards and the tenacity with which these standards are held.

Among the institutions and agencies which have had a part in the internalizing of these group standards the church may be regarded as the most important. This is due to the fact that it stands as the symbol of a supreme loyalty of which the standards are but a function, that it demands a complete commitment to that loyalty, that it calls for an expression of that commitment through regular assemblage and sacrificial service, and that it provides for a constant reconsideration of the implications of this commitment in the light of changing conditions. Most important is the fact that the church is built upon the family unit. Where the other institutions of Springville minister to special groups, such as farmers, business men, women of certain interests, adolescent boys, adolescent girls, the church ministers to all ages and to all classes. In earlier years families used to come in a body and sit together in the family pew. While this practice is not so common today, it still remains true that the church is founded upon the family and that it is chiefly through the family that its ideals are made effective in human life.

The importance of the family in the determination of personality adjustments is indicated by a reexamination of the data. Of the 322 persons included in this study there were 82 whose parents were included and 87 parents who had children that were also included. It was found that for those parents who were classified as faithful the ratio of well-adjusted--faithful and complacent--to maladjusted--pagan, difficult, defeated, and distressed--children was 15 to 2, for those parents who were classified as maladjusted the ration was 3 to 5. The contrast was much more striking where only those parents were considered who were given the same rating. For the seven couples who were classed as faithful there were twelve chil-

⁴ The fact that he is said to be intolerant of inebriates suggests that he has relied upon his own 'will-power' to mend his ways.

dren. Of these, ten were classed as faithful and two as complacent. For the nine couples who were classified as complacent there were sixteen children. Of these three were classified as faithful, eight as complacent, and three as distressed. For the four couples classified as maladjusted there were five children. Of these two were complacent and three badly maladjusted. Looking at it from another angle, it was found that of the 82 persons whose parents were also included in the study there were 20 who were classified as faithful. Of these 14 had at least one parent who was also classified as faithful. There were 31 who were classified as maladjusted. Of these, 26 had at least one parent who was also maladjusted. While the number of persons included in this study is insufficient to satisfy statistical requirements, these findings are supported by those of other studies,⁵ and there is justification for concluding that the adjustments of children tend strongly to follow those of their parents. Such a conclusion is of course in line with what is being discovered today regarding the tremendous influence of the parents upon the attitudes of the child. To the young child the parents stand for that in the universe upon which he is dependent for protection, and for love to a degree which is never repeated in the course of his existence. Out of this early relationship, more than from any other source, comes, therefore, his idea of God and his moral standards. This modern view is in accordance with the teaching of the church's Founder. It is of the very essence of the Christian religion that it looks upon God as a Father and upon men as brothers. The church is thus itself a family.

Springville's school, in accordance with the traditional American plan for the separation of church and state, gives no religious instruction. Neither does it make any provision for the formal teaching of ethics. However, the community appoints its own teachers, and the character and the religious attitudes of these teachers do not escape inspection. It is to be noted that the principal of the high school and his wife were active participants in the church and that most of the teachers, although they were not residents of the community, identified themselves with the local church. This means that the standards of praise and censure in the schoolroom and in the supervised playground and recreational activities of the school would conform to the community standards.

Other opportunities for social intercourse and for the administering of praise and blame are provided not merely through formal organization, but also through many informal gatherings. Among the former are a businessmen's club with some 50 members, a Masonic Lodge--20 members, an Eastern Star Lodge--20 members, an Odd Fellows Lodge--10 members, an American Legion post--17 members, a Legion Auxiliary--12 members, a bridge club--16 members, Boy Scouts--16 members, Cub Scouts--8 members, 4 H Club, for girls--12 members, the Junior Choir of the Church--46 members, the Ladies Aid Society and the Missionary Society. In addition the High School has its various athletic, musical and dramatic organizations.

Springville thus gives evidence of the effectiveness of praise and blame in determination of the standards and attitudes of its people. Mrs. Grundy is an excellent policeman, but like most policemen she has some faults. She is much quicker with censure than with praise. This is due to the fact that fault-finding is a common protective device. The loafer in the pool room who criticizes the President feels himself for the time being superior to the President. He is thereby bucking up his self-esteem. So also the malicious gossip is motivated by the desire to prove that other persons are inferior to herself. But control by censure means control by fear. It means emphasis upon the "Thou shalt nots." And that means a static morality and a static religion.

The control by fear may also help to explain the amount of maladjustment

5 Boisen, Anton T., Exploration of the Inner World, Chicago, Willett, Clark, 1936 (xi and 322 pp.); begin p. 229.

which was found in Springville. The person whose standards are determined by fear has not really accepted those standards. He is therefore not free. His conduct is controlled by something which is still external to himself, something which he often resents. That resentment, if it does not eventuate in an open break, is likely to give shelter to interests and conduct of which the better self does not approve. There is likely to be a mixture of love and hate toward the representatives of authority which will mean a divided self and therefore a sick soul. Mrs. Grundy's guardianship is thus likely to be ineffective when the young man from the village visits the big city and the forbidden indulgence which he is afraid to acknowledge then becomes a source of trouble.

THE ALTAR FIRE

In the ancient story of the destruction of Sodom it is recorded that Abraham interceded in behalf of the doomed city. He told the Lord that it would not be just to destroy the righteous along with the wicked. The Lord agreed. The question then arose as to how many righteous persons it would take to save the city. Starting with fifty, Abraham gradually reduced the number until the Lord agreed to spare the city if even ten could be found.

Judged by this standard Springville is not in danger of destruction. It is smaller than ancient Sodom and within it are found more than fifty persons who were classed as righteous.

The question now is how the presence of this nucleus of the faithful contributes to the well-being of the community. Three considerations suggest themselves.

The task of organized religion is to transform into custom and habit the new vision and quickened purpose of its creative stages and thus transmit them from one generation to another. In such a community as Springville it is the group of the faithful which is entrusted with that task. Even though that group may be dwindling in numbers, and even though its beliefs and practices become formalized, it is not without significance that the altar fire is kept burning.

Within this group of the faithful are those who best exemplify the virtues of honesty, of industry, of efficiency, and of kindliness, virtues upon which the health of any community is based. Within this group are some of the community's most devoted servants and steadying influences, those who are most likely to give employment or financial assistance to the able-bodied and the helping hand to those who are in trouble. It thus meant not a little to Springville that during the tragic years of the Depression when the banks in neighboring towns were failing, the local bank, honestly and efficiently administered by one of this group, did not go under.

It is part of the genius of the Christian Church that it provides for the renewal of the vision and the replenishment of the fire. In contrast with the other great religions, which make no provision for religious assemblage, in contrast with the modern lodge which has its assemblages and its religious rituals, but no provision for instruction, the Church has not only its regular assemblage and its rituals but also its pulpit and its church school. The sermons may frequently be dry and the church school teaching sterile, but the way is thus kept open for the prophet when he comes.