A COMMON STANDPOINT AND FOUNDATION FOR PSYCHOPATHOLOGY.

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IN a recent lecture on " Individual Psychology and the Bases of Science," Dr. Crookshank declares that Adler " like Socrates . . . condemns . . . the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, as a futile attempt to transcend the limits of human intelligence " (p. 54). Again (p. 48): " . . . the real problem is that of right living—the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake is a delusion and a snare, a delusion inasmuch as absolute knowledge is unattainable, and a snare inasmuch as it draws us away from the study of conduct ".

It is quite plain from these quotations that Individual Psychology has a normative standpoint—which distinguishes it from science—and that it studies its facts with a purpose, *i.e.*, it is at best an applied science. Of course, " pure " or " systematic " science is a " limit " or ideal. All knowledge must have its human aspect, namely its interest ; but the aim of science is to reduce this preferential factor to a minimum, or rather to present the facts in such a way as will serve not one only, but all interests equally well. This is a somewhat subtle and controversial point, but vitally important. Science regards purpose as a variant of bias, it seeks then to get rid of specific bias, substituting a generalized interest which we call the desire for knowledge for its own sake, *i.e.*, " pure " science. It is this, the mainspring and essential subjective characteristic of scientific pursuits, that Adler explicitly and roundly condemns ; and he claims the title of scientist ! Is this " right living " ? Is there not a morality of intellect as well as of conduct ? Did not Socrates—to whom Adler is likened—consider that clear thinking was a pre-requisite to right living ?

We must equally deny Adler's title to be regarded as a logician and philosopher like Socrates. True, he studies in the same field—that of ethics ; but every mathematician is not a Laplace or an Einstein, nor every student of life a Socrates. Socrates' method was in the highest degree analytic, definitive and critical. But for his normative interest, he might have founded a positive science of behaviour. Adler points out, quite rightly, the integral totality of each human life, and its extreme individuality. But this feature, of course, forms a barrier to its analysis into constant factors and mechanisms. I shall return to this ; but I would point out here how complacently Adler resigns

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himself to this limitation, and gives himself up henceforth to description and generalization.

Let us now return to the central idea of Individual Psychology—that a human being should be considered as a unique totality rather than as a sum of standard mechanisms, of which only the deranged ones concern the physician. No one would deny this as a fundamental principle of treatment, except those whose interests are to treat patients wholesale or to exploit some special panacea. Freud, in formulating the principle of over-determination, clearly recognized that it is impossible to consider " thought " as if it worked in a number of simple isolated causal series. He was perhaps the first to proclaim explicitly the relationship of mental illness to the life-history of the patient, and to show its utilitarian aspect in the patient's present situation (advantage-of-illness, defence, substitution, etc.).

The value of the Individual Psychology movement lies in the stress it lays upon the adaptation of the individual to his social environment and upon vigorous constructive living. The Freudian technique, and to some extent outlook, seemed until lately affected by the tacit assumption that *all* maladjustment to life proceeds from mental conflict, *i.e.*, endo-psychic disharmony of some kind. The resolution of this conflict, then, was the whole aim of analysis. The reintegration of the personality and its readjustment to life were not looked upon by analysts as the physician's concern. The analyst regarded himself as an operating surgeon. In these respects the patients were to be left to Nature, but, where there seemed no prospect of natural recuperation, the patient was merely regarded as unsuitable for treatment.

Freudian analysis, then, is a highly specialized treatment, and correspondingly limited in its application. In this respect Adlerism is an expansion, and may prove helpful in mental hospitals. But I hope to show that there is no logical incompatibility between practical Adlerism and the parent doctrine to justify a schism ; and the price Individual Psychology has paid for its individuality has been the loss of scientific impetus. Indeed, as I have said, the principle of Individual Psychology itself is a negation of science ; for science could not exist in a sphere where things and events were truly individual. Science exists to find regular sequences and identities in difference. Individuality can only be understood scientifically in so far as it can be resolved into particular patterns and quantities of definite factors, etc. ; *i.e.*, reduced to terms of what is *not* " individual ".

The aim of science is to provide reliable knowledge, which means conceptions that can be verified against actual experience. Science also must always provide for its own growth and modification, both by observation and by inference from its existing theories. It is essential for science that different observers should be able to compare their experiences by language and to impart them to students, so that the rising generation need not spend its

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whole life in attaining for itself the skill and experience won by its precursor, but can acquire this quickly, and use it as a foundation for further discovery on its own behalf. Now, every one of these essential functions of science depends upon its conceptions being defined. If they are left vague they can be neither proved nor disproved; they cannot be used as a basis for further inference; they cannot be used in discussion or teaching with any certainty of being understood as they were intended. Science therefore is compelled to analyse totalities into standard mechanisms, constant factors, etc., even at the expense of an admitted artificiality and inadequacy. It is compelled, too, to seek definiteness, as against the mystics, who measure everything with an elastic rule so that they can always say, " It is just exactly as I expected ".

In their own way species and organisms are also individual, yet the biologist compares the former in regard to resemblances and differences, and the physiologist analyses the latter into organs, tissues and " functions." The psychologist, it is true, has to deal with a yet more integral and individuated subject, and, in so far, has a more difficult task and greater likelihood of artificial analysis; but his purpose is the same—to make his knowledge of one case facilitate his understanding and treatment of another, and to pile up a body of abstract knowledge about minds in general which shall be acceptable to all observers as a basis of co-operative study, and shall be readily communicable to students. The fact of the extreme integration and individuation of mind is the principal obstacle to the progress of psychology; it is indeed well to bear this in mind; but it is not well to make it our starting-point for scientific discovery. If we do this—thus tacitly denying the possibility of analysis—how can we expect to attain general formulæ that are largely true of each individual?

Broadly speaking, Adler is concerned to describe total meanings and situations, and that on a normative basis. He does not produce a psychology at all, but a practical ethics. Granted it would be better to have this wisdom without psychological knowledge than the science without the wisdom, but why not both? Why take up a starting-point that tends rather towards descriptive generalizations, and condemns the detailed analytic formulation of mental process and development which we owe almost exclusively to the Freudian school? In scientific work it is better to be definitely wrong than vaguely right, for then it is possible to test and correct our ideas. It is Freud's great merit that he strives always to produce clear and articulated formulæ which can be demonstrated to be right or wrong. He does not usually rest content with vague generalizations which are " probable " or " possible ", but unprovable. He himself takes tremendous liberties with method, but, while this may exasperate the reader, it always leaves him thinking. The wisdom of Adler and the philosophy of Jung raise no problems that their platitudes do not easily lull to sleep. We may read these latter writers without

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stimulus, or neglect them without loss, but we must reject, or agree with Freud.

Turning now to the mainspring of Adler's teaching—the struggle for superiority. Freud would say that achievement has ultimately a sexual value. Adler says, "The striving for gratification is only one of the million varieties of the striving for superiority". For both, this generalization is rather a philosophic "coping-stone" than a working hypothesis. Both seem to be in error; but the type of error is characteristic of each. Freud finds the mainspring of all vital striving in "Eros", a definite instinct which is equipped with its own special organs, hormones, etc., and which is universal in the higher animals. It is therefore a *vera causa*. Adler finds it in a struggle for social superiority. But the social habit is virtually confined to man, baboons and a few other species; and, even so, social impulses cannot be operative in infancy. Freud, then, has taken a real and elementary factor in life as his theoretical "mainspring", while Adler has taken a highly abstract aspect of highly evolved behaviour for his. Both get into serious difficulties over aggressiveness, and seem rather to regard it as a separable component instinct than as, what it more probably is, a mere aspect of all thwarted instinct. The strength and weakness of Freud's theoretical position can be detected, but Adler's is much more obscure and intangible.

Up to a point Adler's clinical intuition has served him well. An enormous amount of human behaviour aims, directly or indirectly, at securing for the subject the regard of his fellows. Even crime, strife and greed, anti-social as they are, are largely motivated by distorted social ambition; so also is paranoia. We cannot suppose that mere "animal" wants are the incentive that lead a millionaire to run every risk and adopt any method to increase his already unspendable wealth. Such a struggle for wealth beyond any possible instinctual need or enjoyment, must be actuated by some desire for enhanced power, prestige, consequence, esteem or love. Our social tolerance of it also seems a tacit recognition that the motive is a social, not an instinctual one, and therefore not "shameful" or "blameworthy". I have actually observed clinically in a boy of five to six the metamorphosis of the desire for possessions for the sake of use and enjoyment, into a desire for ownership for the sake of the right to lend or to refuse, *i.e.*, for the social importance that ownership brings.

So far we are in close sympathy with Adler's clinical outlook, but we wish to know more about the composition and development of this "superiority goal". We know that man has an instinctual ancestry and infancy, and desire to know how and from what instinct roots his social strivings spring. We wish to know why different men seek different kinds of superiority—masochists indeed may seek supremacy in inferiority. "Social superiority" indeed is a concept so general and abstract as to have little more than

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descriptive value, which is all very well in a popular book, but is a poor starting-point for inductive science. It is again characteristic that Adler overvalues this abstract generalization. Freud's fault on the other hand is that, having traced to a common instinct origin two apparently widely divergent types of behaviour (sexual and self-preservative), he undervalues this developmental differentiation. We might say that Adler looks at the tree of life from above, and apprehends as the central fact of life the aspect of self-assertiveness. Freud, on the other hand, having traced one branch of the vital impulse—the sexual—back into its undifferentiated root and finding no hiatus, regards the latter also as sexual. Then, since all other branches, too, are continuous with root and stem, he exclaims, "Behold Eros!" Yet, aware of aggressiveness as an aspect of much vital activity, Freud reifies this as a death-instinct in a way that at least is definite. He faces the difficulties which confront him, and rarely takes refuge in mystical generalities. But the difficulty of fitting the death-instinct into the tree of life is insuperable. In his efforts to overcome it Freud even tries (in the course of two or three chapters of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*) to identify it with the self-preservative instinct, but in a way sufficiently definite finally to expose its own fallacy. We ought to remember that while Freud is attacking these problems with a view to definite solution, the leader of the Adlerian school finds time instead for writing a succession of popular books.

Dr. Crookshank rightly condemns feeble and facile eclecticism, yet, since Freud, Adler and Jung have worked for long at the same problems, it is inconceivable that the views of any one of them should be totally devoid of truth. Moreover the splitting of psychopathology into camps—Freudian, Adlerian, Jungian and "heretics"—is not for the good of the science. Must we heretics be illogical if we refuse to subscribe without reservation to Freud or to Adler? Is the distinction between these two not largely an artefact of partisanship and personal jealousy, and itself therefore illogical? I suggest that it is. I suggest that we can take up a perfectly logical position that recognizes the insight of Freud and the intuition of Adler, yet rejects as illogical certain contentions of each. Those who accept part of Freud's findings have always been open to the reproach of being half-hearted eclectics. Though ordinarily this reproach could be dismissed, yet in this case there is good reason—Freudians argue—to watch for exceptionally subtle bias. It is therefore *possible*—to take my own case—that though I was an enthusiastic Freudian until the "metapsychological" papers appeared, the resistances which were not evoked by the sexual aspect of Freud's theory of mind may have been dormant, and suddenly seized upon the illogical and unscientific aspects of the "metapsychology". Here, as many have observed, Freud abandons empirical-inductive method for what (for him) is intellectual libertinism. But during the course of ethnological studies this year it occurred to me that there was an apparently definite limitation to the

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application of the Œdipus explanatory principle and a correlatively definite rift in the logic of the Freudian psychology. This suggested to me that the "borderline" Freudians, like myself, might not really be so irrationally eclectic as we are considered. We might actually have something positive in common. It is easy for a great leader and pioneer to impress unity upon his followers; it is extremely difficult for independent investigators to reach identical conclusions, *i.e.*, to find themselves in agreement. What then, is the ground, common yet undefined, to Freud, Adler and ourselves? If we can discover such common ground, we can oppose a logical barrier to all extremists and repel the accusation of intuitive eclecticism.

We might even—by this discovery—create better conditions for psychopathological research in the future. For, lacking a common standpoint and some common premises, isolated workers are at a great disadvantage in every way; while, at the other extreme, the members of a school tend to have so much in common that individual initiative suffers. A leader tends to impose his own limitations upon his followers. Why should scientific workers form "sects" of "followers", valuable as "schools" are for propaganda where beliefs and objectives are defined from the beginning? To learn a prescribed lesson, a school requires a master; even in departmental science special tasks must be allotted, and work co-ordinated by an organizer or director. But for psychological research this arrangement is absurd. Beyond the enunciation of a method that will ensure mutual intelligibility, each collaborator should be as free as possible to exercise his own insight and initiative. I suggest that the analytic school has suffered from too much leadership. The genius and versatility of Freud have given him the first word and the last in nearly every application of his theory. May it not be that this very genius has a negative aspect, and inhibits originality in his followers, prescribing too narrowly the mode of interpretation? In the hope therefore of assisting co-operation among "unattached" workers, I have endeavoured to discover the logical highest common factor of Freud and Adler which I can accept.

Adler finds man's dominant incentive in the striving for power over his fellows, and recognizes that this begins in the nursery. Freud sees in all culture the sublimated metamorphosis of ungratified sexual wish. He also allows that this striving originates in infancy. He is indeed more emphatic than Adler on this point. Rank and Ferenczi recognize that dissatisfaction and ungratified longing begin at birth. Indeed we must suppose that these aspecific needs are coextensive with conscious life, and that some insufficiency of instinct-satisfaction is the incentive to all human endeavour; for, with satiety, effort fades. What, then, is the source of the unappeasable and undefinable longings that have driven man to his infinitely varied cultural achievement?

For the moment we shall suspend the Freudian interpretation of this

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formless and plastic urge. Our prime justification for doing so rests on this fact—upon which it appears both Freud and Adler are agreed—that this struggle for " dominance ", or whatever else it may be, begins in the pre-genital phase of infancy. It begins, in fact, the moment the mother fails to respond in a way entirely satisfactory to the infant ; from that moment all effort is directed towards making good the lack. It begins on the withdrawal of gratifications that have already actually been enjoyed, and which must therefore be replaced by sublimated interests. It begins, therefore, before the sex instinct has matured and been denied its objective. This longing and striving is not a mere appetitive urge, either nutritive or genital. It supplies a generalized emotional need corresponding to the de-specialization of instinct that occurs in human infancy (and in the higher animals) as I have discussed elsewhere. (" The Mother : Agent or Object," *Brit. Journ. of Med. Psych.*, 1932). The instincts of self-preservation in lower animals are directed with the most elaborate precision upon the outside world. In the human infant, on the contrary, self-preservation can only be attained by the continuous ministrations of the mother. Spontaneous efforts on its own part would not only be futile, but would actually endanger the infant's life. Of necessity, then, the self-preservative instincts in infancy manifest themselves almost exclusively in attachment to the mother. Its expressions are sucking, clinging and crying —all of which have the mother as their objective. We may suppose, if we like, that the vague sensual rudiment of what becomes the reproductive instincts appears about this time in a similar amorphous condition and with the same objective—thus aiding survival. From this almost non-specific instinctual root are differentiated all the instincts and culture interests of later life; but the process of development is to some extent forced upon the child. It is weaned, and must accept other food. As it grows up it has to do things for itself that formerly the mother did for it. She withdraws (perhaps bestows upon a younger baby) much of the direct personal interest it used to enjoy, and it now finds that her constant companionship can only be retained, not as the sole and direct object of her attention, but only by participating in her interests.

The deprivation of the mother, then, is the starting-point of the development of interest which has other than instinct goals. For his adaptability in this respect man has to pay two prices : first a prolonged and helpless infancy, and, secondly, a never completely specified, and therefore never completely satisfied, desire to do or to have " something else ". Of course it is never completely satisfied unless in the state of being " in love " or in the mother's absorption in her baby in turn, or in the præcox regression to an imaginary infancy. All these conditions are satisfying, and consequently accompanied by a proportionate withdrawal of interest from the real world. Innumerable instances could be given of an intuitive apprehension of this longing for a

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" communion of spirit " with somebody else. Perhaps it is a more general motive for religion even than that of propitiation for guilt. The latter, in fact, is itself very little more than the sense of severance from others. Every social ritual has as its aim the enhancement of the sense of fellowship and the dissipation of the sense of isolation.

This view differs from that of Freud in not accepting the persistent mother-child bond as specifically sexual, and in according therefore to the jealousy of the father only a secondary and contingent *rôle*. Indeed it is the father who is jealous of the baby as such, whether boy or girl, since it has already supplanted him in an important emotional respect. In general, this suggested modification of the Freudian theory does not appear either to be itself illogical, or to leave out much that is of universal application.

In regard to Adlerism, again, I am merely objecting to the conception of " superiority " as the goal of struggle, and to his failure to bear in mind that all social sense and striving must itself be an adaptation of instinct. Adler says sex is only one particular way of attaining superiority ; I would say that to attain superiority is only one particular—and not the best—way of binding other people to you. We strive to make other people feed us, need us and heed us. We wish to be of consequence in the world. But behind all these protean longings and strivings is the need for love (in the widest sense). This need in the infant is identical with the instinct of self-preservation as well perhaps as with the rudiment of Eros. Culture therefore must be regarded as developed from both, but particularly from the former instinct. After all, in human life the sex instinct is not so completely divorced from its original biological expression as that of self-preservation, though it may be more thwarted. The latter has to suffer such profound modification in the adaptation to infancy, and later to culture, that we must look upon it as the chief source of plastic interest.

I cannot here work out the significance of this and of the mother's handling of the infant for the genesis of the psychoses. For the moment I am only concerned to show why so much of human social behaviour assumes for Freud and for Adler such different aspects. For the former they are sublimated incestuous strivings or the reactions thereto. For the latter they are attempts to establish a " social superiority ". Freud seems to miss the mark when he attributes this primeval mother-craving to a definitely sexual urge. He is right to the extent that cultural drive originates in longing for the mother; wrong in calling it exclusively sexual longing. Adler's service consists in pointing out the essentially personal and social form which all this striving takes. All interests except the appetites have a personal origin and reference, *i.e.*, depend upon fellowship. Of course Freud expressly mentions this child-mother relationship, but, having done so, he does not allow it to affect his theory of the genesis of culture and psychopathy.

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My suggestion is that all cultural, all non-appetitive need originates with the infant's gradual privation of the mother, and that character formation and the differentiation of ideals, ambitions and " life styles " represent the various ways in which different people " make good " this primeval loss. Normally, I suggest, it is the mother herself who sets bounds to the infant's desire for her. And in the very act of denial she can hardly avoid indicating to the child-mind how it can best retain, recover or replace her. This is where the child, boy and girl alike, begins to covet the father's strength, authority and assured position with the mother. To them it appears as one way—the " dominant " sadistic and sexual—of recovering possession of the mother. Another way is to be a " good " and " helpless " baby, or to regain the mother's admiration and approval by being " great ". Yet other techniques seek, by surrendering the mother, to replace this lost " communion of spirit " by religion, by art, by comradeship, or by love. The girl (and even the boy) also may take the father as a substitute for the mother, and this satisfactory personal attachment is one reason why women are not driven to such intense cultural achievement as men. But, naturally, at the inception of this need for increased "*rapport*", the small child is impressed by the value of goodness and greatness. To it, it must seem that adults can have babies and mates, and can never be threatened with loneliness of spirit. The striving to command attention, to be needed and tended, originates in this crisis.

We can then apprehend the relation of Freud's and Adler's outlook. For Freud the male child seems always to model himself on the father in order to recapture the mother, or a substitute, human or cultural. For Adler, the child seeks always to be of importance (in a wider than sexual sense) to other people. Freud does not recognize the general nature of this emotional craving ; Adler does not recognize its origin as an instinct privation in the gradual severance of the child from the mother. Obviously they have each got hold of a different aspect of the truth. So we unattached workers, far from being illogical eclectics, have merely refused to be bound by the limitations of either school.

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