

Latent Human Potentialities, Aldous Huxley

Latent Human Potentialities

I want to talk in this lecture about a subject which is of profound importance to everyone: the possibility of realizing latent human potentialities. I think we don't have to flatter ourselves by imagining that we have already realized all the potentialities with which we are born. There are many, in almost all of us, which might be released and made effective. As a matter of historical fact, human beings have actualized faculties and powers which in the past had been completely latent and unimaginable. Our biological make-up has not really changed since the upper Palaeolithic, and we are now using much more effectively exactly the same natural equipment we had fifteen or twenty thousand years ago. This is a very encouraging fact. It shows that man can get more out of himself without necessarily changing himself biologically.

Before we start discussing the problem of how these latent potentialities are to be actualized, it is necessary to talk about human needs. For it is only in relation to needs that we can discuss potentialities. We can start with the basic biological needs of man, which are the need for food and the need for preservation of life from the elements and from natural or human enemies. These two fundamental biological needs must be fulfilled in order for man to survive at all. Then, going up the scale, we find strictly psychological needs such as the apparently universal need to give and to receive love. This need has been stressed very strongly in recent years by anthropologists and psychologists who have pointed out that if it is not satisfied in infancy and childhood the child is apt to grow up into a psychopath or even into a moral imbecile.

Closely related to the need for love is the need for belongingness, the need to satisfy what Adler called the *Gemeinschaftsgefühl*, the feeling of community with people. Then there is the need for respect and recognition from other people, which is a very powerful need, and the need—a little more rarefied—for self-respect: we have to be able to think of ourselves with some kind of esteem.

Next we come to still more rarefied but nevertheless (in certain people and under favourable conditions) very strong needs: the need for satisfying curiosity; the need to satisfy the hunger for knowledge—knowledge for its own sake, not necessarily for utilitarian purposes; the need for order and for meaning in life; and the need for expression—we are symbol-making animals and we have evidently a real desire to express what we feel and think about in terms of symbols. Finally, there is the need to grow to the limits of our capacities, to actualize our potentialities—which is a basic need when the conditions are favourable for its appearance. I think of the first line of Mallarmé's sonnet about Edgar Allan Poe, 'Tel qu'en Lui-même enfin l'éternité le change' (as eternity changes him into himself). But we don't have to wait for eternity, necessarily; it is possible, I believe, to become ourselves in the fullest ego-transcending form even in this life. It certainly is worth trying.

We see from this list that these needs are arranged in a kind of hierarchy. If the primary biological needs are not fulfilled, then the other needs will simply not be felt. Not only will they not be realized and satisfied, but they won't even enter our consciousness. A man who is hungry is preoccupied with only one thought, which is food. He is reduced to something subhuman—an empty stomach and an emaciated frame—and nothing

more. It is the same with safety. If one is continually menaced, it is extraordinarily difficult to feel any of the higher needs. It may be possible, if hunger is satisfied, to feel and even satisfy the needs for love and for belongingness while living in a state of chronic insecurity, but it certainly will not be possible to feel the higher needs for knowledge and for growth and the various other purely human needs.

Then we come to the primary psychological needs. Unless the needs for love and belongingness and respect and self-respect are satisfied, it is very difficult for the intrinsically human needs for knowledge, for order and meaning, for expression and growth, even to be felt—and much more difficult for them to be actualized in practice and to come to fulfilment. These needs are definitely born with us; they are quasi-instincts. I know the word 'instinct' is now a bad word. It is one which psychologists don't like at all, but I would be inclined to agree with the great German ethologist Konrad Lorenz when he says that the time has come to take the stink out of instinct, because it does seem to me that whatever you may call these things, they are inborn tendencies. In this context I find extremely helpful A. H. Maslow's idea that these basic needs can be described as weak instincts. They are not the kind of all-or-nothing instinct which compels a bird to build its nest; they are conditional instincts, tendencies which will arise provided the 'lower' biological and psychological needs have been fulfilled. When these higher needs present themselves we are in a position to attempt, at least, to fulfil them and thereby to realize the latent potentialities which lie within us.

It seems to me that, in the light of what we have been saying, we can speak realistically about the whole nature-nurture controversy. Obviously neither nature nor nurture exists independently. We come into the world as a specific body with inborn needs, and we come into contact with a specific environment. Conversely, the specific environment has to work upon a specific hereditary parcel, a bundle which is delivered to it. The two are always synergic, working together in a continuous way. The point is that it is only when the environmental conditions are most favourable that the hereditary factors can express themselves fully. In a bad environment even the best hereditary factors may be masked or smothered; it requires the best kind of environment for us to be able to realize our latent inborn capacities.

So, if we want to be eugenicists, we also have to be social reformers, because it is no good breeding a magnificent race of human beings if the conditions under which they live are so bad that the excellencies which we have bred into the race cannot be fulfilled. Conversely, it is no good having a magnificent environment if the hereditary material on which the environment has to work is of poor quality. We have always to think of these two factors, nurture and nature, heredity and environment, as absolutely inseparable terms, both of which must be developed to the highest possible limit.

What are the circumstances in which human beings are most capable of realizing their potentialities and expressing their latent powers effectively? Observation shows that there seem to be two classes of circumstances which allow for a maximum expression of human power. One is the moment of crisis. We have all seen the extraordinary fact that in a crisis most people will not merely behave very well, they will show capacities which they simply have never shown before. The other circumstance in which there will be an exceptional display of human power occurs when there is some kind of upsurge of joy and creativity—what Homer called *menos*—when some kind of divine influx comes rushing in and

raises us, so to speak, to a higher level, where we are capable of being more than our ordinary selves.

But a crisis, to be a crisis, must be short; a crisis which becomes chronic, which goes on for too long, leads inevitably to breakdown. The weaker members of a society in crisis break down rather soon; the strongest members can hold out longer, but they too, in the long run, disintegrate under prolonged pressure. The moral is that we simply have to avoid such prolongation of pressure, all the more so because long before human beings actually break down, life in general becomes so limited and narrowed and finally subhuman that it is quite impossible for the higher needs of individuals and the higher needs of society at large to be met. In the same way, we cannot rely upon uprushes of joy and creativity. The spirit bloweth where it listeth, and we don't know when these things are coming.

It is possible, as I shall hint later on, that we may in future learn to control these uprushes and to produce them at will to some extent; at present we certainly cannot. Thus we cannot rely either upon crisis or upon these upsurges of power to help us. What we can rely upon is the pretty good performance of human beings in a society which satisfies their basic needs and at least gives them the opportunity of satisfying their higher ones. In fact, a reasonably good society where people are properly fed and are not subject to too terrible frustrations is the one in which we can expect potentialities best to be fulfilled in the best way.

Ideally, in order that individual potentialities may be completely developed in all individuals, we should have a perfect society. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished, but it is one which is not likely to be fulfilled within any foreseeable span of time. Therefore I shall not spend any time in this lecture discussing the social reforms which are desirable for the purpose of helping individuals to fulfil their potentialities. This would take us much too far afield. What I shall do is talk about certain obvious deficiencies and consider the ways in which these might be made good for individuals and, indirectly, for society, within a social set-up not too different from our own.

How are we then going to improve the circumstances of individual life in such a way that our higher needs may be satisfied? What methods are we going to use to make our potentialities realizable? Very briefly, let me touch on one possibility which is still largely a possibility and not a realized fact. This is what may be called the pharmacological approach to the problem. It was announced a year or so ago by Soviet scientists that they were engaged upon a five-year plan to find pharmacological methods for increasing mental efficiency and endurance in individuals without doing any appreciable harm to the body. Pharmacologists tell me that this is probably not an impossible dream; rather it is quite on the cards that chemicals which do not seriously, or even appreciably, harm the body may be found to help the mind in its task of realizing latent potentialities.

One can imagine a chemical similar but greatly superior to the so-called psychic energizers which have already done such remarkable work in psychotherapy in cases of depression. It is possible to imagine substances which would produce a profound euphoria—the uprush of joy which is one of the conditions of human effectiveness—and which also might produce a lowering of the barrier which normally separates the conscious from the preconscious mind. This would permit what Lawrence Kubie calls the preconscious or creative mind to come more easily to the surface and provide us with the kind of inspiration to artistic creation

and to effectiveness in life which is essential to the fully developed human being.

There might also be chemicals which could permit us to be more alert, more capable of sustained tension, or which might make us more patient and more friendly. We all know that it is much wiser to approach the boss after lunch than before lunch—he probably feels a good deal happier after lunch than he does when he is hungry. And we have all had the experience of how a cup of coffee or tea may make a profound difference in our mood. There seems to be no reason why substances should not be found that are as relatively harmless as tea or coffee and yet are considerably more powerful in their influences upon the mind.

It is quite clear, however, that pharmacology alone is not likely to do the trick. We have to have, in conjunction with it, some kind of educational process. At present we teach our children to obtain a knowledge of useful things, to have an understanding of what's what and to behave like civilized human beings, if possible. But we do not train the mind-bodies which have to do the learning and which have to do the living. We give them the knowledge and we give them moral injunctions, but we don't then go on to train them in such a way that they can put these injunctions into effect. This is one of the grave weaknesses of our current ethical and educational systems.

Let us consider the fields in which such a specific training of the mind-body might be most useful. The basic and most important is obviously the field of perception. In order to survive, to realize our needs and wants and to actualize our latent potentialities, we need to have a really efficient perceptual apparatus. Yet training in perception is something whose importance we are only just beginning to realize. Consider the stultifying effects which poor seeing has upon human beings: it results in poor reading habits, retardation at school, and all kinds of neurotic and antisocial reactions to such retardation, which may then result in juvenile delinquency.

Seeing is, like talking and walking, a learned activity. We are not born seeing perfectly. We learn to see perfectly, and it is an act which is partly physiological and also very largely mental. There may then be much that will help in the realization of potentialities to be gained simply by teaching children what I have called, in a book which I wrote years ago, the 'art of seeing'. This art of seeing has recently attracted a good deal of attention in orthodox circles, and I have been rather amused in recent years to find many of the propositions which I set forth, following a remarkable pioneer in the field, Dr W. H. Bates, who died in 1930—propositions for which we were both called fools and charlatans—being adopted by those who are professionally concerned with the problem of vision and its relation to education and to general social problems.

There is no time to go into the details of training in the art of seeing or in remedial reading. The evidence of what bad seeing may do to children and some account of the techniques being used, not merely in remedial reading, but, much more basically, in the art of seeing, are to be found in a short but very pithy and interesting article by Dr James Curran, which appeared two years ago in the *Optometrical Weekly*, and which has an extant bibliography attached to it. It seems to be quite clear, however, that this kind of training can be used not merely therapeutically but also preventively. And it can be used as a concomitant to all systems of teaching from the earliest years.

I think we can generalize and say that the more discriminating and acute and precise our perceptions are, the better on the whole will be our general intelligence. I think most people would agree to this. It is perfectly true that certain kinds of intelligence, such as the intelligence which is required for logical analysis, can probably exist without a very highly developed perceptual apparatus; but I would also think it true that intelligence for life situations and for mental activities is a little less rarefied and specialized than logical analysis. For these kinds of intelligence, a highly developed perceptual capacity is really necessary. We have to learn to perceive clearly how it feels to be what we are where we are. We have to know what surrounds us; we have to know how we react to what surrounds us; we have to know what is happening within our bodies; and we have to have a clear idea of what it is that we are thinking and feeling and wishing and willing. In other words, we have to obey the old Socratic maxim—it was a very old maxim even in the time of Socrates—'Know Thyself'.

Before we go on to discuss positive ways of knowing ourselves, let us consider the obstacles to self-knowledge which are most common in our world. The greatest obstacle to awareness—generalized (or acute) discriminating awareness—is neurosis. Neurosis can be defined in one of its aspects as a fixation upon a single aspect of life, a looking at the world through one particular set of distorting lenses, and hence as the inability to see a wider angle of life and to perceive realistically what is going on around us. As we have seen, most neuroses are clearly due to events which took place in the past, often in early childhood, and what happens is that we are influenced now by events which took place then—we are reacting to the present in terms of the past. The cure of neurosis, however it is carried out, is some method by which a person may be brought out of his unconscious obsession to a full awareness of events taking place now and be given the capacity for responding appropriately and realistically to these present events.

Non-neurotic or relatively non-neurotic people also face obstacles in the way of awareness—obstacles which are described frequently in literature—for example, monomaniacal preoccupation with a single interest or domination by a single passion such as avarice or the love of power or sexual enjoyment for its own sake, apart from love. All that used to be called by old-fashioned moralists 'the passions' are essentially narrowings down of our awareness. They are all blinkers which confine our vision to a very small field and prevent us from becoming conscious of ourselves and of everything going on around us.

Another very common obstacle in the way of awareness is a kind of misplaced intellectualism. It is the kind of intellectualism that regards words and concepts as being somehow more real and more important than actual events and things. There is a very amusing account of an eminent man's succumbing to this kind of obstacle to awareness in the Goncourt journals. Ernest Renan, the great nineteenth-century French scholar, who was very fond of talking about aesthetics, was holding forth at great length about the beautiful, the true, etc., when suddenly Edmond Goncourt interrupted him and asked, 'What is the colour of the wallpaper in your dining room?' Renan hadn't the faintest idea. Obviously he hadn't really got very much factual basis for discussing beauty; he was simply discussing a whole fabric of words rather than immediate experiences—which in fact are the only experiences of beauty.

Another obstacle to awareness is habit and routine. Both habit and routine are extremely valuable. They permit us to save a great deal of time and to do unimportant things—inasmuch as anything is unimportant—

rapidly and efficiently. But they are also extremely dangerous. If we become the victims of our habits and our routines we tend to react to them in terms of something which we learned in the past instead of reacting to them as they are here and now.

Ideally we should somehow make the best of both worlds, and this is always the moral we get down to. We have to be sufficiently aware of the newness and uniqueness of every event here and now to be able to react appropriately and spontaneously to it. At the same time, we have to be sufficiently aware of the unique event's resemblance to past events to permit our past experience to help us be more efficient in coping with the immediate experience. But in all too many cases we find that our reliance on habit, on words and on concepts, tends to blind us to the immediate reality in front of us. It would be a very good thing if in all education children were trained to realize the importance both of habit and of non-habit, although how exactly this is to be done, I don't know.

Let us now consider some of the positive ways in which perceptual awareness can be increased. Here I shall mention a book which I think is well worth reading; its thesis is not novel, as I shall show in a few minutes (it goes back thousands of years), but it is rather novel in the present context where we have forgotten a great many important things. The book is Gestalt Therapy by Perls, Hefferline, and Goodman. Their method of dealing with neurotic problems is essentially to teach people to be aware—this is the beginning of their therapy—and they prescribe courses in becoming aware of external events. They suggest for example that we should make up sentences which begin 'Here and now, I perceive' (whatever it may be) 'the light in my eyes, these shining objects in front of me, this red thing, this yellow paper, various aches and pains which I may have,' and so on.

Such extraordinarily simple and apparently childish exercises in awareness are extremely helpful in bringing us out of our absurd preoccupation with the past and the future, with daydreaming, and with pleasant or unpleasant memories, which occupies so much of our time and energy—in short, in bringing us out of this morass of non-actuality into present time and into the possibility at least of reacting realistically and appropriately to what is happening. These authors specify a number of other exercises, such as shifting the focus of attention towards an awareness of objects in relation to their background (seeing how things in the background, which are relatively dim, come forward when you pay attention to them and how what was the foreground then becomes a side object or a background). They speak of the importance of becoming acutely aware of events within the body and events going on in the mind. In general the whole process is a thoroughgoing training in the basic perceptual awareness which we need in order to exercise all the other functions of the mind-body.

This work of the Gestalt therapists is by no means new in our century. A remarkable Swiss psychotherapist, Dr Roger Vittoz, who died in 1925—I remember hearing of his methods at the time, I never saw him—was extremely successful in dealing with neurosis. As far as one can gather, he was a great deal more successful than the psychoanalysts; his method was essentially to train his patients to become aware of seemingly the most trivial actions (because no action is fully trivial).

It was a process of becoming aware and learning how to use will and how to be conscious of whatever is being done. When Vittoz died, his method was completely neglected. This is one of the tragic things which are constantly happening in the history of ideas: excellent ideas are brought

forth and acted upon, but for various sociological reasons they are often totally forgotten for a long period. Vittoz's ideas didn't happen to fit in with the psychological notions current at the time. People preferred the much more complicated and rarefied methods of psychoanalysis to his rather straightforward and simple approach, even though it apparently happened to be very successful, according to all accounts.

What is extremely interesting is that both Vittoz and the Gestalt therapists are actually reviving procedures which were current in various systems of Oriental philosophy and psychology one or two thousand years ago. This business of being acutely aware of everything within and without is a standard procedure in the Buddhist, Tantric, and Zen psychology. There is a text, for example, which is introduced by a dialogue between Shiva, the great god, and his wife, Parvati. Parvati asks Shiva the secret of her profound consciousness—the consciousness of *Tat twam asi*, of the Thou Art That, the consciousness that the Atman is identical with the Brahman.

Shiva proceeds to give her a list of 118 exercises in awareness which he says are all extremely helpful towards achieving this ultimate consciousness. They are exercises in awareness in every life situation, from eating one's dinner to sneezing, from going to sleep to making love to having dreams to daydreaming. It is the most comprehensive series of exercises in consciousness that I know of, and it is very curious to find that this immensely valuable psychological discovery has been allowed to remain as some sort of vague Oriental superstition which we haven't bothered about. Now, after so many years, it is coming to the surface and will prove to be of very great value.

Let me touch on another technique of awareness, one in which John Dewey was greatly interested. I refer to the technique developed by F. M. Alexander (who died at the age of 80) for becoming aware of the proper posture—the proper relationship between the neck and the trunk above all—which permits the best possible functioning of the psychophysical organism. Dewey, who had studied the technique with Alexander, wrote introductions to three of Alexander's books; in one of these introductions he says quite definitely that he regards this technique as being to education what education is to life in general, that it is the thing which gives education the possibility of really doing some good.

Yet among the hundreds of thousands of educators who have followed Dewey, virtually none, so far as I know, paid any attention to this method of training the mind-body which Dewey regarded as of primary importance in education; it has been allowed simply to fall away, and so far as I know, there is only one school in the United States where it is applied to the education of children. This, then, is another example of what is quite clearly a very important idea, recognized by a first-rank philosopher as being of immense practical and theoretical significance, allowed to lapse because it just doesn't happen to be in with the current academic views of the time.

Now let me go on with some of the other ways of training the mind-body. A very important form of training is clearly the training of the imagination. Here I recommend Herbert Read's *Education Through Art*, in which he talks of the possibility of training children's imagination in such a way that they may retain the remarkable faculty of eidetic imagery, which most children seem to have, in later life. Generally intense power of visualization disappears about the time of puberty, but there seems to be no reason why it shouldn't be preserved and remain a source of enjoyment and of intellectual benefit to human beings, even in

their adult phase. In Gestalt Therapy, too, many interesting exercises in the use of imagination are prescribed to pry the mind loose from its old bad habits of thinking and feeling. I can't go into them here, but they are well worth looking at. They do help to pull us out of this illusion of a sort of bogus personality, which we create by means of our bad habits.

It seems now to be quite clear that any development of awareness must go hand in hand with the development of our knowledge of language and concepts. If we are going to be aware of our direct experience, we must also be aware of the relationship between direct experience and the world of symbols and language and concepts in which we live. We are like icebergs. We float in immediate reality, but we project into the winds of doctrine in so far as we rise out of immediate experience into the world of concepts. For it is quite certain that there is no such thing as absolute immediate experience, that all our experiences have a kind of linguistic tinge to them, just as there is no question at all that we are able to go much further in the direction of immediate experience than we generally do go. Thus it is extremely important that we should be aware of the relationship between the experiences that we are immediately presented with and the words in terms of which we think about them and express them and explain them. In other words, twentieth-century developments in linguistics in general and in semantics should find their way into education on every level. I would think that there should be simultaneously a training of the mind-body in perception, in imagination, and in the use of language. All of these seem to me to go together in an essential way.

Now, closely related to problems of awareness in general are problems in love. Love and knowledge go very closely together. Love without knowledge is largely impotent, and knowledge without love is frequently inhuman. In the world as we see it today, there is obviously a great deal of loveless knowledge and of knowledgeless love—not to mention a good deal of both knowledgeless and unfortunately very knowledgeable hate floating around. Our problem is to find some way in which we can make it more possible for more human beings to love in an aware and knowledgeably directed way.

Oddly enough, we can learn quite a lot in the field of love from some of the primitive peoples. Anthropologists in recent years have been investigating all kinds of psychological and social arrangements which we will never be able to observe under laboratory conditions. (This is why it is so extremely important that these primitive peoples should be carefully and sympathetically observed before they all disappear and are completely homogenized by the rising tide of technology and propaganda.) In this question of love we find extraordinary examples of primitive intelligence.

Margaret Mead has described the amazing practices of the Arapesh, which are a tiny tribe in New Guinea, an essentially non-violent and co-operative society. They have set the highest value upon love and friendliness and have developed methods which are used from the earliest years for encouraging and implementing the ideals of love. Dr Mead tells how the Arapesh mother, when nursing her baby, will continuously murmur the words 'good, good', and while the baby is sucking the milk and the mother is murmuring this, she will rub the child against the family dog, or against the family pig, or against a human being in the family circle or even outside the family circle, so that the child is brought up with a kind of conditioned reflex for feeling confidence and love and the goodness of other people.

You may say that this is merely a conditioned reflex, but we are all influenced by conditioned reflexes all the time, so we may as well see that our conditioned reflexes are good rather than bad. I think that there is—as many sociologists have pointed out since the Arapesh findings were published some years ago—plenty of room for us to learn a lot from these very simple people, who have discovered methods for increasing the amount of love and intensifying its quality in society.

Another arrangement from primitive societies which might very well be borrowed, and which also tends to increase love and decrease frustration, is the arrangement of the multiple family which we find in many Polynesian societies. There a child has many potential homes. A whole group of people take responsibility for the child, who is free, as soon as it can walk, to go from one place to another. In all these places it will find rights and responsibilities. This scheme overcomes many of the grave disadvantages from which we suffer owing to the extremely restricted family set-up in which we are now condemned to live. In the past, the family arrangement in the West covered a much larger number of people because people lived in the same village and many generations were present always, as well as cousins and aunts, and so on. But the Polynesian method seems to be even better than what we had here, and far better than what we have at present. Perhaps this is a fanciful idea, but I don't see why, for example, we shouldn't develop a kind of mutual adoption club out of the baby-sitting co-operatives which are now becoming so common in the modern world. It seems to me that there would be an immense advantage in doing precisely this.

Finally, let us consider a very painful problem, the problem of prejudice and mutual dislike, both international and intranational. A great deal of work has been done on the problem of prejudice and how to diminish it, on how to increase the amount of good feeling between different racial and religious and class groups. The nature of the researches and the methods used and the results obtained have been summed up by Gordon Allport in his book, *The Nature of Prejudice*. Allport's conclusion is, I am sorry to say, one of tempered pessimism.

He says that the evidence shows that probably four-fifths of all American adults are affected to some extent by prejudices and that there are weighty considerations which lead him to believe that it will be exceedingly difficult to change this 'ominous proportion'; we shall not do so, in spite of all the great efforts which are being used—legislative methods, propaganda methods, methods of group co-operation, methods of individual therapy, teaching in schools, and all the rest. Some of these methods are more effective than others, and it is possible that yet other methods may be discovered in the future. Allport's view is that although the outlook is not particularly bright, it is our duty to pursue the means by which an increase in good feeling and a decrease in prejudice can be brought about.

One of the basic problems here is expressed in an epigram of William Blake's: 'Damn braces. Bless relaxes.' The meaning of this is, of course, that there is a higher psychological dividend to be obtained from negative emotions than there is from rather lukewarm positive emotions. The highest psychological dividend is undoubtedly paid by love, but hate pays a considerably higher dividend than mere tolerance or acceptance. It is a tragic fact that we get a bigger kick out of hate than we do out of these rather placid virtues; the question is, can we raise the lukewarmness of mere tolerance to something a little warmer and more powerful? Can we get good feelings—not merely an absence of bad feeling—to take the place of the bad feelings? I think one of the things which

may help in the long run in minimizing the desire for negative emotion as a form of stimulus, as a kick, will be precisely better training in perception.

There is no doubt at all that a person with trained perceptions finds the world a great deal more interesting than does one whose perceptions are untrained, and therefore he may have less need of either the vicarious excitements provided by Westerns and murder stories or the much more dangerous excitements provided by racial antagonisms and nationalistic orgies. I think that if in everybody, again following a phrase of Blake's, the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would be seen as it is: infinite. And if we all had the doors of our perceptions cleansed, and if we habitually saw the world as infinite and holy, we should obviously find it a great deal less necessary to go in for bullfighting, attacking minorities or working up frenzies against foreign peoples. So all these things work in together. Let us hope that sooner or later we shall find some method by which, combining awareness with these various trainings in good feeling, we may increase the sum of human decency and make the realization of many of our latent potentialities possible.

With this, I will draw to a close and end by thanking you for much patience in listening to what I am afraid has been a very rambling series of discourses. Everybody here has been extremely kind to me. The only criticism I have had has been in reference to some of the people that I thought had made important contributions, such as W. H. Sheldon. I may be wrong, and Sheldon may be wrong, but I happen to think he is right. In regard to this I will just say what I have already said, that it is not necessarily true that, because a particular doctrine at a particular moment is orthodox, it is correct. There have been too many examples in the past of orthodoxies proved to be profoundly incorrect, for anybody to feel it necessary to accept everything in the orthodox view.

I close with a remark which Oliver Cromwell made in his letter of 3 August 1650 to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland: 'I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken.' I feel that these words should be written in gold over every rostrum and in front of every lecture table and over every church door. It is, after all, an expression of what is one of the great discoveries of modern times—the working hypothesis, which has replaced the idea of the dogma or the doctrine. We may form a hypothesis and be perfectly prepared to alter it as new facts appear; we do not have to stick to it through thick and thin and martyr other people because of it. And with this last word—that I hope I can conceive I may be mistaken—I will leave you.

The end