

IN MEMORY OF DR. ALEXANDER NEUER

In these days when so much bad news reaches us, we have learned that our friend Alexander Neuer died in Paris recently. He was a member of the very first group Alfred Adler had organized in Vienna in 1910. From this time, Dr. Neuer concentrated his thoughts and his work on the problems which Individual Psychology presents to the physicians, philosophers and intelligent men of our time. As a young Doctor of Philosophy he added the degree of Doctor of Medicine in order to master the difficult technique which Individual Psychology requires. Dr. Neuer knew, as few other men, all the currents, trends, and contradictory theories of modern thinking. He found his own way through these conflicting ideas. No dogmatic doctrine, no matter how firmly established, would have found in him a blind follower.

In his personal life, he was living proof of Individual Psychology's principles. Since youth, he was tormented by a relentless and painful disease. This did not hinder him from doing an astonishing amount of work in his kind, serene manner.

I saw him for the last time in November 1939 in a French concentration camp. The pain he suffered was immeasurably increased by the hardship of the concentration camp life. Nevertheless, amidst the many people complaining bitterly of their fate, he was always the smiling, comforting comrade. Thus, he not only worked and thought, but also lived in the spirit of Individual Psychology.

Dr. Carl Furtmueller, New York.

ALEXANDER NEUER

The god-father of Individual Psychology died with him.

We met more than 30 years ago, as freshmen in Medical School. But at that time, he already held a Ph.D. from the University of Vienna. Just like so many other students of philosophy, he felt dissatisfied with the barren theory of logic, metaphysics, and epistemology. To him, his college courses did not simply mean a gateway to a professional job. He was groping for the solution of problems which, he began to realize, required knowledge of facts. So he took up Medicine, working his way through Medical College.

About one year after Alfred Adler had separated from the Freudian group, Neuer joined our rather informal crowd, in one of the Viennese coffeeshops. I still remember how deeply impressed he was by Adler's ideas. "Doctor, you have something there! You probably don't know yourself how important it is!" Such was his first reaction. Indeed, he knew better than Adler could at that time. For him, the new thoughts of Individual Psychology stood against a background of all-round philosophical knowledge. For him, it meant, right from the beginning, far more than a psychiatric method, more even than a new approach in psychology. It meant the Copernican turning-point of philosophy. To Adler, the physician with some sociological education, Neuer was of invaluable assistance in the development of an adequate terminology. He introduced the concept and term of teleology into Individual Psychology, and he helped Adler realize that what he tried to accomplish was an approach to personality as a unit. In endless discussions with Adler, he eagerly received and accepted his teachings and returned them clarified and put into scientific terms. In

the course of this give-and-take relationship, Neuer became a psychologist, and Adler a philosopher. Henceforth, the two had an identical viewpoint. Adler felt, and often said, that Neuer was the one among his disciples who understood him best.

Neuer became a psychiatrist and a practitioner of Adler's method. Naturally, there was a personal touch in his way of treatment which was entirely his own. It was characterized by caustic witticisms, a sort of humor quite different from Adler's. With a pun, or even with a cynical remark made in a slang not to be translated, he would lay bare the threads of a neurotic structure so that the patient, while laughing, was deeply struck with a truth.

This man, a great teacher and a great scholar, surpassing all of us in knowledge, was, at the same time, modest to the point of humility. He could have written scores of books, just jotting down those things he knew better than anyone else, thus becoming the Plato of his Socrates, Alfred Adler. In fact, he did not write more than about a dozen short articles and pamphlets, most of them explaining, in a popular form, Individual Psychology. Virtually nothing of what he taught us in his lecture courses has ever been published. He always felt that what he said still was not final; critical of himself more than of others, he saw the potential objections and counter-arguments, and did not want to put into writing and into frozen print what he himself did not accept as a final formulation. So he died leaving nothing but the memory of an extraordinary man to those who knew him.

Life did not give him much outward success. Some time in the twenties, he moved from Vienna to Berlin. Just when success was within his grip, Hitler came, and he had to quit. Back to Vienna he went, then to Paris, to Palestine, and back to Paris again. There, the Nazis caught up with him. While never being actively interested in politics, he knew and everybody knew, that Adler's spirit and his teachings were incompatible with totalitarianism and dictatorship, be they red or brown. They would have killed him, if they had known what he really was. Fortunately for him, they did not understand him.

And they could not have killed the spirit, anyway.

Dr. Erwin Wexberg, New Orleans.

A FIGHTER FOR YOUTH

Kindness, modesty, human understanding and friendly interest - these are the characteristics of Ida Loewy's personality which come to the minds of her friends when they speak of her. That she also had the spirit of a fighter may seem at first surprising. Tumult and shouting are not the marks of the fighter, but the firm, determined belief in a cause. Ida Loewy was a disciple of Alfred Adler. She was truly devoted to his teachings which she mastered thoroughly.

She loved children. Her love was not superficial and pampering and thus weakening - it was a curative and helping love. And if she had to be, and she had to be many times, because "problem-parents" are just as frequent as "problem-children", then this small and quiet woman could indeed "get tough". She avoided offending the "adults", she never condemned high handedly, but knew instead how to make many parents realize