Education for Contemporary Society

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Education in an Industrial Society (Faber and Faber, London, 1963. 238 pp. 35s.), by G. H. Bantock, will be of interest to those who are following the controversy in Britain between C. P. Snow and F. R. Leavis, or between the scientists and the humanists [*Science* **145**, 653 (1963)]. Bantock, himself a scholar in literature, history, philosophy, and education, undertakes to write a philosophy of education for contemporary society, a philosophy which explicitly takes the position of the humanists as opposed to that of the pragmatic scientists. His heroes are Henry James, D. H. Lawrence, T. S. Eliot, and F. R. Leavis. He dedicates the book "To my Father, who trained as an engineer but became a musician." The educational system that he proposes and outlines briefly, if taken seriously, will stir up a fight among British educators who are involved in the expansion of secondary education now going on in that country. In the United States there is no such sharp division between humanists and scientists over the content and method of secondary and college education, but neoconservative writers on education, such as Russell Kirk, will probably find much comfort in this book, while the proponents of the comprehensive high school along with James B. Conant will not like it.

Education in an Industrial Society has three parts. The first part consists of two chapters on the school in relation to society. In the first chapter, on the social role of the school, Bantock argues that the school should be *apart* from society, and should not be made to serve the "needs of Society" as these needs are likely to be interpreted by the leaders of society. This brings Bantock into conflict with John Dewey, to whom he devotes the second chapter. In my judgment, this chapter is a weak one, but more on that later. Part 2, "Some Social and Ideological Roots of Modern Education," consists of two chapters. In this part Bantock reconstructs British education of the 19th and 20th centuries as a basis for the positive recommendations made in the third section. In 65 pages the author is selective. He discusses the implications of the educational goal of universal literacy and shows how a tension arose in the school system between the principles of diversity and uniformity, which is parallel to the tension between liberalism and collectivism in democratic ideology. The tendency to give everybody a uniform education conflicts with the tendency to train young people to fit into the diverse manpower slots of the labor force. Neither of these is good, in Bantock's view. As a humanist, he wants something else from the school. He says, "One of the problems of this book will be the extent to which the school—and university, for that matter—ought to become a function of the technological society, which is what in large measure threatens it. That the social pressures in this direction are strong is undoubted—and they will increase. An important role for the school, then, will be that of the preservation of 'minority' interests, 'minority' in the sense at least that such interests serve tendencies against the main stream" (p. 119).

The third and largest part of the book consists of three chapters in which Bantock proposes improvements in the British system of secondary education. He accepts as possibly desirable the threefold system of secondary schools which grew up in England before 1940 —the grammar, technical, and secondary modern schools. He likes the tripartite division, but he has severe criticisms of the program of education in each type of school, and he suggests ways of improving all three. Thus, he is opposed to the British educators who are now working for a single "comprehensive" secondary school, but he is not merely nostalgic for the good old days.

The educational system proposed by Bantock would divide secondary school students into three groups, roughly according to their intellectual abilities. Students would attend schools developed out of the present grammar, technical, and secondary modern schools, which rank in that order in the intelligence of their students. The proportions of students in the three types of schools are not defined by the author, except that he designates the "less able" who would go to one type of school as the lowest 40 percent of the age group. At the other end of the spectrum, the "academic" group would clearly be a rather small minority. They would receive an "academic" education suggested by the following quotation: "the 'academy' suggests precisely that cut-off, enclosed and remote quality which is characteristic of certain sophisticated social groups who lift themselves beyond the immediate cares and pressures of everyday life in order to contemplate the deeper realities of human existence—those realities, that is, which do not press immediately on the consciousness but take into consideration something of man's ultimate position of strangeness in the universe or of that curious imbalance in his nature which sets him over against his environment and enables him to detach himself from it" (p. 123). The middle level, which apparently consists of some 40 percent of youth, would receive a "technical" education.

In addition to this controversial division of youth into three levels for secondary education, the author makes a basic distinction between "affective" education and "cognitive" education and argues for more emphasis on the affective for all three types. Here he takes up the Leavis versus Snow controversy, or the humanist versus the scientist argument. The pragmatic scientist wishes to place learning at the disposal of a society that wants greater material productivity. It is this *social engineering* trend that Bantock opposes as part of the education of the best minds. "Our present trends in secondary education seem to involve largely an education for efficiency as that efficiency is understood in an affluent society, not a training for life as the great poets and artists and religious leaders have understood the word" (p. 116). For all three levels of ability, Bantock would have more attention paid to affective education, but differently for each level.

The distinction between affective and cognitive aspects of education lead to an exposition of the advantages of the

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humanities over the sciences in education. Here Bantock devotes several pages to the argument between C. P. Snow and F. R. Leavis. He argues for the wider use of the fine arts and of literature in the education of able children. "Fundamentally, great literature affords us the means of moral and perceptual growth; and, of course, it helps to awaken our intuitive awareness so that we are enabled to see more fully into the life of situations; and it does this, not by telling us, but by enabling us to 'feel into,' making possible a measure of what I will call 'empathic' projection; the control is of the emotions—but through the intelligence" (p. 167).

It is a temptation for an American reviewer to dismiss Bantock's tripartite scheme as academic and intellectual snobbery, but the book is pretty well protected against this charge. Accepting the fact of differences in intellectual abilities and accepting the proposition that, on the basis of examinations and other methods, young people can be divided into the three levels, one must at least entertain the proposition that, from both the individual and the societal points of view, rather different forms of secondary education may be desirable for the three levels. Bantock's humanism and his belief in democracy are broad enough to allow him to say something positive and interesting about the kind of education that is desirable for each level. This is in contrast to some critics of modern education, on both sides of the Atlantic, who are so wrapped up in the problem of educational "standards" and so myopic in their social vision that they can think only about education for the upper 20 percent, and then they either assume that this form of education is good for everybody or that nobody else is worth educating.

Bantock is concerned about the influx of students into the secondary schools and the universities. This must come, he says, but educational values must be preserved against the problems posed by "status seekers." The ills of secondary and higher education he is inclined to lay largely at the door of the economists and sociologists who regard education as "investment" in the training of manpower.

The middle level of students should receive a *technical* in contrast to an *academic* education, where the word "technical" refers especially to machinery and a machine age. But, although they are to be educated as maintainers of a technological society, they should also receive an affective education.

The chapter entitled "The education of the less able child" is both interesting and disappointing. Bantock accepts the proposition that, in the future, the least able 40 percent of the population will work shorter and shorter hours and that they will get less and less personal satisfaction from their work. Therefore, he looks to leisure-time activities as the chief area of self-expression and asks how education can contribute to the making of a new lower-class or folk culture. He argues that universal education and literacy have robbed the working class of its former folk culture, and that, in our time, the lower classes have not produced anything to take its place. Then he asks, "Can we in the schools do anything towards the evolving of a new folk-culture?" Some critics would argue that Bantock is being sentimental about the folk culture of preindustrial England, in a period when Thomas Hobbes described the life of the people as "poor, nasty, brutish and short."

Bantock proposes that the curriculum should deal with four common aspects of working-class life: "the affective life, the physical life, the domestic life, and the environmental challenge of the machine." For the affective life, he would teach language and literature and the arts in a direct, dramatic, and active way, with emphasis on painting, pottery, weaving, and metal and wood crafts. For the domestic life he would teach domestic arts—"the rudiments of domestic labor, such as boot-mending, plumbing, soldering, painting and paper-hanging, gardening." The content for girls is obvious. "Much more concern for cooking should be fostered—if only to try to disgust our populace with the typical English restaurant meal; some biology, too, for the brighter girls, and a little dietetics" (p. 218). For boys the main emphasis must be on common machines. For the physical life there would be games, dancing, hiking, climbing, camping, and the like.

These proposals for the education of the less able are hardly new. Some versions of them have been tried in many places, though not to the exclusion of formal history and geography and civics and arithmetic, as Bantock suggests. "I believe that children come to be 'good citizens' rather through the activity of joining together in the sorts of enterprises I have noted than through self-conscious attempts to learn about local government or the functioning of parliament. . . . What I want is a schooling that will enable these children to realize their natures as much as in their own way our able children realize theirs through intellectual accomplishment" (p. 221). These suggestions have a logic, and perhaps a skillful teacher could make something out of them. But American teachers find such youngsters less apt and interested in home economics and industrial arts and fine arts than children of average or higher ability. Furthermore, American parents of such children would generally resist a school curriculum so different from that of the average and above average youth, and it seems likely that British parents also would object to it as a kind of "second-class education."

Bantock has set himself the task of describing an educational program for youth in a democratic industrial society, and he has produced a program quite different from the one that would find most favor in the United States, and probably rather aside from the main stream of opinion in Britain. When one realizes this fact, one then understands why he devotes a chapter at the beginning of the book to a critique of John Dewey. More than that of any other educational philosopher, Dewey's philosophy represents the view that education should serve a developing democratic society, and that, in so doing, it will serve the individual best. By giving society priority, and with his emphasis on the applications of science to human welfare, Dewey goes contrary to the humanist theory of Bantock. Therefore he must be attacked. References to Dewey appear throughout the book and make up almost a column in the index. One of Bantock's chief objections to Dewey is his claim that Dewey believed that education should serve society, and that society is the majority. Dewey accepted the modern industrial society uncritically, he believes. "He considers much of that environment which profounder minds have questioned for so long to be adequate. He is largely at one with the tendencies of his times—an excellent example of one of Arnold's swimmers with the stream; indeed, he wishes to accelerate the current" (p. 48). "Dewey's exposition of what constitutes the curriculum is symptomatic of the degree to which he is willing to pander to majority interests" (p. 52).

I will not attempt to argue the philosophical points that divide Bantock and Dewey, but in this chapter Bantock

clearly misrepresents John Dewey's views on education in relation to social change. To charge that Dewey was a conformist, a "swimmer with the stream," represents a gross misunderstanding of his educational theory and of him as a man. Dewey was noted for his personal espousal of minority political and social causes.

In conclusion, setting aside the inadequate treatment of Dewey, one must say that this is an important book. While contemporary trends in education have their critics, most critics operate from too narrow a base of understanding and interest in education to be worth listening to. Bantock has a broad base of interest in the whole of the school population, though his knowledge may be seriously limited with respect to the working-class population. He has undertaken to develop a theory of secondary education based on the views of literary and humanistic scholars and to apply this theory to the entire youth population of an industrial society. His ideas about the importance of affective education and his suggestions for putting these ideas into practice deserve wide consideration.

Anthropology

The Swazi. A South African kingdom. Hilda Kuper. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, New York, 1963. x + 87 pp. Illus. Paper, $1.50.

During the past few years Holt, Rinehart, and Winston has published a number of short case studies in anthropology which have achieved a considerable reputation for providing good succinct accounts of the lives of peoples of other cultures. *The Swazi* is a welcome addition to the series. It describes the people of Swaziland, a British protectorate bordered by the Republic of South Africa and the Portuguese territory of Mozambique.

The Swazi long ago developed a centralized state with a dual monarchy vested in the king and the queen mother. Hilda Kuper describes the delicate balance of power between the two and the way in which the monarchy impinges upon the Swazi nation. In other sections she discusses the organization of family life in a society that is patriarchal and polygynous and the educational system, especially the organization of regimental age classes, which provide both a formal indoctrination in Swazi values and a method of recruiting labor for public work. The religious beliefs, those that stem from the past and those that are introduced by Christian proselytizers, are shown as they work within the framework of the kingship and the general organization of Swazi life.

Most of the material upon which the account is based comes from Kuper's early work in Swaziland during the 1930's and 1940's. But this is no static account of the Swazi as they were three decades ago. In more recent years, Kuper has made extended visits to Swaziland, and a continued close contact with Swazi outside the country has enabled her to keep abreast of recent trends. This perspective permeates the book but is most apparent in the final section in which she discusses the impact of recent economic and political trends and the growth of Swazi political parties that seek to modernize the state and to free it of external control. Here she brings the account up to 1962, the time of her last visit to the country.

Kuper is an artist with words as well as a fine anthropologist and a sensitive observer. In 84 pages of text she has succeeded in creating a vivid and coherent picture of Swazi organization and values through the decades. It can stand by itself, but I hope it will lead readers back to her earlier books on the Swazi: *An African Aristocracy* and *The Uniform of Color*. The first is notable for having the finest account known to me of the ritual of African kingship. The latter is a sympathetic study of the clash of blacks and whites, a study that is relevant not only for an understanding of Swaziland but also for understanding what is happening in South Africa.

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Amateur Scientists

Wanted: Amateur Scientists. Robert Froman. McKay, New York, 1963. xviii + 102 pp. Illus. $3.25.

On its dust cover, this little volume is described as a new book for teenagers. It *is* a good book for youngsters, but it is also good for anyone, at any age, who has never known science as a personal adventure or who has strayed into the administrative wilderness of professional science. Froman writes as if he himself were an amateur scientist, as if he thoroughly understands the satisfaction of making observations or measurements that give him a firm grip on a segment, however tiny, of reality; observations or measurements that may, in the hands of others, contribute to an understanding of a larger and more complex area of natural science.

The author defines "amateur" only by implication. The amateur scientist is one who "loves" to do scientific research without pay. He may be too young or too old for gainful employment, or, if in between, he will derive his income from something other than scientific research—even science administration or teaching—and will pursue his investigations outside of official hours. It is indeed correct that "the true spirit of science is the spirit of amateurism" and that "nearly all amateur research is pure research, the seeking of knowledge for its own sake." The taint of incompetence attached to the word "amateurish" is unfortunate, for it should be a proud adjective connoting idealistic, self-sacrificing effort, sometimes less productive than professional work only because of lack of time, facilities, equipment, and assistance.

Froman points out briefly (there are 11 chapters) what amateurs are doing and can do in the physical and biological sciences to obtain new information, and how in some instances amateurs are organized so that their combined observations become valuable raw data for the use of professionals. The interest of the book is enhanced by examples of the work of individual amateurs. And there is wisdom and advice in it from some of the leaders of professional science.

It is astonishing how well the author estimates the opportunities for amateurs in every field. In the chapter on entomology, a field in which I have had some experience, the author has listened to J. F. G. Clarke, of the Smithsonian Institution's Department of Entomology, and has reported accurately and persuasively the great opportunities for original work on insects and other arthropods. However, I doubt very much that amateur entomology lags in the United States because insects are repulsive to some people or because entomologists are sometimes regarded as odd (some of them are!). I believe amateur entomology is "the unpopular science" because, in America, professional entomologists have not taken the time and trouble to