

The Kinsey Report and related matters

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la culotte pendue au mur au dessus du lit du sergent Louis et sortis suivi de mon ami qui portait ma valise. Les autres m'attendaient dans la cour.

Devant l'entrée de l'hôpital, à l'endroit où les ambulances s'arrêtaient, s'étalait une large flaque de sang. Elle était comme une grande étoile rouge. Je la regardai comme si elle était déjà faite de mon sang. Carpanéro la vit-il ? Quand la voiture s'éloigna, j'aperçus longtemps sa tunique blanche.

André du Dognon

The Kinsey Report and related matters

by H. S., New York

As one might have expected, the Kinsey Report has attracted much comment. Several books have taken up the figures which the Report presented to the public, and have supplemented and analyzed a great deal. Nor have the newspapers been entirely silent.

A small bi-weekly publication, «People Today» (March 26, 1952), carried a brief report under the title «Homosexuals in America» by a noted New York psychiatrist. The magazine must be highly commended for allowing an article of such extraordinary fairness to appear in its pages. The author deals briefly with statistics pertaining to military service, and states that «one out of every 200 male draftees» will be rejected on account of homosexuality. Noting the existence of the «curtain of silence», the device by means of which most newspapers withhold any fair information about HS, he proceeds to an outline of three case-histories from his own practice. The summary concludes with general statements on the nature and causes of HS. The author is inclined to feel that psychological, social and family influences are the causes, rather than hereditary or biological circumstances. As against Freud, who did not believe that a «cure» could be effected, our writer says that «some cures are possible to the extent of making an invert also capable of having 'satisfactory relations' with women». Some psychiatrists, we learn, are very confident that they can achieve a «complete cure». A patient of the writer says, «We homosexuals live in constant fear of discrimination. We are a persecuted minority.»

So much for the article itself. I am afraid that the first two of the case-histories given are representative only of those among us who have come into serious emotional conflicts and need treatment by a psychiatrist. Furthermore, it seems that in both of the cases mentioned, homosexuality is merely an accompanying factor, and does not constitute the main cause of the unbalance itself. Incest and an Oedipus conflict cause similar disturbances in hetero-sexuals, and it must be said that these psychological attachments are not necessarily stronger in the average adjusted homosexual than in other people. Understanding of homosexuals cannot come entirely from clinical cases or the psychiatrist's couch. There are well-adjusted homosexuals and heterosexuals; there are also

the sick or at least disturbed in both groups. The distinction must be drawn between those men whose conflicts require attention, who should seek counsel, and the others, who may not be entirely without conflicts — what would life without conflict or sensitivity amount to? — but who can nonetheless, or even on account thereof, live constructive, creative lives.

The article also raises in my mind the question of the advisability of marriage and an «adjustment» to bisexual relations. It appears to me that no homosexual should marry. If, however, such an urge is present, I believe that the person cannot be classified a homosexual. The genuine invert does not have any longing for sexual association with women; otherwise he must be classified as potentially bisexual or as not fully adjusted to his homosexual nature. From a social point of view marriage is hardly more commendable. Marriage implies as much loyalty and undivided devotion as we assume that genuine friendship does. Neither has to last a lifetime, nor is there any need to maintain a status quo when the relationship requires modification. Notwithstanding an exception to the rule, both marriage and homoerotic friendship are mutually exclusive, and it is up to the bisexual to find a *modus vivendi* which may suit his desires.

Another remarkably fair presentation of HS is contained in a small book, «Sexual Conduct of Bachelors» by Shailer Upton Lawton, M. D. (Sex Guidance Publications, Inc.)

The author quotes several noted authorities, mostly from the psychiatric field, on their view of the origin of HS and its meaning. All agree that either a strong father or a strong and influential mother, or the absence of father-love or mother-love, or too much father-love or too much mother-love lay the seed for a person's homosexuality. Of course, it is also agreed that either the youngest or the oldest son may be driven into that emotional outlook in later life. The love of both parents concentrated on their only son, or no love from either of the parents — as in the case of orphans — are also given as «explanations». We shall leave it to the learned and initiated to solve these contradictions. The outlook of Lawton and of most of the professional colleagues he quotes is, however, more constructive. The universality of HS is acknowledged, and the fact is stressed that we cannot be recognized by lack of virility nor singled out from other men because of effeminacy. But one must exercise reserve when the author and his authorities consider the danger of seduction of younger boys by older men. It seems that some factors are forgotten here. I believe that we can quite emphatically state that most homosexuals do not feel an attraction for the young, sexually immature boy, and that «seduction» is not the right word in all such cases. The emotional disposition of the boy approaching adolescence is quite often already defined, and though as yet unclarified, the subconscious desire leads, in a great many cases, to a coquettish or even more aggressive behaviour (the personality determining the approach) and the consummation of the act itself is then by no means «seduction». When such occurrences are brought to the attention of courts or other authorities, the picture by that time is generally distorted, pressure having been brought upon the boy or the young man of minor age by parents, guar-

dians or the legal counsel. Still these happenings are rare, and must be viewed in a proper perspective.

The solution offered does not amaze us. It is conversion through psychiatric treatment! Since it is felt that such a large undertaking will not be possible in the near future, the author concludes with a plea for tolerance which is well worth quoting, though allowing for certain differences of opinion. We cannot quite share the optimism of the disciples of psychological science; entertaining, as we do, an outlook which heterosexuals in our culture cannot easily absorb, we shall have to maintain a certain distance.

«To condemn homosexuality», Dr. English is quoted, «will never accomplish anything, but to accept it and work for its elimination (!) should help everybody.» Those words «should be engraved in gold on the walls of every American home and every American courtroom».

Some time ago quotations from «American Sexual Behaviour and the Kinsey Report» and some comment appeared in these pages. It is amazing that the book discussed in the preceding paragraphs expresses a thought in passing which I also discovered in this one. Both contain brief reference to the theories and work of Dr. Magnus Hirschfeld in Germany and reach a similar conclusion with respect to homosexuals in Germany. It is suggested that «a good many of them were attracted by the Nazi principles», and that «it is no secret that practically the entire Nazi government was composed of homosexuals». These are statements which show how conditioned even the scientist's insights may be. As for the first statement, one must realize that a difference exists between latent criticism in male society and consciously practiced homosexual life. As a matter of fact, these two features are generally deeply opposed to each other; if any evidence is needed, Germany between 1933 and 1945 can amply supply it. Our way of life was considerably more happy and free in Germany before 1933. It came to an end, at least in all its social and organized aspects, with the rise to power of the Nazi government, only to be revived gradually after the end of the war. It probably cannot be denied that some of our friends did favor the philosophy and politics of the Nazis. But a sharp distinction must be drawn between the reasons that may have led some into that ideology and the more general attitude of homosexuals with regard to governmental forms and political enterprises. The writers in both books seem to assume that we are as a whole, by reason of our desires and our disposition, an easy prey to totalitarian philosophies and inclined to accept more willingly a dictatorial rule. To say so is perfectly in line with most of the accusations made against us lately in America. Homosexuals are purported to have been used extensively as informants on secret matters by the Nazi government, and today it is said that we are security risks in government positions; only very recently the charge was made that homosexuals had gathered in the home of an Eastern diplomat and had supplied him with information. All this must be called by its proper name: scapegoating! — Loyalty to one's country is shared by heterosexuals and homosexuals alike, and there is no reasonable indication that homosexuals are weaker in this respect. As far as national histories and religious affiliations are concerned, we are no less a part of them than

others are. If something goes wrong in a country, we may assume that, like it or not, homosexuals share it — for better or for worse; this is determined not by the direction of their love, but rather by their upbringing and development. As a matter of fact, there is far more reason to believe that homosexuals will be on the side of freedom and of enlightened regimes, and even that a greater proportion than among the heterosexuals would defend such principles. For we can only live in a society which is liberal and tolerant, a logic which has apparently never occurred to our opponents, who would associate us with every possible evil that threatens their security — sometimes imaginary, at other times real. I see this very clearly with relation to the racial problems which haunt our American society. Interracial or intercultural association is in no segment of our population as frequent and as informal as among us. Social strata, national origin and income brackets are probably nowhere as irrelevant as in our circles.

If those who write about us would not jump to hasty conclusions, but would also try to see our side of the picture, they need only turn to some of our publications. It may be that the humaneness and compassion reflected in the homosexual press is not found in every one of our number, but I would at any time risk comparing heterosexuals and homosexuals with regard to their views on liberality, humaneness and prejudice. It is very regrettable that writers of otherwise liberal persuasion spread information for which they have no evidence except a bird's-eye view of Continental history.

What is the Big Brother Movement?

The Big Brother movement is a service which brings a mature, intelligent and well-rounded man into a personal, individual relationship with a growing boy who might otherwise lose his way in life.

Its essential principle is «One Man and One Boy.»

Since its founding in 1904, the Big Brother movement has been one of the most significant human efforts in the prevention and correction of juvenile delinquency.

Through the encouragement and counsel given freely by the man, a stabilizing and helpful influence is brought to bear on the boy in his formative years.

Early in its history, the Big Brother movement confined its work largely to boys who had become involved with the law. Later, the emphasis shifted more and more to boys showing tendencies toward delinquency, or living in such environments as offered little choice other than future delinquency. The movement was founded and is maintained by men who appreciate the influence that a man of good character can have in moulding the life of a boy trying to find his way; men who are aware that the principles engendered in youth are those that remain throughout life, and out of which the spiritual, social and economic patterns of the future are formed.