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THE HOMOSEXUAL
VIEWPOINT

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1967

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" . . . a mystic bond
of brotherhood
makes all men one."

Carlyle

magazine

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CONTENTS

- 4 "It Just Isn't Natural," by Jim Kepner
(August-September, 1957)
- 9 Some Historical Incidents, by J. P. Starr
(January, 1958, and October-
November, 1957)
- 11 The Homosexual and Democracy
by T. M. Merritt (January, 1958)
- 13 Homosexuality & Scientific Humanism
by T. M. Merritt (February, 1958)
- 15 A Glimpse, poem by Walt Whitman
(May, 1954)
- COVER, by Woody

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names of Ruth and Naomi, Plato, Sappho, Erasmus, Michaelangelo, Tennyson, Florence Nightengale, Carpenter and Gide are testimonials to the fact that homosexuality is not synonymous with degeneracy. Nor do homosexuals monopolize degeneracy. Any newspaper is daily witness to the degeneracy, vulgarity and sickliness of much of contemporary heterosexuality. And that idealized picture of happy heterosexual life is a bit more common in story books than in real life.

One last word from our critic, "But everyone has a duty to reproduce himself."

Whatever for?

The population of the United States and the world is increasing at an alarming rate. Not a single state in the U. S. is prepared for the deluge of children entering already overcrowded, understaffed schools. We need a lower, not a higher, birthrate. One would think that a handful of people who shirked this duty would be congratulated. And in some countries suffering from fantastic population explosions, giving birth to more children is socially immoral.

Society needs to face the fact that not everyone is fit to be a parent. Many homosexuals certainly would

not make good parents (most heterosexuals are bad enough.) Why force the creation of families that are only too likely to be maladjusted.

Instead, why not use homosexuals in those functions of modern society where a family is a drawback? Many scientific jobs run the serious risk of genetic damage. Why not reserve those jobs for men and women whose habits insure against the tragedy of monstrous offspring? Many jobs require a nomadic existence. Why wreck or strain families by putting heterosexuals in such jobs? There are many other occupations for which homosexuals show talent. Instead of trying to fit round pegs in square holes, society would benefit by learning to make full and tolerant use of the talents possessed by homosexuals. Ancient Greece found rich dividends in such policy. It could pay off again today.

If only our society would learn to accept Nature at face value (and not only in regard to homosexuality) and lay off the counterfeit . . . for this must be clear: the sex mores of our society are counterfeit. They are unnatural—against Nature. And every day we read in the papers the shocking price our society must pay for its rigid and unnatural attitudes.

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At the time when the Romans conquered Greece, about 200 B.C., there lived in Chaeronea, in Boeotia, northwest of Athens, an orphan, Damon Peripoltas, in beauty surpassing all of his age. A Roman army captain became passionately fond of the youth. Damon agreed to brook the accomplishment in him of the captain's desires on condition that the Greeks, Damon's people, be given freedom. The Roman captain agreed but was later unable or unwilling to live up to his bargain. Damon let himself be enjoyed; but at length he and sixteen of his companions daubed their faces at night with soot, set upon the Roman captain and killed him.

The city council, subservient to the Romans, assembled and pronounced sentence of death against Damon, but he fled before they could catch him. In the country districts Damon found time and opportunity to beget offspring. One evening as the magistrates sat at supper together Damon and his confederates broke into the hall and killed them. The Greek citizens made new decrees and let Damon return to his home, where he became head of the gymnasium. His posterity were still living in the environs at last report.

Alexander of Macedon, who lived between 356 and 323 B.C., loved women as well as boys and both in

SOME HISTORICAL INCIDENTS

By J. P. STARR

moderation. He was forever trying to reduce the number of women and other non-soldiers in his camp, and for that reason he favored sexual relations between men when he was on campaign. When Alexander made war upon Darius, king of Persia, and captured the Persian's wife, mother and daughters, as well as many other women, Alexander made a great parade of forbearance: presumably he was expected to rape them all. He even said, jesting, that Persian women were terrible eyesores.

Alexander came into Gedrosia, in Persia's arid southeastern wasteland, refreshed and feasted his army and went to see his favorite, Bagoas, contend for a prize in dancing. Having won the victory, Bagoas crossed the theater, still all but naked, and sat beside Alexander. The Macedonian soldiery present urged Alexander to put his arms around Bagoas and kiss him, which he did in the sight of the congregated soldiers.


On another day, after Alexander had undressed himself to be anointed and was playing at ball, just as they were going to bring his clothes again, the men who played with him brought him a young man and induced the stranger to undress before the king to show his musculature and graceful proportions. Upon the assembled companion's urgings, Alexander took the youth to a couch, to the onlookers' delight.

Agesilaus II, born 444 B.C., was king of Sparta from 397 to his death in 360 B.C. He fought against the Persians but formed strong friendships with Persian officers' sons when truces permitted. Spithridates of Pharnabazus and Megabates are the names of some of the Persians. Agesilaus, the Spartan king, felt superstitious scruples about bedding with the young Megabates. The Spartans were a superstitious lot, but this misgiving may have existed only in the reporters' minds: it was then as it is now the fashion to depict the Spartans as begrudging themselves pleasures and as afflicting themselves for conscience's sake. Not only did they have sex; they advised and helped one another in conducting courtships with third parties, males, both Greek and Persian.


Agesipolis, Agesilaus' fellow-king, was young, modest and ready in forming attachments for young men, and accordingly the two kings talked continually of love. The elder aided the younger and acted as his confidant. Such attachments in Sparta were entirely honorable, Plutarch tells us, and attended always with lively feelings of modesty, love of virtue and a noble emulation.

Indiscretion makes trouble, as is illustrated in a story dating from 72 B.C., when a Roman general, Quintus Sertorius, commanded an army in Spain. One of his subordinates, Perpenna, with another whose name was Manlius, plotted Sertorius' murder. Manlius was in love with a youth named Titus, and to strengthen the boy's affections Manlius disclosed the confederacy to Titus, bidding the youth neglect other bunkmates and be constant to him, Manlius, who was thus soon to gain great power.

But Titus loved another captain, Aufidius, better than he loved Manlius, and to Aufidius Titus told the news. Aufidius was one of the confederates, but he had not known that Manlius was one, and when Titus named Perpenna and others as parties to the conspiracy Aufidius was terrified. Aufidius went to Perpenna, notified him of their danger and of the shortness of their time and counselled Perpenna to act upon their design immediately. So they killed the general, Quintus Sertorius. Because of the premature killing, the plotters failed to consolidate their winnings; and when Pompey, another general, came to Spain he suppressed the revolt.



How dull they seem whose lives in ancient his'try's dust recline:
But once, as we, they throbb'd with life, enjoyed their food and wine,
So, e'er death shut fore'er our mouths . . .
One lesson do we learn from Arab, Roman, Jew and Greek:
. . . (obscure passage) . . . must once a week
Or oft'ner if occasion serve . . .
Lest fatherhood redundant render life and culture bleak
And fratricide bring hurt and death to bodies young and sleek.



THE HOMOSEXUAL & DEMOCRACY

By T. M. Merritt

It is not often that one has the opportunity to participate in a situation of historical importance, one wherein the remote consequences are likely to affect the happiness and welfare of countless numbers of people. One Institute with its plans and activities seems to this writer to be such an occasion.

The theme of the history of Western Europe in its social development has been twofold. It has in both cases referred to the obtaining of the goods of life which have changed but little in their major categories in historic times. Man wants the satisfaction of certain basic economic needs: food, clothing, and shelter, a satisfying family or love life, participation in community life as a respected member, health or physical welfare, a religious or philosophical outlook on life, that is, some understanding or explanation of the world wherein he finds himself, wholesome recreation activities, and finally the means of communicating with his fellows. Of course there are infinite variations in detail, but essentially man's wants, or values, if you wish, fall into these categories and he spends his time and effort to secure the satisfactions thus included. The theme of the development of the history of Western Europe refers first to the distribution of the satisfactions of life. Some men have always enjoyed the goods of life, such as they were, but all too often at the expense of others, that is, by exploiting them, or by climbing on their shoulders, one might say. At this point history shows the unending struggle to achieve a broader dis-

tribution of the goods of life and the principle emerges that everyone is entitled to such of the goods of life as he has the capacity and interest to make use of in so far as he does not encroach upon the same right of others. This principle may be termed that of democracy and its ever greater realization becomes the goal of social evolution. Some thoughts on this subject are the content of the present paper.

The second aspect of the theme refers to the technique by which the goods of life are obtained and is the more philosophical side of the question. Here it suffices to say that man is coming to an ever greater recognition that rationality or intelligence provides the technique above all others for the increase of his welfare and happiness. This topic will be elaborated in the second part of this study.

As was said before, in all epochs some men have enjoyed such goods as there were and it has been man's fate to have to strive unrelentingly sometimes to dislodge a greedy and monopolizing minority from positions of power and perhaps oftener to secure the recognition of the majority if one belongs to an unpopular minority. The content of history is largely made up of examples of such efforts. A few will be given.

The often-praised cultures of Greece and Rome were superstructures built upon slavery of a most degrading kind. It is said that the free youth of Greece, when the Helots became too numerous, went out at night and killed them for sport as modern

youth might shoot rabbits. The long struggle of the centuries to abolish slavery is only too well known and, that the battle for human equality is not yet entirely won, recent events of so-called racial antagonism prove only too clearly. The light colored ethnic groups may yet have to undergo profound humiliation before they grant justice and equality to the darker peoples in the pursuit of the goods of life.

In this writer's opinion there is no darker picture in history than that of the exploitation of children in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the coming of the industrial revolution in Scotland and England in the newly established factories where they were chained to the machines and died like flies. It took a whole social movement created by Robert Raikes, Robert Owen, Charles Dickens, Heinrich Pestalozzi, Friedrich Froebel, and others to break the hold of the industrialists and emancipate the children, and child labor abuses still appear from time to time.

For many centuries women were subordinated and exploited by men. Even in the United States, which has been one of the foremost countries in the world to recognize the rights of women, as well as in England, the struggle for the right to vote was carried on with a bitterness that is now being forgotten. In England Emmeline Pankhurst was considered a fanatic or worse when her women threw acid in the mail boxes to get the attention of Parliament. Recently it has been proposed to raise a monument to her memory. In the Middle East where the movement for the emancipation of women is still in the earlier stages, an old sheik was reported to have killed his several grown daughters rather than have them appear in public without the symbolic and oppressive veil.

The repudiation of colonialism in our own time is a late recognition of the fact that the beauty and charm of the life of the aristocracy of Europe has little justification when based, as it has been, on the degradation and misery of the more primitive peoples of the world. The intolerable poverty of India reflects no credit on the great British Empire. It has taken the world-wide upheaval of two great wars to bring about awareness of the injustice of the subordination of one nation to another.

Although they have existed throughout recorded history, homosexuals have doubtless not thought of themselves as belonging to a minority group in society which suffers unjust discrimination and limitation in its freedom to seek the satisfactions of life, precisely as any other group. Thus in a sense they are the last minority group to join the procession toward a more perfect democracy. As in the cases previously mentioned, a group of courageous and self-effacing leaders stand at what is practically the beginning of the movement to secure fair and just treatment for this minority. It is here that One Institute finds its historic importance, one of the very first organized attempts to change the situation both as to the attitudes of the individuals within the group and as to those of society in general which is as far from real understanding as were those of a bygone age who held that slavery was ordained of God. Education, publication, conferences, counselling — all these activities and others serve to awaken a consciousness of the problems involved and give knowledge which will support valid solutions. Its success and appeal thus far give promise of a future which may well invite the cooperation of all who are interested in bringing about a happier and more democratic world.

HOMOSEXUALITY AND SCIENTIFIC HUMANISM

T. M. MERRITT

It was stated previously that a second aspect of the theme embodied in the social evolution which marks the history of Western Europe was the gradual acceptance of the principle of rationality as the most effective technique for the solution of man's problems arising out of his efforts to obtain the satisfactions of life. It is the purpose here to examine the concept and trace its development somewhat.

It was among the Greeks that the nature of thought was first looked into in our Western World. It was also the Greeks who taught man to seek the solutions of his problems by his own efforts, rather than to depend upon a mystical other world existing behind a veil. Heraclitus taught that truth and acting as Nature bids. Protagoras taught that man the individual is the measure of all things. Rationality among the Greeks, some times called "the Greek spirit of free inquiry," consisted of first the desire to know, then the determination to find an explanation for phenomena in harmony with reason, and finally the qualities of open-mindedness, sincerity, industry, and power of observation. This humanistic view of rationality caused largely the break-up of the older religious sanctions and brought on the Age of Pericles (445-431 B. C.) which was the high

point of Greek history. Greece fell as a nation about the beginning of the Christian Era and Rome followed with the rise of the Roman Catholic Church. For centuries after the fall of Greece and Rome, rationality or the Greek spirit of free inquiry was lost and authoritarianism became the dominant mode of thought. All wisdom came from God and gradually seeped down through the Pope and clergy to the common man, disbelief or heresy being the chief sin to be stamped out by fire and sword if possible.

Although rationality was in abeyance during the Middle Ages, it was not entirely lost and there were individuals and centers where real scholarship was cultivated. There were also certain historic events: the Crusades, the growth of towns, trade, commerce and industry, Scholasticism, and Chivalry, which tended to stir men's minds. Then, too, the ancient manuscripts from Greece and Rome had been preserved by the monks in the monasteries, although this fact was not generally known and had no effect until the fourteenth century when an Italian scholar named Petrarch discovered them and brought them to public notice. Immediately a great furor arose and everyone wished to learn Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. With the finding of this material the Greek spirit of free inquiry was re-

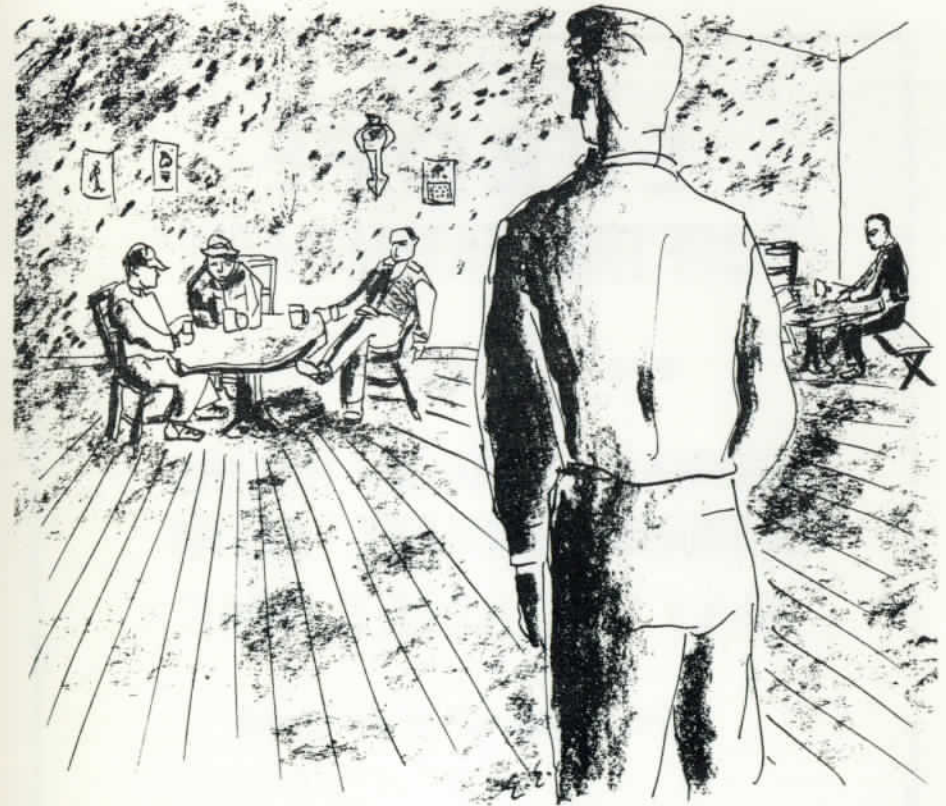
captured and the brilliant period of history known as the Renaissance was ushered in and the modern man characterized by questioning and thought came on the scene.

The first century after the Renaissance was the sixteenth and as religion was the major interest of the Middle Ages, it was the first area of culture to feel the force of the new thinking and the outcome was the Reformation which broke forever the hold of the authoritarianism of the Catholic Church. The seventeenth century was marked by the application of rational thinking to the natural world and science and discovery resulted; the eighteenth to the political world and absolutism in government went by the board; the nineteenth to the industrial world and the democracy of trade unionism resulted; the twentieth to all human relationships and the fixity of tradition has been broken in many fields. It is here that for the first time sex relations can be examined in the light of scientific and rational thinking and homosexuals have the hope that emotional prejudice and bias may give way to a truer and more just evaluation.

While the humanistic principle of free inquiry is far from complete application to the concerns of man's search for welfare and happiness, it has made a magnificent start and has influenced all types of philosophy. More specifically and explicitly the term scientific humanism is coming to represent the thinking of intelligent people especially in the rejection of most of the supernaturalism so long taught by the authoritarian religions. It is a man-centered belief, he having emerged from nature as a result of a continuous process and become a free agent in the seeking of his own destiny. To be sure he is a product of his inheritance acted upon

by the natural and social environment, but as an active participant in it he has the ability and the duty to help remold it, that is, take an increasing part in solving its problems. He is at this stage an active and conscious agent in his own evolution. The test of all action, purpose, and experience as well as of all social institutions is their human significance. Humanism is concerned with art, science, labor, friendship, love—all that is expressive of satisfying human living. The realization and fulfillment of human personality are the aim of all of man's living and the fact that it takes place in a social setting makes it incumbent upon him to work constantly for social betterment. Rational attitudes and processes of free inquiry are to be central to all education. Emotional satisfactions grow out of the enjoyment of art, literature, music, drama, nature, and participation in the cooperative effort to promote social well-being. In sum (quoting from the Humanist Manifesto): Man alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams and has within himself the power to work for its achievement. He must set intelligence and will to the task of realizing the good life for all men everywhere.

Thus, according to this philosophy, the homosexual has within himself the power to make and determine his own life through the agency of his own intelligence. He is not dependent upon some mystical and supernatural agency working within the shadow, whom he may never know and whose negative blows he must accept with equanimity. But he is still not alone. The brotherhood "which makes all men one" is with him and in association with kindred spirits working for the same goals and ideals he may find a deeper satisfaction than he had hitherto known. One has here the deeper meaning of One Institute.



A GLIMPSE

A glimpse through an interstice caught,

*Of a crowd of workmen and drivers in a bar-room around the stove
late of a winter night, and I unremark'd seated in a corner,*

*Of a youth who loves me and whom I love, silently approaching
and seating himself near, that he may hold me by the hand,*

*A long while amid the noises of coming and going,
of drinking and oath and smutty jest,
There we two, content, happy in being together, speaking little,
perhaps not a word.*

From: LEAVES OF GRASS - by Walt Whitman