

curtain draped across eternity, partially veiled by an edging of luxurious black lace that fades into velvety darkness and tranquil night. This is the way my mind works most of the time. Perhaps it is a talent, but how tiring it is always to see the multiplicity in things, always to see things as they are and as I would like them to be.

In people, too, I see this beauty. Not all beauty is physical, of course, but everyone is beautiful in some way. How often I hear someone say how terrible this person is, or how ugly that person is; and I realize that I have never really thought about these supposed shortcomings. I am hurt to discover the venom that some people have for others who may be complete strangers. I smile to think how peaceful it would be if, for just a day, there were no calumnies, no gratuitous insults. This day, to me, would be beautiful. It is this kind of beauty that I appreciate as much as my long-stemmed flower in the rusty tin can—different yet alike.

Another kind of beauty that I imagine could never be imitated by anyone is the beauty of the wild. I believe the most nightmarish sight that I have ever seen is the modern-day skyscraper. Everyone has his own opinion, I know, but to me the person who planned such a structure as this has something against the whole world and is taking out his hate in the form of such monsters as this. This type of man-made "beauty" I would prefer doing without; but perhaps this is the architect's talent. Mine is a nature-loving talent, I suppose: a talent that makes me prefer a stagnant, ill-smelling pond occupied by transplanted goldfish to a maze of egregious, distorted piles of man's imagination.

Somewhere in the world there is another person who is like me; somewhere there is another dreamer who sees what isn't there and doesn't hear what is said. I will find that person some day; it shouldn't be too difficult. All I have to do is hope and watch for a shaggy, long-stemmed flower in a rusty old can sitting on a white stone ledge in the sun.

## Look, Look, See Me Adjust: A Dissertation on Progressive Education

Rick Stanton

**R**EALLY, it all started one day when I saw a TV commercial. It said: "Do you wish you could adjust to the modern world? Then why not come to John Dowe's School of Progressive Learning. No obligation." Well, I figured I could use a little adjusting, so the next day I went down to Professor Dowe's big building. I walked in and tried to look big and important so they would think I was a big-shot. Inside, everything was ultra-modern. I think they called it progressive furnishing. Well, I took off my hat and sat down in a contrivance which appeared to be a cross between a lounge chair and an astronaut's contoured couch. As soon as I was seated, the chair began to move over toward what appeared to be a

huge computing machine with all sorts of flashing lights and revolving gadgets. After the chair had stopped in front of the machine, a deep voice began booming out of a large speaker located near the top of the machine: "Greetings, and welcome to Professor John Dowey's School of Progressive Learning." It asked me why I had come here, and I said that I wanted to become educated and adjustable and that sort of stuff. "All right, then," it went on, "first we must classify you. What is your name?"

"Aloysius Bartholomew Gustavus, Jr."

"Ugh, how revolting! No wonder you need help. Such an uncommon name will never do. Your name here will be John Doe. Understand?"

"Yes."

"Age?"

"Six and a half."

"Previous schooling?"

"None."

"Splendid! That will make our methods much easier. You are to report tomorrow morning at 0800 hours for class. Some of the others have already been here for several weeks, so don't be alarmed by what you see. You will report to room 115. That is all."

Well, my mommy brought me the next morning and took me to room 115 because I didn't know how to read numbers. So I went in to try my first experience in learning. When I went in, I saw the other boys and girls; and it might sound funny or something, but they all looked kind of alike. I asked them if they were brothers and sisters or something, but they said no, that they were just learning to adjust to each other, or something like that. And then the teacher walked in and started to teach us. First he asked us if we were all having a good time, and then he told us that the best way to learn new things is by doing, so did any of us want to do something? Well, nobody could think of anything, so we just sat there. After a while it got awfully boring just sitting (I think he was teaching us how to sit), so he finally said he would read us a story. It was about a little squirrel named Bobby who ate nuts during the summer-time. Some of the squirrels told Bobby that winter was coming and that he should put some of the nuts away and kind of save them. But Bobby didn't like to work, so he didn't. One day winter came, and Bobby found that all the nuts were gone, and he got very hungry. But he remembered that a boy who lived in a *white house* had taken some of the nuts from *his* tree during the summer. Bobby went to the *white house* and yelled in. The door opened and out rolled a "fine brown nut." Bobby had learned his lesson. "Well," thought Bobby. "I know how to get my dinner. All I have to do is ask for it." (Ed. note from *The New Our New Friends*, Scott, Foresman and Co.).

Well, we all thought it was a splendid story and that we had learned a lot. Once again he asked us if we wanted to "learn by

doing," but no one could think of anything to do. But he said that was all right because he didn't want to push us too fast. After all, the idea was to adjust to the group; and if the group didn't want to do anything, we could best adjust by doing what everyone wanted, which was nothing. And so went my first day.

Well, twelve years have passed here since that first day, and I am to be graduated this spring. I feel fortunate to have attended such an excellent school, for it is only here that I could have made such a fine adjustment to society. I feel genuinely sorry for my friends who went to regular schools because they tell me that the competition (or something like that) is frightful. I don't know exactly what they mean, but I *can* say that these have been the happiest twelve years of my life; not one tear has been shed by anyone in my class during these twelve years. The only thing that is bad about our school is that it is still quite difficult for me to tell the students apart. As a matter of fact, they tell me that I have grown to look a lot like them, too. But that's no problem; we all wear name tags. Because I have enjoyed this school so much, I asked Professor Dowey if I could give the valedictorian address at the commencement exercises; but he said no, that we don't have valedictorians because it makes the others feel inferior. But he said that he would honor me by giving me the "Most Typical Graduate Award." He is a nice man.

Well, I really must get back to class. The teacher just now asked if anyone wanted to do anything, and one student said that he wanted to learn to count, but one boy said he was afraid it would be too hard, so we aren't going to. I kind of wish we would because I'm going to feel kind of funny when my mommy has to take me to the room number where we graduate, but I mustn't say anything. I think he'll read us a story.

## The Privilege of Prejudice

Mark Allison

**T**HROUGHOUT the last decade, during which man is purported to have come under the effects of increased tension caused by today's fast-moving society, psychologists and others, who consider themselves to be authorities where the vast realm of the human mind is concerned, have dutifully suggested that Mr. Average Person can lessen the effects of daily emotional stress by engaging himself in some form of a hobby. The term hobby can not be easily defined by any single listing of possible interests and activities. The reason for this stems from the fact that the action which serves as an enjoyable diversion for one individual may be the principal source of livelihood for a person in different circumstances. However, one usable definition would be the following: some activity, other than the primary means of income, from which the participant gains enjoyment or a sense of fulfillment.