

OUR DUTY

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Dr. Adler taught us to live at peace with our consciences. He lit the lamp of understanding that exposed to us our defenses, our evasive pretenses. He lit the lamp of understanding that showed us all goals in their nakedness. With this understanding, we could choose the path to our destination more intelligently and with more consideration. We are deeply indebted.

Since the day we felt we lost a leader and a friend we needed so badly, the ten bloodiest years of the bloodiest century in history have past. It is time we made an accounting of our debt.

How have we used the greater understanding? To boast? To feel superior? To look for a vantage point from which we can talk down and advise, so as to feel chosen, so as to feel that our knowledge is the only knowledge? The products of such labor are the seeds of future disaster.

The peace that has followed a most vicious war is a chaotic one. We are living in an era of constant change - and too many changes intensify confusion, the birthplace of neurosis. Labor and management, democracy and totalitarianism, white and colored, are in conflict. Today women refuse to accept inequality. Men fear equality. Nowhere do we seem to be able to turn to stable forces. Still these forces are present, though in our limited vista we see them not.

What part can we Adlerians play in these times? Let us not imagine we can do our share only in world-shaking activities. Our job is a modest but difficult one. We must change and improve ourselves. Then only in our daily contacts, at home, at play, and at business, can we serve for others, if not out of love, then out of respect for others as well as ourselves. This is social feeling in action. By fitting ourselves to be useful for others we have reduced by so much the confusion and the chaos of this world.

Adler's services and understanding were lent to us to pass on in our lives to others. Lest we become boastful because of this loan, let us recall an incident. Once Dr. Adler and Mr. Davis were discussing differences in their respective viewpoints. Finally Adler said, "Davis, what difference does it make who is more right, you or I, so long as we each contribute to the welfare of others?"