THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY

WILLIAM H. K. NARUM *

Perhaps no two philosophers in the world, and none in history, would agree totally on a definition of philosophy. This is because the definition of philosophy is part of *a philosophy*. In other words, if one is an "Idealist" in philosophy, and Idealism is *a philosophy*, he will define philosophy somewhat differently from a "Realist," or a "Pragmatist." If the reader is new to philosophy, these "isms" are but names, although he may have heard them used before, and vaguely identified them with "philosophy." A preliminary distinction to keep in mind, therefore, is that between "philosophy" and "a philosophy"—the former referring to a distinctive area of human learning, and the latter referring to a viewpoint. As we shall soon point out, one of the distinctive features of philosophy as an area of learning is that one cannot avoid a viewpoint. One always philosophizes with a viewpoint; even a beginner does. Furthermore, since people often speak of "Gandhi's philosophy," or "Hegel's philosophy," or "my philosophy of life," let us inquire into the meaning of philosophy as a viewpoint first.

Philosophy as a Viewpoint

In the popular sense, as when someone remarks that "my philosophy about that is . . .", philosophy as a viewpoint means *"the sum of a person's beliefs."* (W. E. Hocking). As Hocking has pointed out, by "beliefs" is not meant the *opinions* a person *entertains*, but the *beliefs* a person *lives by*. We entertain all kinds of opinions: about who will win the baseball pennant, about the latest movie one has seen, about the latest fad in fashions, etc. We sometimes say of these opinions: "I believe that . . ." although it would be more accurate (but also more awkward!) to say "I *opine* that . . .". But we would hardly say that these opinions constituted our philosophy of life. Thus, if philosophy means the sum of a person's beliefs, we mean beliefs that he lives by, beliefs that determine his way of looking at things. G. K. Chesterton once wrote:

> There are some people—and I am one of them—who think that the most practical and important thing about a man is still his view of the universe. We think that for a landlady considering a lodger it is

* M.Th., Th.D. (Princeton Theological Seminary); Chairman, Dept. of Philosophy, St. Olaf College; Rockefeller Visiting Professor of Philosophy, Dept. of Philosophy, University of the Philippines, 1964-65.

> important to know his income, but still more important to know his philosophy. We think that for a general about to fight an enemy it is important to know the enemy's philosophy. We think the question is not whether the theory of the cosmos affects matters, but whether in the long run anything else affects them.[1]

William James, the American philosopher, commenting on this, said:

> I think with Mr. Chesterton on this matter. I know that you, ladies and gentlemen, have a philosophy, each and all of you, and that the most interesting and important thing about you is the way in which it determines the perspective in your several worlds.[2]

An example, cited by Hocking, is that of a physician, who does not merely *entertain* the opinion that lives are worth saving, but he *lives by* such a belief. In his world of medicine, that is his philosophy. But, of course, we live in more than our "professional" or "business" worlds—in all our activities, day by day, we live by our beliefs about life and death, good and evil, politics, religion, and the life—the sum total of which we call our "philosophy of life."

Philosophy as a Discipline

To put it briefly, the study of philosophy—philosophy as a discipline of learning in a college or university—is, from the standpoint of our own philosophies, the *examination of the beliefs we live by.* In what areas do these beliefs fall? Basically into questions about truth, reality, and value.

Let me use examples. A student is pursuing one of the sciences, say psychology. Now as a scientist he is asking what is true about the human mind as an object of study. But as a scientist he does not ask the question, what is truth? That is a philosopher's question, and when anyone raises it he is philosophizing.

Or let us say you are a biologist. But as a biologist you specialize—you cannot study physics. So you know you are abstracting —that is, in the original sense of that word, you are "cutting off"— a part from the whole. But the whole is not physics either, or not even physics plus biology. Each science, or each discipline, might be called "a partitive consideration of reality" (Alfred Stern). Methodologically this is necessary—if you study law, you cannot at that point study art. But the result is that scientific knowledge— or "partitive learning"—is fragmentary. That is why our longing for knowledge is not satisfied by this fragmentariness. Thus, philosophy is the search to unite these partial truths in relation to the

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[1] G. K. Chesterton, *Heretics* (New York: John Lane Co., 1909), p. 15.
[2] William James, *Pragmatism* (New York: Meridian Books, Inc., 1959), p. 18.

whole of reality and knowledge. It asks: what is reality—not this or that aspect of it—but reality as a whole.

Thus far we have spoken of beliefs about truth (logic and epistemology) and beliefs about reality considered as a whole (metaphysics). But we also mentioned the term "value." Here again one can use science as an example—not because it is the only possible one, for I could use business, or government, etc., but we are in a university which attempts to embrace the teaching of all arts and sciences so far as possible, and the use of science as an example is just what lies close to hand. But any given science, for example, which is interested *in the relations of objects* (that it can categorize by relations of quantity, etc.) not only abstracts a portion of reality but thereby abstracts also from values. A botanist may have his private notion about the beauty of a flower he studies, but that is irrelevant to his objective study of the processes of a plant. But certainly the flower in this concrete context *is* beautiful. But does not art take care of the beautiful? The only point is: there are many arts. No one art studies "the beautiful"—each aims "to create beautifully" in its particular art. So just as science asks "what is true?" but not "what is truth?" even so the arts ask, "how can we create beautifully?" but not "what is beauty?". Philosophy does raise the question of value—not merely beauty, but also goodness (esthetics, ethics).

Thus, philosophy as the examination of our central beliefs—beliefs about truth, reality, and value—is a critical study of their foundations, and of their significance for the idea of the whole of knowledge and reality.

Philosophy has had its ups and downs—from Greece, through the Middle Ages, to the moderns. Modern philosophy has been fighting a battle on two fronts: those who try to make it a handmaid of theology, and those who try to make it a handmaid to the sciences. The former is well-known to you as scholasticism. Positivism in its varieties—perhaps the one known best to you is logical positivism—takes the latter view. In each case, philosophy is lost—in the one type it becomes an instrument of theology, barely different from it. And in positivism we find a revolt of philosophers against philosophy, substituting "unified science" for philosophy. The positivists are correct in seeing science as the dominant fact of our modern culture, but they are wrong in thinking it can make do as philosophy—it was never cut out for that purpose, has never performed that function anywhere, and, psychologically, science can never be this for man.

What arouses us to philosophize? The ancient philosophers said it was "wonder"—this is the most genuine philosophical feeling. When we marvel at our existence, or that anything exists, or at the universe, etc., we are moved to philosophize—to ask, what is it all about?; what is its meaning? It is a contemplative attitude.

The modern ideal is somewhat different. For one, we think knowledge is power—and Descartes got the modern age off with the notion that we must start from doubt, not wonder. It is true, perhaps, that modern *science* has adopted both; yet modern science is not contemplative. A scientist places a substance under some energy in order to see how it reacts. Some philosophers think philosophy ought to do the same, so say the pragmatists. Truth is what works. But in so doing they have, in my opinion, dried up the very source of philosophy and science, too: intellectual curiosity.

Looked at a little more objectively, instead of in relation just to our own philosophies, we can perhaps begin to see that philosophy is not just interested in objects—knowing objects, how they relate to one another, how they operate, etc. It is interested in the relationship between *man as a subject* and *the objective world*—and thus truth, reality, value: each area must include both. A physicist may say everything he studies is atomic—but he does not say his own science *qua* science is atomic. A philosophical theory must account for itself, on the other hand. Thus a philosopher who would say: "everything is matter," must be prepared to show how it is possible for matter to theorize. The self-world relation is, therefore, perhaps our fundamental philosophical starting-point. *Nature, man,* and *God*—these, said Kant, are the three basic unitary conceptions behind all our thinking and creating, and if we agree, then *a philosophy* seeks to bring these three together into a unitary view. Moreover, a philosophy sees the necessity of explaining more closely in what the reality of these things consist, and how we are able to think about them. *Metaphysics* and *epistemology,* while they sound foreboding to the beginner, are but names for the endeavors of thinking through these problems. A complete system of philosophy would also include the other fields of philosophy that we have spoken of. It would be a mistake, however, to think of the main branches of philosophy as distinct provinces. They are but different ways of approaching a single problem, namely, what is the unitary conception, a philosophy of life, by reference to which all the facts and values of life may be seen to have meaning and worth.

If arts and religion also give us some intimations of ultimate reality, why not be satisfied with them rather than turn to what many consider the bloodless and abstract procedures of the philos-

ophers? Why not simply *enjoy* truth, as in art, or *worship* Truth, as in religion? Everything depends here on what we mean by truth, and what is meant by reason in philosophy compared to reason in art and religion. In a fallacious understanding of them, we set them against each other, as if art and religion had nothing to do with reason. But on the contrary, the insights of the artist, and the worshipful attitudes of the believer, his sense of the holy, are expressions of the depth of reason, not something irrational. Only if reason is reduced to the operations of logical analysis, to "discursive" reason, would art and religion be "irrational." But reason is more than discursive—it is what Aristotle called "intuitive reason" first and foremost, and in fact, discursive reason is a derivation from it. Paul Tillich has called the former "entological reason," and the latter "technical reason". Whatever we call it, reason is much wider than logic. Thus we find in art and religion that problems naturally arise in our minds wherein philosophy enters, not to spoil the immediacies of enjoyment and worship, but to relate truth as seen in art to truth in religion, science, and the like. To compare their values, to relate them to the whole of life, we need thought—not something radically different from what is exercised in religion or art—but a *different exercise* of the same faculty, one trained to look at things in a unified way. As Aristotle said, we have no real choice whether to philosophize or not—we do it willy-nilly. "If we say that we should philosophize, then we must philosophize; but if we say that we should not philosophize, then in order to show that we should not, we need to philosophize." If someone would claim that an art, religion, or a specific science was sufficient for a philosophy, he would be required to show that it is true, and this is a philosophical task whether one wants to engage in philosophy or not.

Therefore, let us look again at the relation of philosophy to the sciences. The ancient philosophers who first gave the name philosophy to this kind of inquiry said they were "only philosophers"—*lovers of wisdom.* In its long history philosophy has been the mother of the sciences, for many fields we call "science" today were formerly a part of philosophy (physics, for example, was called "natural philosophy"). "Wisdom," as Whitehead has said, "is the way in which knowledge is held." What makes a field of inquiry a science is that it is only concerned with knowledge—that is, "the positive nature and the laws of a certain group of facts, which have been selected out from the rest of the world to be studied by themselves" (Rogers). Philosophy is always concerned with the whole, with an attempt to hold together in some comprehensive way all the

scattered fragments of science, art, religion, morals, social life, and what have you. It seeks wisdom, it seeks to answer the question: what is the meaning of life? Even when we speak of a philosophy of science, or of history, and the like, we are seeking to move beyond the particularity of that field to see its connection with the whole, to ask what meaning it has for life in its fullness. Unlike science then, philosophy does nothing to increase our stock of information about particular facts or events, but it discusses the way in which facts or events are to be *interpreted* if we wish to think consistently and gain a view of the whole. Such a philosophy is *a philosophy,* consciously arguing for its own position. A philosophy does not create morals, religion, art, or science, but it takes these areas of human experience plus the myriad other values and experiences of life and seeks to work out their relationships, and to get some unitary point of view which gives justice to each. "But by this very process it will be making a positive addition to the value of experience itself, not by creating truths which are entirely new, but by clearing up and throwing new light upon the meaning which already has been present in our lives, and so making it more real to us." (Rogers).

The Functions of Philosophy

If to philosophize is to examine beliefs, we need now to ask what philosophizing consists of—what are the functions of philosophy? C. D. Broad, an English philosopher, divides philosophizing into three functions: synopsis, criticism, and speculation. Charles Hendel of Yale has a slightly different classification, regarding the functions as critical, constructive, and speculative. Let us try to combine their understandings in some such fashion as this:

I. General Function: Synopsis

II. Special Functions: Critical and Constructive (Speculative)

(I) By the general function (*synopsis*) we mean as Broad says the feature that is always present in a philosophical work. As he puts it:

> A strong and persistent desire to see how the various aspects of experience hang together is perhaps the one characteristic common and peculiar to philosophers. I understand by the word 'synopsis' here the deliberate attempt to view together aspects of human experience which are generally viewed apart, and the endeavour to see how they are interconnected. ("Two Lectures on the Nature of Philosophy," in *Clarity is Not Enough,* p. 61).

This would be as true of epistemology as of ethics and all the other fields. Philosophical problems arise because philosophers have pushed

beyond what is often called "common sense," which accepts superficial conclusions about such matters as sense perception, right and wrong, and the like. With his training and familiarity with philosophical problems, the philosopher seeks to assess what are the relevant facts, to be aware of the wide sweep of such facts which common sense ignores, and to know how to relate them to a coherent pattern.

(II) By the special functions we shall mean—again followed Broad—features which *need not* be present in *every* philosophical work, but at least *one* of them would be.

(1) *Critical.* The first phase of this task is to bring to light the actual presuppositions of our philosophical views—whether they be in epistemology, ethics, or what. Take ethics: any person who attempts to do right and avoid wrong-doing is acting according to a presupposition—according to some ethical theory. That he has such a theory, however, would be a surprise to most people. Thus, a preliminary phase of the critical function is to make *explicit* the principles that are *implicit* in our minds. Then comes the next phase of criticism, to submit the principles that have now been made explicit to the searchlight of critical intelligence. Are these principles true? Do they hang together with other principles we hold? Have they been held by us merely out of prejudice, or out of "tenacity" (beliefs held just because we hold them), or what?

This moving out of uncritical acceptance of certain principles or beliefs into a searching criticism of them has made some beginners in philosophy uneasy. They feel that all the foundation of their beliefs are slipping out from under them. But if one of the purposes of education is not "to prolong infancy," but to grow up into responsible adulthood, it is necessary for a person to be able to face all the criticisms of his beliefs that will inevitably confront him both in college and as he moves into adult society. To use ethics as an example, can one really be content with crude and uncriticized notions of moral authority, moral obligation, and moral sanctions? Our ethical beliefs have grown by constant alteration and accretion, and we have taken little care to revise what we learned before, and there is even the possibility of contradictory principles quite at odds with one another lying side by side in our minds. There may even be rudimentary ideas, like the appendix in our body, that need to be rooted out. The critical process is often painful, and seems often to be totally negative, but it is needed for the positive task of pulling our beliefs together, and giving us a stronger, "critical" set of beliefs. The resultant beliefs may even be identical with the beliefs

we held uncritically before, but now they will have "an anchor in reason," as Plato said.

It might be added, as Prof. Hendel says, that one of the advantages of doing this in a college or university is that it provides an opportunity "for the young and spirited to begin the naturally critical phase of experience among older persons who have themselves been through the mill and who can guide them in the essential task of growing." For it is not just philosophy that is critical and is responsible for the young people becoming critical and doubtful of their former beliefs. It is a natural phase of growing up! Some adults will never want their young to grow up, and are thus even suspicious of education in general. The difference between philosophy and most other disciplines is not in the fact that philosophy is critical and the others not—on the contrary, all are critical of "common-sense" ideas. But philosophy is concerned with beliefs that lie at the sensitive core of our existence, whereas our rudimentary scientific beliefs, for example, do not concern us so centrally. That is why philosophy is legitimately regarded as more "dangerous" by those who wish to protect their young from maturing, whereas they do not object to their growing up in some science which does not affect their central beliefs so intimately. However, would it not be strange to encourage a lopsided growth of knowledge at the expense of wisdom? Will we not produce what General Bradley warned against—"technological giants but ethical infants"? Infantile notions occur in other areas of philosophy as well. Certainly in our time of political conflict which takes on philosophical dimensions and not merely political ones, nations need to develop philosophical wisdom as well as technical and scientific know-how. As James B. Conant has said (and I am paraphrasing), any dictator wishing to destroy a nation will leave its scientists alone but will liquidate its poets and philosophers.

Thus, for educated people to be content with half-baked philosophical ideas while at the same time becoming highly sophisticated in science and technology would be to rob themselves as well as their nation of the full-grown leadership educated people should provide. To become philosophically critical is to become intelligently critical in an area where too often discussion becomes the mere exchange of opinions, or dogmatisms. By becoming aware of the problems of philosophy, and particularly of the way in which the philosophical tradition has dealt with such problems, the student should be put upon and assisted to remain upon "the road to honest belief and personal integrity" (Hendel). As Brand Blanshard once put it:

> A belief that is true but unreasoned is at the mercy of the sophistries of the day. A belief that is false, if it is also reflective, carries the means of its amendment with it. Thus, to touch into life the student's own philosophic interest, though it provides him no ready-made belief, sets his feet on the road to attaining beliefs of his own, which, because they are authentic achievements, have vitality far greater than any that could be handed out to him. Indeed, such awakening does much more. In stirring him to autonomy of mind, it helps him to maturity of mind. And it reveals to him as nothing else can the meaning of intellectual integrity. (*Philosophy in American Education*).

Thus, while criticism may seem nothing but destructive, the true goal is reconstructive. No man can be satisfied with mere criticism anyway. He wishes to drive through criticism to the right conclusions on the other side. In order to criticize, which is to pass judgment on beliefs, a person must have standards or principles of judgment in the light of which he passes such judgment. Many of these are implicit, to be sure, explicit. Incidentally, this is partly the explanation of an intrinsic difficulty of philosophic thinking—its self-critical nature. One does not merely act according to his own principles, and criticize alternative principles—but one must always be open to criticism of one's own principles. Only then can one move on to the constructive task of philosophy. Plato called the critical side of thought the "puppy dog" stage, and there are college student who are so delighted with their first exposure to constructive thought. They delight to criticize any possible view. The mature thinker, however, realizes that the function of criticism is not to destroy but to fulfill. For purposes of reconstruction, it is necessary to separate the permanent from the transient, the essential from the unessential, and the spirit from the letter. Criticism makes construction possible.

(2) *Constructive (or Speculative)*. As Hendel warns us, we should not think of the constructive function of philosophy as a separate compartment from criticism. They are more like two sides of the same coin. Even if criticism were considered as merely tearing down, one builds in the very act even if it is only a heap that one builds. But if one understands this duality of criticism-construction, it may be considered a single process in which the mind "naturally passes from one to another" and that is why Hendel calls them "phases". If one examines the history of philosophy from Socrates to the present, one can see that philosophers pass judgment on what they consider false only in order to build new foundations of metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, and the like. The purpose of synthesis, which Broad characterizes as the specific work of speculative philosophy, "is to supply a set of concepts and prin-

ciples which shall cover satisfactorily all the various regions which are being viewed synoptically." He gives an example of this from Sidgwick's *Methods of Ethics,* showing how Sidgwick had criticized common-sense morality by eliciting, formulating, and critically appraising the presuppositions of such a morality, and then constructing a utilitarian ethics as his synthesis. In this connection, Jacques Maritain has written:

> . . . society cannot do without philosophers . . . even if philosophers are hopelessly divided among themselves in their search for truth, at least they seek this truth . . . The philosopher in society witnesses to the supreme dignity of thought: he points to what is eternal in man, and stimulates our thirst for pure knowledge and disinterested knowledge . . . The philosopher who is pursuing his speculative task pays no attention to the interests of men, or of the social group, or of the state, but reminds society of the absolute and unbending character of Truth.

In its constructive or speculative phases, then, philosophy seeks to relate beliefs to a single whole, to push beyond the criticism of the principles we hold to an integrated set of principles.

What distinguishes the work of the great philosophers, like Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, or Whitehead, is that their work of speculative synthesis does not occur merely within a specific region, like ethics, but within a far more embracing outlook, in fact all-embracing, with original vision and an unexpected way of looking at life that characterizes the work of genius. It is given to few philosophers to make such creative syntheses, just as great art and great science are the achievement of the few. To many students it is these all-embracing visions that are the most exciting products of philosophizing, but at the same time they may seem remote from the ordinary man's preoccupations and possibilities for his own philosophizing. What William James said of the saint, however, can be applied to the philosopher of genius: "If things are ever to move upward, someone must be ready to take the first step and assume the risk of it." Geniuses inspire us to emulate them where we can, and it was Socrates who encouraged us all to be philosophers, which he considered "caring for the soul," to "know thyself," for "the unexamined life is not worth living." This applies not merely to ethics, or to metaphysics, but "it is simply philosophy in its original work of caring for the soul where it touches the well-spring of life and action" (Hendel). In that sense, we *are* all philosophers, and we can be better *philosophizers!*

Just a closing comment on how this all looks when broken up into philosophical studies:

1. Questions about knowledge: epistemology & logic 2. Questions about reality: metaphysics	theoretical (Truth and reality)
3. Questions about goodness: ethics 4. Questions about beauty: esthetics	practical (values)

Special Philosophies

There are all kinds of special philosophies that are derivatives from these four basic fields: such as philosophy of science, philosophy of history, philosophy of religion, political philosophy, or philosophy of law.

Since you are students of law, let me make a comment on the latter. I said earlier that all departmental philosophies are trying to move beyond the particularity of that field to see its connection with the whole, to ask what meaning it has for life in its fulness. But this can be both "critical" and "constructive":

a.—A "critical" approach to a departmental philosophy is basically asking what kind of knowledge, or what kind of methodology is involved in that area. What is legal reasoning?

b.—A "constructive" approach is not so much interested in "law" as a field of study, or as a practice involving critical judgment and reasoning—but rather in the question as to *what is law?* Is it merely *what is legislated?*—positive law? or is there *natural* law? Thus, Justice Holmes of the U.S. Supreme Court was a pragmatist, this was his philosophy of law in the second sense, and he regarded all laws as positive laws. There is no natural law. Just what is the relation of law to other normative areas—that is, in particular, ethics? Are there natural rights? A study of the history of the philosophy of law would be extremely valuable here, I would think.

Now no doubt you may practice law without being clear about your local philosophy, just as one can be a good philosopher without a philosophy of law. What must be questioned, as Prof. Friedrich of Harvard says, "is the thought often expressed by lawyers of the more practical sort that law does not involve any philosophy of law." [3] As he goes on to remark: "If positivists, pragmatists, and formalists at times speak of the law as if it existed in a vacuum, un-

[3] Carl J. Friedrich, *The Philosophy of Law in Historical Perspective,* 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 3.

related to values, opinions, or beliefs, this sort of viewpoint implies actually a philosophical position of sorts." [4] Likewise if a particular philosopher does not develop a philosophy of law, this does not prevent others from applying such a philosophy to the law.

As philosophers might argue—law is a part of ethics. What language is to thought, norms are to values. There is a complex interplay of legal and moral obligation. Law and morals are not the same, but is from the idea of the good that all "normative" proceed, although the essence of moral experience is freedom.

Let me quote from Kant in making this distinction:

> A perfectly good will . . . (cannot) . . . be conceived as necessitated to act in conformity with law, since of itself, in accordance with its subject constitution, it can be determined only by the concept of the good. Hence for the divine will, and in general for a holy will, there are no imperatives: "I ought" is here out of place, because "I will" is already of itself necessarily in harmony with the law. Imperatives are in consequence only formulae for expressing the relation of objective laws of being—for example, of the human will.

The political law cannot be more binding than conscience, as most countries recognize in allowing the "conscientious objector." To regard political law as more binding than moral law is entirely opposed to common sense. The very fact that political laws vary from country to country, and from time to time, separates them from the moral law which has been generally considered (at least) to be absolute and unchanging. Let us just spell that out a little more in detail:

1) *Political laws* deal with morals in a *negative way,* but are often incapable of dealing with positive moral duties such as benevolence, for example, which depend on the individual's circumstances and position. But a political law can forbid theft or murder.

2) *Political laws are external,* whereas morality is a spirit of life, an inner enthusiasm. Thus, a political law can forbid or command an action, but it cannot ensure that the action is done or refrained from in the right spirit—and this "right spirit" is very vital to morality at the level of conscience. This is what moral prophets in any generation have appealed to, have attacked congealed morals, or mere external conformity, and have sought to energize inwardness, for the letter kills, but the spirit gives life.

3) *Political laws* and laws, generally, *cannot enjoin actions which are unique* in their moral quality. Thus, the heroism of the brave

[4] *Ibid.*

man, and the self-sacrifice of the saint are things that cannot be commanded by law.

4) *Political law is heteronomous;* morals require the autonomy of the individual. That is, in political law, we turn cases over to the "judge" who makes the decision. In moral cases there are no judges, for that would be heteronomy. Each man has to be his own judge. Judges are needed to interpret the law in order to make law more determinate—for no law covers a case in its complexity. Thus, the fact that in morals I have to be my own judge does not diminish the rigor of moral principles, but that I must reckon that this new case before me forces me to revise my principles, to make it less general and more specific. Aristotle said nearly the same. The judge must formulate things in terms of what the lawgiver would have done had he been confronted by it. Substitute the word "adult" for judge and we are "self-judges." The question, as you can readily see, is when are we adults? It does not require a wise and experienced man to be an adult—but by seeking for new principles. In given cases, we may find it hard to formulate principles, in which case we might seek out "a wise counsellor" to help—not to decide for us, but in order to find a reason.

5) Law is a bad analogy of morals, for the law occurs *post eventum,* "after the event." Even a political judge decides a case after the event, and the law takes as long as it wants to decide. (I was reading in a magazine recently that in Chicago certain court cases are 2-3 years behind schedule—the law takes as long as it wants!) But in morals we must make a decision *"ante eventum"*—before the event. Because so many of us are inexperienced, and when confronted by a moral decision we are distracted by temptations, and the like, we find it difficult to be our own judges. Thus, we arm our children with simple moral principles, and some good advice to ourselves would be: think about your moral principles often—both in the abstract and in particular cases. Beware when the latter involves oneself. We should ask: what would a wise spectator say? The older man has more concrete moral experience to reflect upon, and thus his reflections are the wisdom of age which so maddens the young. What principles? Unfortunately, that is the subject of ethics in itself and that would require another lecture.