

Love, as a task of two equal persons of different sexes, calls for bodily and mental attraction, exclusiveness, and a total and final surrender. The right solution of this task of two persons is the blessing of socially adjusted persons who have proved their right attitude in having friends, being prepared for a useful job and showing mutual devotion.

Memorial Meeting for Alfred Adler*

A memorial meeting for Alfred Adler was held May 25 at A.F.H.Q. Educational Center, Caserta, Italy. At the meeting, D. Grossman, of the British Army, and Paul Plottke, of the Alien Pioneers, represented Individual Psychology, and Lillian Morrison, of the U. S. Army, read quotations, which included data on Adler's life, characterizing anecdotes and readings from his books.

In this month of May, 1945, it is eight years since Alfred Adler died. He was the founder of Individual Psychology. This new psychology is a scientific instrument whose usefulness is invaluable in leading humanity towards peace of mind. Adler was born in Vienna in 1871; after World War I he lectured as a guest in Universities and scientific societies of most of the European capitals; in 1929 he became professor at Long Island Medical College, New York; he spoke for the last time at the "Cercle Laennec" eight years ago, and ten days afterwards died suddenly in Aberdeen, Scotland, where he was to start a new lecturing tour through Great Britain. He is buried in Edinburg near the great Adam Smith, the author of the "Enquiry into the Origin and Nature of the Wealth of Nations."

Adler, who spoke a very charming Viennese German, had not cared in his youth to learn foreign languages. In Paris, he depended on his wife and friends for interpretation, but later he learned English, in about a year—well enough to take his place as professor in the U. S. A.

He rarely spoke about himself, but in one case he used his own life to demonstrate the dynamics for the mechanism of compensation that leads a person to become a physician. These facts, published in one of his books, show how he selected his profession in order to conquer death, this guiding fiction being derived from experiencing several dangerous situations and critical illnesses in his early years. As an infant he taught himself to stop crying, because this brought on a discomforting spasm of the vocal chords. He saw his prevention of crying not only as a method of preventing suffering, but also something to oppose the fear of death. At 3 years of age he saw a younger brother die; at 4 he twice fell unconscious under a wagon, and at 5 he almost died with pneumonia. From these events, Adler posited a goal that might put an end to infantile worry and the fear of death, and he began to picture his future profession as that of medicine. The choice was actually a courageous compensation for a feeling of inferiority inspired by the phenomenon of death.

*From a report by Paul Plottke.

Listening to Adler, one was struck by the simplicity, both of his exterior appearance and his way of speaking. He was definitely not an orator in the French sense of the word and, in his absence of emphasis rather more English. His writings, too, are surely less brilliant than those of Freud, who had spent many student years in France. However, each little remark of Adler's, aphoristic and dynamic, rather than abstractly systematic, was full of wisdom.

He once said that deep respect for others and modesty for our own activity will create the atmosphere in which the abstract social interest will best become a reality.

Courage, which is related to social interest, is an important conception in Adler's method of understanding and transforming human behaviour.

As it appears in the English translation of his "Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology," Adler's description of Individual Psychology is as follows: "Individual Psychology is not a limited science with a limited subject matter. It covers the whole range of psychology in one survey, and as a result it is able to mirror the individual unity of the personality." In contrast to the Freudian concept of the principal role played by the sex libido, Adler held that mischievous instincts arise from the inferiority complex of a spoiled child.

Many anecdotes have been told about Dr. Adler. Once he was sitting with his friends of the Dresden Individual Psychology Society in the drawing room of one of its members when the young son of the house, curiously and hesitantly, entered the room. Adler noticed him and opened wide his arms, to invite the boy to come to him, asking: "Whom do you belong to?". However, the lad withdrew quickly, leaving his father to relate the following: "When Hans asked me this morning 'who is the famous gentleman who will come to our house tonight?' I told him: 'It is he to whom you owe that you did not get all the spankings that I would have liked to have given you.'" A friend sitting in the circle said: "You might also have told him that it is he, under whose influence you lost a lot of clients." As a matter of fact, the gentleman of the house was a lawyer, specializing in divorce cases.

Once, eight years ago, a young French doctor came to see Adler after me, and Adler introduced us to each other. When this doctor gave me his card I noticed that he was living just two minutes away from my own place. I said laughingly: "And you had to come from New York to bring together two men who live in the same neighborhood." "Yes," he said quietly, "It has always been my function in life to bring people together."

One journalist reported that when Adler had collapsed on his way to the University at Aberdeen, a stretcher had been brought to carry him to the hospital. When he was put in it, he helped to push himself, so as to collaborate with and help the others who took trouble with him.—Even when life had, already, nearly flown from him.