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I. Philosophy of Education

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ON BERNARD LONERGAN:

Philosophy of Education

JAMES W. SANDERS, S.J.

THE key to Father Bernard Lonergan's philosophy of education, as to his philosophy in general, lies in an understanding of the method employed. Just as one arrives at an understanding of what it means to understand by analyzing what happens when understanding actually takes place, so an understanding of what education is results from an analysis of what happens when education takes place. Thus, a philosophy of education, like philosophy in general, is a second order knowledge, a reflexive explication of what is already given.¹

If one wishes to know what education is, then, he had better look at the concrete reality of what happens when education takes place. This is not a question of what men have said it is, or of what they have said it ought to be. It is a question of what in fact actually happens when people are educated. If one looks at the process of education in historical perspective, he finds that what actually goes on in education differs over time and place. The education of the mandarin literati in China was not the same as that of the Athenian

¹ The view of Fr. Lonergan's educational philosophy presented here is based primarily on a study of three sources: Bernard Lonergan, S.J., *Insight, A Study of Human Understanding*, Longmans Green & Co., London, and Philosophical Library, New York, 1957; Bernard Lonergan, S. J., "Le rôle de l'université catholique dans le monde moderne," *Relations* 11 (Oct., 1951), 263-65; and tape recordings of ten lectures given by Fr. Lonergan at *An Institute on the Philosophy of Education*, Xavier University, Cincinnati, Ohio, Summer, 1959.

citizen, nor was the medieval university identical with that of the twentieth century.

However, one finds that despite vast differences in organization, curriculum, methods, and a host of other variables, every system of education shares one factor in common with every other. In every case the process of education is a process of preparing the young for adult life. In a primitive society this may consist merely in having the young accompany and assist their elders in the field or on the hunt; in more differentiated societies it may consist in a period of apprenticeship; and in modern, complex, industrial societies it consists in an extended period of formal schooling. But in each case the goal is the same: to teach the young those attitudes and skills deemed necessary for a mature citizen of that society. Education, then, is a means of insuring the preservation and continuation of a given society by passing on the civilization and culture of that society to the younger generation.

I

This is the first principle and the starting point for building a philosophy of education. If education is the process of inducting the young into the society of which they are a part, then a philosophy of education is a process of analyzing the components of that society. It is a process of understanding, theoretically and explicitly, the current civilizational and cultural level. The understanding of that civilizational and cultural level will in turn dictate the nature of the education needed in that society. Further, it will also have something to say about the methods to be used in achieving that education. The reason is that the operative civilizational and cultural structures in any society are the results of human apprehension and choice, of human activity. They have been achieved and are maintained by particular modes of human activity, which, because they are human, can be appropriated by the young. The ways in which things are done in adult society set the normative goals for the process of education. Knowledge of the patterns of thought and activity peculiar

to a given society is normative for the patterns of thought and activity to be employed in the process of education.

These patterns change over time, and thus philosophies of education must change with them. Primitive societies were integrated at the level of common sense practicality, characterized by thought processes at the concrete, symbolic level in which each succeeding problem is solved as it arises, with the help of accumulated insights gained from the past. There was no sharp differentiation of sense and intellect, no concern for exact definition, chains of reasoning, or universal principles. The members of such societies all performed basically the same groups of activities, and without any theoretical framework. The young entered adult life simply by learning from association with adults, or perhaps by passing through a period of apprenticeship. This common sense mode of thinking and acting still characterizes large segments of every human life, and no doubt always will.

But with the Greek Achievement man stepped into a new mode of intellectual activity, and therefore of integrating his life. The Greek Achievement was a leap into the intellectual pattern of experience, characterized by the quest for universal definitions, the pursuance of logical chains of reasoning, and the formulation of theoretical explanations of reality. Mankind today still operates in this mode of knowing, and therefore the intellectual pattern of experience must be normative for the education of the young.

However, over the past few centuries this intellectual pattern itself has undergone a fundamental transformation. The modern world has experienced not merely a tremendous accumulation of new knowledge; not merely the development of new areas of inquiry such as archeology, anthropology, depth psychology, etc.; it has experienced a development in the mode of inquiry itself. There is an important difference between Aristotelian physics and modern science, between Euclidian and modern geometry. Both clearly operate in the intellectual pattern of experience. Both seek universal generalizations through a process of abstraction from the concrete and particular. But the intellectual pattern of experience is char-

acterized today by the conscious control of these abstractive processes, a conscious control of the methodology employed in seeking knowledge, conscious to the extent that disciplines are distinguished no longer by the objects which they study but by the sets of mental operations by which they are pursued. Each discipline has a highly differentiated methodology, and by that methodology it is defined. This concern for method, which first appeared in the natural sciences and led to their astonishing success, has spread into the human sciences, and into philosophy and theology as well.

It follows that this further development in the intellectual pattern of experience, characterized by conscious control of the operations performed within the various disciplines, must be considered normative for the process of education in modern society. Man today operates at this level of integration.

Further, this deliberate control over his pursuit of knowledge has tended to overflow into modern man's approach to the question of his own future. Control of his approach to the acquisition of knowledge leads to the attempt to control the application of that knowledge. Man has always lived and planned for the future, but never before in such a highly rationalized way. The natural and human sciences, economics, philosophy, all are systematically applied in the effort to shape history. Man looks at his past and realizes he has come a long way since the days of his cave-dwelling ancestors. This sense of history makes him keenly aware that he has no reason to believe the final end point of human development has as yet been reached. This awareness is sharpened by the fact that the pace of development has so accelerated that a single individual actually experiences it over the course of his own life.

It is this sharpened historical consciousness which dictates that the role of education cannot be limited to a purely conservative function. It cannot merely be a question of handing on to the young the acquired wisdom of the past. Assimilation of the contemporary level of human development cannot suffice for the simple reason that this development is ever developing, and it is the younger generation who

are to continue the movement. Man's historical consciousness, then, tells him that the present level of human development can not be the only norm for education. A second norm must be the future level of human development. Since this is not yet known, and since it is the generation being educated which is going to achieve it, the process of education must develop in the young a spirit of inquiry and a willingness for reorientation likely to carry them beyond the limits of the present generation.

But analysis of the human situation suggests still a further consideration that will be normative for education. Whatever criterion he uses to judge, man knows that his journey through history has not been marked by uninterrupted progress, and that it will not necessarily be so marked in the future. Just as every new insight can lead to new and higher levels of integration, it can also lead to new and lower levels of disintegration. This is due not merely to the presence of individuals within every society who deviate from established patterns. The social order itself can break down or become so complex that it gets out of hand. Institutions can become outdated and yet be so rooted that they cannot be easily changed. Biases can develop in favor of certain groups at the expense of others. The individual can lose his identity and autonomy. Degrading myths and false philosophies can gain credence and lead to aberrations of every kind.

Thus, through migration or emigration, through war or revolt, through poverty programs or civil rights movements, through moral and religious renewal, man has always attempted to undercut the misdirections of the past and redeem the present and the future. He applies his intelligence to criticizing and evaluating what he has done and is doing and might do in the future. He ever seeks a higher viewpoint from which to judge himself and his world.

This critical process is also normative for education. That is, the process of inducting the young into the adult world means not merely raising them to the level of human development of their times, not merely equipping them to continue that development. It also means fitting them to correct

the aberrations of the past and to avoid similar ones in the future. It means bringing them to some vantage point from which they might be more reasonably expected to judge their world with discretion and impartiality.

Analysis of the human situation, then, reveals this threefold task for education: to bring the young to the level of development of their time, to equip them to contribute to future development, and to fit them to correct and prevent aberrations in it. These are the general needs of the adult society to which the education of the young must be geared, and these must be considered the goals towards which it aims.

II

The next problem for a philosophy of education is to determine how this preparation for adult roles is to take place. Here one must turn to an analysis of human consciousness itself, and how it develops. That is, the psychology of human learning and development will be normative in determining the methods employed to achieve the goals of education.

Analysis reveals that human consciousness, at whatever level of development, flows in a threefold pattern. The first is empirical consciousness which consists simply of being present to one's self and having other persons and objects present to one's self. This is the level of experience, of awareness. The second is intellectual consciousness characterized by wonder, by asking the question "What is it?" and by answering that question in an act of understanding or insight. The third is rational consciousness, characterized by asking the question "Is it true? Is it right?" and by answering that question in an act of judgment. In every complete act of knowing, however simple or complex, these three, experience, understanding, judgment, are always present.²

However, analysis also reveals that this threefold structure of human consciousness follows a direction, a line of

² There is also a fourth stage of consciousness by which thought flows into action. This is the conscious interposition of the ego by which decisions are made.

flow in each individual. This flow is essentially autonomous, directed from within. Governing the direction is one's concern, attention, interest. Each man, directing the flow of his own consciousness, limits his world to the totality of objects included within his interests. Thus, one walks down a noisy street with a close friend aware only of the friend's presence, despite the host of other experiences that could be attended to. Interest sets boundaries to the flow of consciousness. The point is that the flow of consciousness is not the same in every individual. Each man constructs his own world by directing the flow of his consciousness. The structure of experience, understanding, and judgment takes on different patterns depending on the direction of this flow.

Now, the educator's task is, working within the framework of the basic structure of human knowing—experience, understanding, and judgment—to develop in his student those patterns most likely to fit him for the adult role he is to play.

The pattern which is the common endowment of the human race is that of common sense practicality. This, as has already been said, is the pattern characterized by undifferentiated activity in which one experiences, understands, and judges in the concrete, without a theoretical framework and without taking the long range view. Common sense solves the immediate problem at hand. Aside from the fact that common sense probably cannot be taught formally in any case, on two other counts it cannot be a proper or an adequate object of the educational process.

First, in today's highly rationalized and intellectualized world, the man of common sense alone cannot fully participate. The level of human development has progressed beyond common sense.

Second, common sense is of its very nature short-sighted, and therefore inherently prone to bias. Common sense answers the practical problem here and now, but fails to take in the wider ramifications. The horizon of common sense is necessarily limited. Its weakness is that it cuts short inquiry without raising, much less answering, all the questions pertinent to the problem at hand. This results in partial or

even erroneous insights and judgments, which, when applied in the practical order, lead to aberration. Thus common sense does not lead to human development, nor can it take the wider view necessary to avoid the pitfalls that beset man's journey through history.

The young, then, must be broken out of the common sense pattern of experience and carried beyond it to a higher viewpoint. Two patterns of experience suggest themselves as both contemporary and likely to transcend the biases of common sense. These are the intellectual pattern and the artistic-aesthetic pattern. It is into these that the young must be initiated.

The intellectual pattern has already been discussed as the characteristic of contemporary human development. Human knowledge today is apprehended and sought at this level. Contemporary man must be able to handle the intricacies of rationalized thought. But there is a further aspect of the intellectual pattern. This is its potentially unlimited horizon. When one's chief concern becomes the "wonder" of Aristotle—the pure desire to know—then his experience takes on a pattern of its own dictated by the exigencies of that wonder. Within this pattern one's dominant concern becomes the quest for truth. He is lifted out of his private, common sense, world and confronts the entire universe of being. All limits are stripped from his interests, and his horizon includes the whole of reality. The quest for truth drives on, accepting new evidence as it presents itself, seeking answers to pertinent questions as they arise, never cutting inquiry short, willing to scrap old theories when these cannot solve new problems. The result is an ever expanding series of higher viewpoints, each incorporating the former into a more systematic whole.

This unrelenting drive of inquiring intelligence gives a basis for man's hope to transcend the biases of common sense. We already have a successful model in the development of the natural sciences. The natural sciences as we know them were made possible by man's leap into the intellectual pattern, and they have made continuous progress because, within

the limits of this particular segment of the intellectual pattern at least, scientists have refused to cut inquiry short. Thus, when new problems have arisen that could not be answered on the basis of old methods and theories, science has been willing to push through to a higher viewpoint by revising the methods and theories themselves. The revolutions brought about by men like Copernicus, Darwin, Galileo, Newton, or Einstein, have been just that—revolutions in science itself. They have not been merely the accumulation of new data; they have been rather fundamental reorientations within the scientific discipline in which new problems have been solved by finding a higher viewpoint in which the problems solved themselves. In this manner, for example, Newtonian physics was transcended by Einstein's theory of relativity. Biases in the natural sciences have been avoided through this willingness to undergo successive fundamental reorientations.

However, the natural sciences make up but one part of the area covered by the intellectual pattern of experience. These sciences themselves raise questions which cannot be answered within them. The quest for truth drives on into the realm of philosophy, where man asks himself the fundamental questions about human existence: the origin of his world and of himself, his purpose and destiny, the nature of the good life. Man's progress in answering these questions has not been uniform or steady, as it has been in the natural sciences. The reason is that philosophical development requires reorientation not only in one's thought, but in one's life. Acceptance of a new theory in the natural sciences does not require a reorientation in the fundamental value structure of one's life; but in philosophy this is not the case. Here reorientation meets with resistance, and unwieldy problems are bent and forced into the system to which one has already committed himself. Thus philosophical positions tend to split off into self-perpetuating schools. The pure and unrestricted desire to know is impeded by self-interest, temperament, background, previous commitment. And thus the intellectual pattern of experience develops biases of its own.

So persistent is this bias, in fact, that reason itself suggests that man unaided will never reach a completely un-

biased higher viewpoint. Thus reason itself recognizes the need for and calls to an intervention more than human. And man realizes the unbiased higher viewpoint in revelation.

But the essential point here is the need to pursue the unrestricted desire to know. If unrestricted human development is to go on, if evils in the human condition are to be recognized, and rooted out, then man must continue to apply his intelligence unrestrictedly to the task. It is the educator's job to prepare the young to do just that.

But man does not and cannot live merely on the level of abstract intelligence. Modern depth psychology and anthropology have reemphasized what an age of rationalism tended to obscure, namely, the tremendous power of the symbolic in human life. It is the artistic-aesthetic pattern of experience, the realm of art, which does on the symbolic level what the intellectual pattern does on the abstract, highly differentiated level. It takes one out of himself and his own narrow world; it expands his horizons without limit, and leads to a liberating vision of beauty, goodness, and greatness. No one who has done art or appreciated it would deny this fact.

It is, then, into these two patterns of experience that the young must, above all, be introduced in the process of education. But the problem is how this is to be achieved. All that can be done here is to lay down certain methodological guide lines suggested by what has already been said about the structure and dynamics of human consciousness. Four general principles suggest themselves.

First, the structure of human knowing, comprised by the three phases of experience, understanding, judgment, indicates that learning does not take place without an experiential ground. Real learning cannot be a matter of rote or of pouring in facts, definitions, principles. Learning proceeds only from an experiential base, and only through the self-activity of the learner. No one can give another insight. He has to gain it for himself, and he can do so only by finding intelligibility in the sensible, whether that sensible be a blow on the head, a diagram on the blackboard, or a construction

of the imagination. The teacher's function is to structure the child's experience in a manner likely to lead to insight, then later help him to clarify that insight, formulate a definition, and arrive at a judgment. But the whole process is essentially activity on the part of the student, and no one can do it for him.

Second, what is ultimately normative for the teacher in selecting and structuring the child's experience is the structure of the human activities which are to be the end point of the student's education. That is, the various disciplines are constituted by the structure of the key insights and the sets of operations performed within them. Once the student has mastered this structure, he has mastered the subject; and the rest is merely a question of filling out the details and making applications. It is for the specialist in mathematics, the sciences, history, literature, etc. to determine what the fundamental structure of his particular discipline is. The teacher should be guided by this and organize the experience to which the child is exposed in such a way that he will be likely to get for himself the key insights and master the basic sets of operations which characterize the structure of the discipline he is to learn.³ All sorts of practical applications follow from this principle. For example, since modern physics is so highly mathematical, the student cannot possibly learn physics in any real sense until he has the necessary mathematical understanding. Again, the student cannot really know what history is until he has done what the historian does: delve for himself into the records of the past, weigh the evidence, and form a judgment.

Third, the development of human knowing follows a genetic process of refinement and gradual evolution to higher

³ At this point Fr. Lonergan's approach makes contact with research currently being conducted in the United States on the structure of knowledge and the psychology of the learning process. See Jerome S. Bruner, *The Process of Education*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960; G. W. Ford and Lawrence Pugno, eds., *The Structure of Knowledge and the Curriculum* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1964).

viewpoints.⁴ This demands beginning at the child's level of development. The child begins at the level of undifferentiated consciousness, so undifferentiated, in fact, that the infant at first makes no distinction between himself and the world around him. Only slowly can the child make progress in refining his experience and in graduating to higher levels of differentiation and integration. The educator must conform to this fact. The child, for example, will not gain insight into the theory of probability if presented with a mathematical formula, though he may gain it in a confused way if presented with a properly structured game of chance. This insight can then be progressively purified into a strictly mathematical notion as development continues. Therefore, though the mature structures of the disciplines the child is ultimately to master must be normative in guiding the educational experiences to which he is exposed, the laws of development from undifferentiated to differentiated consciousness, from simple apprehensions to synthetic higher viewpoints, must not be tampered with.

Fourth, not only does the educator have no direct control over the child's power to gain insight, he has no direct control over the child's interest. The teacher can expose the child to structured experience all day; but, unless the child's interest is actively directed towards that experience, no learning takes place. Human consciousness is not merely a passive receptacle which registers any bit of experience that comes its way. Its flow is largely autonomous, directing itself only to that which arouses its interest. The educator, therefore, has to arouse the child's interest, and this constitutes one of the central challenges of the educative process. How does one arouse the child's genuine interest in an experience which lies beyond the horizons of his present concerns? Obviously this cannot be done directly by appeal to already attained interests, since the experience lies beyond the attained interests. The appeal must be made to more fundamental potentialities: wonder, curiosity, the desire to understand.

⁴ Here Fr. Lonergan's approach is corroborated by the work of the psychologist, Jean Piaget, to whom he acknowledges indebtedness.

This can be done by presenting problematic situations at the level of the child's present development.

These general methodological principles are derived both from an analysis of how human knowledge has developed over the history of mankind and of how it develops within the individual. Guided first by the overall objective of introducing the student into the intellectual and artistic-aesthetic patterns of experience, then by the specific structures of the mature disciplines within these patterns, and finally by knowledge of the developmental level the student has already reached, the educator organizes the experience to which the student is exposed in a manner likely to extend his interest beyond its present horizons and thus lead to new insight and higher levels of integration.

The curriculum should be geared to these general norms. Thus, those subjects should be taught which get the student into the intellectual and artistic-aesthetic patterns of experience and which develop those groups of operations which are contemporary within these patterns, and the subjects should be progressively ordered to meet the student at his present level of development and carry him to a higher.

Since language is the universal means of communication and a prerequisite for intelligent activity, language skills are primary. Further, while language employs symbol, it provides the means for a transition from the symbolic level, at which the child begins, to an ever greater differentiation of consciousness.

Art and literature are the means of developing the artistic-aesthetic pattern of experience. They are especially appropriate for the young, who have not yet arrived at a sharp differentiation of consciousness. They provide experience and understanding at the symbolic level, at which the young most facilely operate. At the same time, through the gradual introduction of analysis and discussion of artistic and literary forms, the student moves into the intellectual pattern.

Mathematics will have an important part in the curriculum for two reasons. First, its emphasis on exact under-

standing and definition is the perfect medium for habituating the student to the intellectual pattern. Second, mathematics is the language of science, and therefore a prerequisite for scientific study. It follows from this that the study of mathematics should precede that of science, or at least that those mathematical skills necessary for any given science be mastered first.

History is always contemporary, especially at the present time when world movements are founded on theories of history, and when rapid change threatens to obliterate man's roots in the past. History can be considered from two different points of view. Approached as the common memory of mankind, history carries a strong symbolic and affective content. It is the treasury of myths and heroes that, taken together, constitute the spirit or the ethos of a nation or a people or mankind itself. The young should be introduced to this common memory of their nation and of mankind at large. It is this which gives them a sense of solidarity with the society of which they are a part. But history as an intellectual discipline is quite another matter, and equally as important. Here it is not so crucial that one be filled with all the facts of past history, but that he develop a sense of history itself. This can be done only by actually doing historical investigation, even on a very limited scale. Such investigation results in a personal realization both of the complexity of human events and of the fact that the historian's judgment about any given event is based on an interpretation of probabilities.

The human sciences such as sociology, anthropology, or psychology, though important, properly come later. The student must first master the necessary tools—language and mathematics in particular. He should also build up the humanistic background in literature, art, and history so necessary both as a source of clues to initiate relevant inquiry and as a guide to realistic interpretation of findings.

Philosophy is a still further development which results from reflection on the content and structure of all the other

disciplines and attempts to integrate them into a related whole which constitutes a higher viewpoint.

Finally, the purpose of education dictates that the school must also be concerned with the moral, religious, and theological formation of the student. If the goal of education is the welfare of human society, then the young must be committed to achieving that good, which is morality. Further, if the ultimate good of human society, because of the biases inherent in the human situation, cannot be achieved by man unaided, then religion and its systematic intellectual formulation in theology become relevant to the formation of the young.

At the level of undifferentiated consciousness where there is no clear distinction between knowledge and commitment, education necessarily includes a moral component. In art, literature, and history as common memory the moral component lies imbedded. This is not to say that such studies are to be used primarily as instruments of moral formation, but simply that *de facto* they do have a profound moral influence and must therefore be taken into account as part of the moral formation of the young. Religion as a separate discipline would first expose the child to the events of sacred history as recorded in Sacred Scripture and embodied in liturgy at the symbolic level, and then gradually proceed to a more systematic understanding of its meaning as explicated in the development of theology at the intellectual level. It is ultimately through an understanding of salvation history that one reaches the higher viewpoint from which he can make sound judgments that transcend the biases inherent in the human condition. And it is commitment in Faith to this viewpoint which restores confidence in the future of humanity and informs one's life with the effective love necessary to do something about it. This adds up to saying that Faith, Hope, and Charity are indispensable means of achieving the human good to which education is directed.

III

In attempting some evaluation of this approach to a phi-

losophy of education, the following considerations seem appropriate.

Probably the single most distinctive aspect of Fr. Lonergan's approach is the method itself, which is merely a further application of his general philosophical method. This method is based on the position that philosophy has no content of its own but reflects instead on content from elsewhere, formulating that content explicitly and theoretically. Thus, philosophy begins with the attempt to understand understanding, and does so by reflecting on the actual act of understanding. Accordingly, educational philosophy begins with the attempt to understand education, and does so by reflecting on the actual process of education. It does not begin with certain first principles from which the nature of education can be deduced. Rather, it looks directly to the concrete reality of education.

The basic insight resulting from reflection on the actual process of education is that always and everywhere education is a function of society, a process of inducting the young into the adult world of their time and place. If one accepts this insight as valid, then at least one very important implication follows, namely, that there can be no such thing as a timeless philosophy of education. While certain aspects of that philosophy may remain constant, others must change with the progress of human knowledge and the development of human institutions which result from that knowledge. Educational philosophy must continually be rethought in the effort to make explicit at the reflective level the current degree of civilizational and cultural development which is to be normative for the education of the young. This approach does not deny the presence of continuities, but it emphasizes the fact that man lives in history, which is open to change and development. This is a departure from the traditional concentration, in Catholic circles at least, on the immutable in nature, and the consequent attempt to work out a philosophy of the "ideal", forever valid education.

It should also be borne in mind that what has been presented here does not constitute a fully elaborated philosophy

of education. Rather, a structure has been set up, to be filled in only by more detailed investigations. The general characteristics of the present level of human development have been sketched out, but await further refinement. The analysis of the human condition has revealed man's continuing drive to push beyond present boundaries and to escape the aberrations of the past, but no attempt has been made to define the direction of further development or the specific aberrations that have to be overcome. Indeed, the implication is that the purpose of education is to equip the young to answer these questions for themselves. A general psychology of human knowing and development has been delineated, but needs filling out in detail. An argument for teaching the essential structures of the various disciplines has been made, but precise definition of the structures of these disciplines has been left to the experts in their respective fields. There are many points of contact between this general orientation to a philosophy of education and work currently being done, for example, on the structure of knowledge, the psychology of learning, and the dynamics of development. Hopefully, these points of contact can be incorporated into a further development of a concrete philosophy of education.

It may also be that certain other crucial educational problems have to be made explicit within the general framework of this orientation to a philosophy of education. One of these would be consideration of the school itself as a social milieu. While some would argue that development of inter-personal relationships is not a primary function of the school, the fact remains that education takes place in an environment with others—with fellow students, and with teachers. The child's interaction with others in the school presumably has considerable effect upon the growth of his personality, and on his learning the academic subjects themselves. Therefore, it would be a concern of educational philosophy to understand the dynamics of group action in the school, of teacher-student relations, and especially of various approaches to discipline in the formation of the young.

A second problem that ought to be dealt with would be that of the under-achievers. If it is true that no one can really participate in and contribute to the present level of human development who has not escaped from the common sense pattern of experience, then one is bothered by the question of how relatively large numbers of less gifted individuals are going to be educated. The thrust of the philosophy presented here is clearly in the direction of a liberal education. The young are to assimilate the key intellectual skills which characterize the highest activities of modern man and lie behind his achievements. But what happens to those who cannot make such an assimilation? This consideration does not invalidate the approach taken, but it does raise a critical question that has to be dealt with in a complete philosophy of education.

Finally, several remarks should be made about the definite social orientation of this philosophy of education. In the first place, this social orientation should not lead to the impression that education is a process aimed at helping the young get along in the world as conformists to present adult norms. True, a man of his time should have mastered the essential knowledge of his time, and to this extent he is a conformist. But, as already indicated, analysis of the social process itself demands the capacity to push beyond present barriers and to reflect on and judge the value of present human institutions. This implies the need for a built-in autonomy. Introducing the young to the quest for truth in the intellectual pattern of experience and to the appreciation of beauty in the artistic-aesthetic pattern accomplishes precisely that purpose—it develops the autonomy of the human spirit.

Secondly, it must be remembered that to define education as a process of inducting the young into adult society is not in any sense to imply the sacrifice of individual values in education. It does not denigrate the individual or make him the creature of society. It merely looks at man as a social animal who finds his complete individual fulfillment in life with others. This approach is perfectly consonant with, in fact it constitutes the essence of, the Christian view of life.

Nor does this social orientation, when considered in the Christian context, reduce Christianity to a mere social gospel. In the Catholic community especially, one notices a split, a dichotomy between the realization on the one hand that people do have to live and get on in this world, and on the other that they have to be prepared for the next. These two goals, either consciously or unconsciously, have been seen precisely as two goals, with a tension and sometimes even a conflict between them. Catholic education is justified on the grounds that *in addition to* preparing the young for citizenship, it teaches them morality and religion. Through the one the student learns to satisfy his obligations to this world, through the other he satisfies his obligations to the next. True enough, the attempt is made to bridge the gap, but the fundamental dichotomy between the "two cities" remains.

But there is another approach which cuts through this dichotomy. Man's purpose on this earth is to participate in and contribute to the development of the human good in all its forms, and *through* this to achieve salvation. The temporal order has intrinsic value, and therefore man's life within it has intrinsic value. His life is not a two-directional one, at the same time vertical and horizontal, pointed toward the city of man on the one hand and the city of God on the other. Rather, man moves towards God precisely by working in collaboration with his fellow humans to achieve the true human good on this earth. This is his vocation.

Christian education looked at from this point of view is justified by the conviction both that man is called to God through his contribution to the process of human development in this world and that the Christian has something unique to contribute to that development. The Christian commitment is seen as the ultimate corrective to the biases inherent in the human condition, and therefore as an essential component in the process of human development.

It is this orientation which underlies Fr. Lonergan's approach to a Christian philosophy of education, and it may

well be that here he has made his most significant contribution.⁵

⁵Those concerned about what Authority has to say about this view of Christian education might ponder Pius XI's explanation of why the school exists in the first place: "Since however the younger generation must be trained in the arts and sciences *for the advantage and prosperity of civil society*, and since the family of itself is unequal to this task, it was necessary to create that social institution, the school." Pius XI, *Christian Education of Youth* (New York: American Press, 1958), p. 4. Italics added.