ON BEING REASONABLY HONEST

By Sir James Darling

Delivered at a meeting of the Medico-Legal Society held on 2nd March 1968, at 8.30 p.m., at the Australian Medical Association Hall, 426 Albert Street, East Melbourne. The Chairman of the meeting was the President, Dr. G. Newman Morris.

It is one of the distressing facts of life that nothing that one does ever comes up to one's first hope for it, and this speech will prove no exception. The theme of personal integrity seems at first sight straightforward if not simple, but as I have proceeded with it I have found it more and more involved and inconclusive. I should perhaps preface what I have to say with the disclaimer that it is far from my intention to question the integrity of the two most respectable professions in the country. It is, I hope, just by their integrity that they have maintained this position. If therefore, the generalizations and illustrations from my own experiences have any bearing upon your own, it will not be I who said so.

The title of this discourse derives from an exchange which used to take place not infrequently at meetings of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. On the many occasions on which a decision of delicacy had to be made on matters of such vital importance to the welfare of the nation, as the amount of time on the air which should be allocated free to the Democratic Labour Party at State elections, there was often considerable difference of opinion, particularly between the administrative staff and the Commission itself. When all the arguments for and against this extra quarter of an hour had been fully stated, the Chairman in a desire to reach a conclusion would sum up, stating as a preliminary and overriding principle that, however unimportant the issue might seem to us, and however stupid the contestants were being, nevertheless we should endeavour to be reasonably honest in our decision. This was always, as indeed it was intended to be, a certain draw. The Vice-Chairman, the occupant of that position for some twenty years and before that a Labour politician in South Australia and, subsequently, a considerable man of affairs reacted immediately. "Damn you, Jim" he would say, or words to that effect, "you of all people ought to

know that there is no such thing as being reasonably honest; one is either honest or not honest".

Honesty, then is an absolute. It has no shades. But who then shall be saved? When some years later I was extruded from my position as Chairman of the Commission, the newspapers were, for the most part, sympathetic, as were a large number of friends. The general line of comment was that a man of integrity had been victimized by the wicked politicians.

This was a recurring theme, balm to a bruised ego, of course, and kindly meant, but not really the truth, certainly not the whole truth. I detected in some the holding of a different view and one, perhaps, rather nearer the mark. These felt, I am sure, though they were too decent to say so, that my failure had not been in standing up too firmly against the pressures of those who did not like the liberal attitude of the A.B.C., but on the contrary of not having been clever enough in playing what, for the moment, I shall call the political game in a public position which demanded this more than anything. It is my belief that they may well have been right, and this has caused me to think much about the subject of integrity during the last eight months, and to endeavour to put something on paper about it.

My conclusion is that while integrity may be an absolute in the sense that in Ethics there is no such thing as being reasonably honest, yet the achievement of absolute honesty in public, or perhaps in private life, is not either possible or even a virtue.

> It is all, I suggest, to do
> with man's first disobedience, and the fruit
> of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
> Brought death into the world, and all our woe
> with loss of Eden
> by which fatal act
> We find ourselves compelled on everyday
> to make a choice in essence incomplete
> Imperfect based upon the paradox
> That being men means being less than being God
> But also more than beasts which know no choice;
> Seeking perfection; knowing it as least,
> unable to achieve it, while we tread
> This earthly pilgrimage; condemned to choose
> The way that seems to do least harm, more good;
> But ever compromising with the world

Which sets us limits, limits of circumstance
and limits also of the possible within ourselves.
This is the curse which Adam's sin has laid
upon man, under which curse he lives
And cannot in this life be satisfied.
O spirit that dost prefer
Before all Temples the upright heart and pure . . .
Instruct me for thou knowst . . .
. . . What in me is dark
illumine, what is low raise and support;
That to the benefit of this great argument
I may assert Eternal Providence
and Justify
The ways of man to God.

Let me try to put some shape into what I am trying to say. We need first a definition of integrity; secondly, some illustrations from history of those who have gone nearest to achieving it, thirdly, an examination of the forces which threaten it, and finally, some illustrations from my own experience in the various fields in which circumstances have compelled me to operate, particularly schoolmastering and, more recently, the strange world of national broadcasting with its involvement in news and politics, entertainment and comment. I shall try to avoid any allusions to occupations of which I have no first hand knowledge, but that certainly does not mean that I imagine even the Law and Medicine to be exempt from the temptations which I am discussing, but only that I shrink from the responsibility of pointing the bone in your direction.

In the eyes of most men, integrity is a virtue, perhaps the greatest of virtues.

This above all, to thine own self be true
And it must follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Words put by Shakespeare, either with his tongue in his cheek or by a curious lapse from concentration, into the mouth of Polonius, that most subtle and devious of politicians, drawn, it is usually suggested from the elder Burleigh. There has been in history possibly no statesman so continually compelled by circumstances, to trim his sails to the wind. He had a queen whose greatest strength was an unequalled capacity for obscure utterance, and who used every feminine trick to hide her real pur-

pose, if indeed, in the short run, she had a real purpose: who used flattery or anger to confuse the issue and promises only to delude. Nor do we think the worse of her for this. Neither do we condemn her greatest Minister, because we recognize that the situation of England demanded such conduct, and the glory of Elizabethan England could not have been achieved without it. Walsingham was more single-minded, Raleigh more heroic, Leicester and Essex more, what should we say, humanly natural. None of them could so capably have dealt with the needs of the time.

Paid by the World, what do they
(Elizabeth & Burleigh)
Owe me, God might question.

But that is another question, and it may be that the ultimate sacrifice which a man has to make upon the altar of service is his own integrity, as it is almost certainly his reputation for integrity.

The other authority whom we can hardly avoid is Horace:

Integer vitae scelerisque purus
Non eget Mauris iaculis neque arcu
Nec venenatis gravida sagittis.
Fusce, pharetra.

which is translated in my edition "He who is upright in his way of life and unstained by guilt, needs not Moorish darts nor bow nor quiver loaded with poisoned arrows." This may, perhaps, be brought up to date as "A man who is pure in his motives, true to his principles, speaks the truth and has no skeleton in his cupboard, has no need for a hired bodyguard nor a gun in the top draw, nor a concealed microphone, nor even perhaps a good memory or a public relations officer."

The word itself, integrity, comes from the Latin root "in" (not) and "tangere," "to touch," and means in the first instance "untouched." Both the medical and the legal professions will be aware of the term, virgo intacta, and in fact one of the very earliest uses of the word in English is in connection with Christ when it talks of his Mother's integrity. Later it is used of Henry VI "so much esteemed for his liberality, clemency, integrity and courage." A bit later again of Sir Thomas More, "that he might reserve the integrity of a good conscience." The meaning in all these cases is obvious, it is a man's fidelity to his own standards and conscience. I cannot remember where I was reading recently that conscience was the beginning of civilization, but the writer

meant it as it is largely though not perhaps entirely, as a religious concept. But conscience can be variously defined; as the inherited prejudices of the past at one end of the scale, and as the inner voice of God at the other. Eric Linklater has called it the executive part of consciousness. Robert Bridges in a long passage from which I have found it impossible to extract simple quotation, on the one hand ties conscience to the sense of duty, which is at bottom a recognition of the immutable laws of nature and, on the other, to the yearning of man for the Divine Spirit of which he was conscious in the purity of his childhood.

Wordsworth in his "Imitations of Immortality recollected in early Childhood" writes:

> Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting
> The Soul that rises with us, our life's star
> And cometh from afar;
> Not in entire forgetfulness
> And not in utter nakedness
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> from God, who is our home.

Perhaps these two extremes are not so far apart in the light of the modern theology, as they might appear. But either way, conscience is, whether inborn or developed, the response to what we think to be our duty, and integrity is being obedient to the dictates of conscience.

It has also another meaning, from which comes the idea of integration, oneness, wholeness, completeness, a rare achievement. Few men in the short space of life's allotted span ever really find themselves or, in Socratic terms, know themselves. We are most of us, to a greater or a less degree schizophrenic, compounded of so many instincts, impulses, tastes, prejudices and beliefs, many of them incompatible with each other.

> To be or not to be
> that does not worry me
> Rather to see if I can see
> Which of the 'mes' is me.

But the integration of one's personality is something that one is always seeking. Integrity of conduct implies, therefore, not only fidelity to one's identity, but behind that, the creation and the acceptance of identity itself. To find this is not so much a moral as an intellectual exercise except for the very simple or the very pure.

In practical terms it is simpler than all this, and Wordsworth has put it much better than I can in "The Happy Warrior".

> It is the generous spirit, who, when brought
> Amongst the tasks of real life hath wrought
> Upon the plans that pleased his boyish thought
> Tis he
> Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
> For ever, and to noble deeds give birth
> Or he must fall, to sleep without his fame
> and leave a dead unprofitable name—
> finds comfort in himself and in his cause:
> And while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
> His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause.
> This is the happy warrior; this is he
> That every man in arms should wish to be.

Our battle is immortal and the gods and angels fight on our side, and we are their possessions . . . And the things that save us are justice, self command and true thought.—So Plato—but Plato's fine words do not solve the problem for us; every man at need must do it for himself, *"for the ability to weigh two duties, and balance them against each other is the measure of human worth and dignity."*

"I die the King's good servant, but God's first."

History presents us with few examples of men who, actively engaged in public life, yet managed to preserve the appearance of or reputation for integrity. We have already mentioned Queen Elizabeth and Lord Burleigh. They lived in a time when conditions made simple honesty an impossibility. Their chief enemy, Philip II of Spain, from a position of strength could and did manifest a remarkable singleness of purpose, but with disastrous results for his empire. Catherine of Medici out-heroded Herod, and Henry of Navarre thought "Paris worth a mass" and was probably right to do so, at least in the short term. Even William the Silent, a paragon amongst men, was forced to move deviously amongst the competing claims of his divided countrymen, the faithlessness of his enemies and his allies. He died by the bullet of an assassin.

A contrary example may be quoted from ancient Athens, that of Aristides the Just, of whom the historian Grote writes thus ponderously, "He was incomparably superior to his rivals and contemporaries in integrity, public and private . . . inaccessible to

pecuniary temptations as well as to other seductive influences . . . pursuing a straight and single-handed course in political life, with no solicitude for party ties, and with little care either to conciliate friends or to offend enemies . . . and manifesting throughout a public life full of tempting opportunities an uprightness without flaw and beyond all suspicion—recognized even by his most bitter opponents." He was, in fact, a prig, which is why in the end his fellow-citizens turned upon him, ostracized him and sent him into banishment. We are told that a rustic and unlettered citizen gave his ostracizing vote and expressed his dislike against Aristides on the simple ground that he was tired of hearing him called "Just". Distressingly, we have some sympathy for the unlettered citizens and comparatively little for Aristides.

F. S. Oliver, in his essay "In praise of Politicians" with which he opens his excellent book on Sir Robert Walpole, has much to say about the question, with particular emphasis on the prime purpose of a politician being to succeed. "To gain power, to keep it, and to govern—these are the special business of a politician just as it is a working bee's business to make a honeycomb and honey." He goes on to say, however, that we are entitled to ask—how did he gain power? How did he keep it? What did he do with it when he had it? And the answers to these questions are always mixed up with morals.

Remorselessly, and leaning perhaps too heavily on Machiavelli, he goes on to show that a politician must first get into power and stay there before he can hope to be a statesman. Similarly, it has appeared to me necessary for a great soldier not to get killed too early in his career. At the same time, he cannot become a great leader of men in battle if he earns a reputation for cowardice. Another dilemma! I wonder how many counterparts to "mute inglorious Miltons" there may have been potential Marlboroughs who got killed in their first battles. It may even have been better to have him be "some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood." Similarly there are those who, entering politics full of good intentions and bursting with idealism, find the pace too hot and return to the sidelines to criticize. For "If the conscience of an honest man lays down stern rules, so also does the art of politics. At a juncture where no accommodation is possible between the two, the politician may be faced by these alternatives: shall I break the rules of my art in order to save my private honour, or shall I break the rules of my conscience in order to fulfil my public trust?"

Most of those whom we count great have chosen the latter course, and I believe that they were probably right. The man who refuses, makes an uncomfortable colleague and is very likely to be killed in his first engagement. The other at least has the chance of redeeming his personal reputation by his public contribution until, of course, some clever historian gets a hold of him later and proves to posterity that the idol of the people of his day had feet of clay. It would have been more heroic of Julius Caesar to have withstood the indecent advances of the King of Bithynia, but where would Rome have been in consequence?

Complete integrity demands that a man should never do evil that good may come. Politics continually demand the opposite. These are the conditions of the exercise, and if a man does not like it he should not compete in that field. It was customary for the historians of the XIX century to contrast the wicked Bismarck with the saintly Cavour. But, in fact, Cavour was even more devious, indeed he had to be, than the more blunt Bismarck. It is in the decency of their objectives, or rather in our judgment of the decency of their objectives, that our estimate of the men depends.

This becomes more and more difficult, and seems to demand a number of historical studies rather like President Kennedy's "Profiles in Courage" before we can be justified in making any generalization, and this is impossible in the time available. What then? Integrity is a quality sought for by others in leaders, and admired by them when they think that they see it. It is the quality by which a man preserves his own identity and sense of responsibility, in spite of the pressures which public life put upon him. It requires in him, therefore, first the intelligence to know himself and to understand his own values and, secondly, the courage to uphold them in spite of temptations. But, if he is really to be of use, he must manage to do these things with at least a modicum of common sense and without being priggish, that is, without selfrighteousness and, on the other hand, giving due regard to the circumstances of real life and also to the feelings of others, without whose co-operation he cannot hope to accomplish much. This may not be heroic but it is what they call practical politics. I wonder how Churchill fits in to all this? He almost seems the great exception but his special gift was a boundless fertility of ideas, the courage to change his opinions when necessary, and the blessed capacity to convince himself

that even when making the largest leaps he was still acting consistently. On the other hand, I imagine that he was a fairly unscrupulous master when he thought the need great enough. He was fortunate also to live in times which themselves justified almost anything if it would minister to the cause of survival.

So much for politics, although one could go on at length. Are politics unique or do the same rules apply in ordinary life? Clearly not to the same extent, but there are few occupations which do not have their own political aspects, demanding at least savoir faire, which is something different from naiveté or simplicity. Unless a man is without question pre-eminent, simplicity is not enough. Even Christ advised his disciples to be as wise as serpents as well as being as harmless as doves.

The days of blatant corruption are perhaps over in Western countries, or at least we hope in this country. In ordinary life one rarely gets offered with simple honesty a gift of money in order to do something which one's conscience tells one to be wrong. In Walpole's England bribery was recognized as an ordinary trade transaction and dishonesty lay not so much in giving or accepting a bribe as in not fulfilling one's own side of the bargain after the transaction was completed. It was more remunerative in the short term, though less reputable and in the long run less effective, to take bribes from both sides and then go one's own way. There remain the more subtle forms of corruption. Honours, for instance. A man in a public position, who is likely to have to stand up against political pressure is in a stronger position if he can be sure of being uninfluenced by fear or favour. This is behind the convention, not always preserved nowadays, that a judge, once he is appointed, can hope for no further promotion, but cannot, except in the most extraordinary circumstances, be removed. In passing, it is probably fair to say that in Britain and in Australia, and indeed in other countries of the Commonwealth, where the integrity of the judiciary has been counted of the first importance, it has been quite remarkably preserved. All honour to those who hold these positions, for they are the keystones of our liberties, as anyone who contemplates what happened in Germany or Italy or other totalitarian societies will recognize. To cast the smallest doubt on this or to contribute to the creating of such doubt would be to undermine the whole structure of our society. Even those who regard it as their heaven-sent duty to attack the establishment and to impugn the motives of the most respectable of men, the

gentlemen of the Press and the more intrusive television interviewers, as well as the so-called satirists of the intimate revue, have stopped short before the majesty of the law, either because they recognize the difference or possibly because judges have more intimidating powers than the rest of us. Remember, however, that it was not always so. There were venal judges from bible days and in England at least down to the time of James II and beyond.

There are, in almost every vocation in which a man may be engaged, temptations to which the weaknesses of our own characters make us susceptible. First those which are common to all men; the appeal to the vanity of appearing friendly with the great; the desire to seem to be in the know; the opportunity of being able to make a bit on the side by being in with those who know about investments. Such vanity may be harmless enough in itself but it becomes harmful when we allow our judgment or our actions to be influenced by it; and which of us does not?

There are also fears; the fear of losing the job, or of being passed over in the promotional rat-race; the fear of unpopularity, of being considered difficult; the fear of becoming isolated from our fellows. Most insidious and most subtle of all is the uncertainty created by doubt, even by humility. If everyone else thinks this is all right, surely I can't be the only one to be right? Who am I to set my judgment up against the general and the popular opinion? Pipe down, Darling! you are always making trouble.

Faced by this sort of fear, it is very difficult to accept ultimate responsibility. It is easier to fall back upon the machine, the superior, or the Committee, or simply to leave the decision in the "too difficult" file and hope that it will sort itself out somehow. But integrity, honesty, mean sometimes taking ultimate responsibility, fighting with the readiness to die in the last ditch, even if it really does mean dying. This is very difficult to do, not because one lacks the courage but because one lacks the certainty that it is the right course.

At some stage, I forget exactly when, I was on the Broadcasting Control Board. The Television Licences for Melbourne and Sydney had, in spite of all our efforts to prevent them, and indeed in spite of some noble promises on their part, fallen into the hands of the major newspaper interests; a year or so later the Government decided to extend television to Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and Hobart, but without laying it down whether there were

to be two licences granted or one. After an interminable inquiry, the Board decided that if two licences were granted in Adelaide and Brisbane, there would be no way of avoiding these also falling into the hands of the big newspaper groups. For this reason, and for others, the Board strongly recommended the granting of only one in each city, to be held by a truly representative local group. How right the Board was the subsequent troubles of the Government with the newspaper licence-holders have shown. The report of the Board was supported by the Postmaster-General, and, as we subsequently discovered, by the Prime Minister himself. It was, however, defeated in Cabinet, and returned to the Board to re-submit proposals for the granting of two licences in each case.

This provides us with a very nice case for moral decision on the part of a number of individuals. The issue was, within its own field of Broadcasting, for which the Postmaster-General and the Control Board were responsible, an important issue, fraught with dangerous implications, as eventually turned out. Moreover, the Government had the ultimate responsibility to decide how many stations there should be in each city and if they had determined this in the first case, the Board might have grumbled but would have no right to do more. Having been entrusted with the task of advising, there was a difference when the advice was disregarded. Clearly the issue was not important enough for the Prime Minister to insist with the threat of resignation. Nor probably could one expect the Postmaster-General, for whom Broadcasting was only a minor part of his portfolio. The Chairman was in a rather amphibian position, being a full-time chairman of a statutory Commission, with for the most part only advisory powers. He was, therefore, almost a civil servant and it is the common lot of civil servants to have their advice rejected. There remained the part-time members of the Board, who had been put there presumably to enlarge its wisdom but also to secure its independence. The most vocal of these two members was Darling. He behaved with a feebleness of which he remains ashamed. He wrote a letter to the Prime Minister rebuking him for the decision and making palpably insincere noises about resignation, and received a characteristic reply, which if I could find I would read to you. It was full of sympathy for the cause, doubtful about the effectiveness of resignation at any time and at this time in particular, expressed hopes that the recipient might at a future date serve the Commonwealth in an even higher field

of service and indicated that resignation would fix that. It ended with expressions of enduring friendship. The recipient succumbed as was expected. It is, of course, unlikely that his resignation would have had any effect at all on the course of history, except to deny him the opportunity of further public service.

I have told this story at length because I think that it makes clear the integrity issue. In the end, the holder of a public office, whether small as in this case, or great as in that of a Cabinet Minister, who disagrees with Cabinet policy has only the one weapon, resignation, and this can only be used once, if his bluff is called. Sir John Medley, who had considerable experience of threats of resignation, on the receiving end, used to say that the verb "to resign" should be conjugated only in the first person singular of the present indicative active. This is fair enough from his point of view but there are times at the other end when a man is greatly interested in his work, is absolutely sure of the rightness of his policy and above all, wants to see it carried through to a conclusion. Resignation achieves nothing for the cause, though it may salve his conscience. The threat of resignation, if he is important enough and valued enough, just might. There is a corollary to this. If his bluff is called and he does have to resign, then gentlemanly behaviour about it is to be deplored. He must make the most of it. It may be most distasteful to do so, but unless he does so, his resignation will be glossed over and forgotten and nothing at all will have been achieved. This was, I think, the mistake of Eden in the Hoare-Laval pact and of Nutting over Suez. If you go, you must not go like a gentle man, but rather as Gladstone would have and did go, stumping the country full of sound and fury.

During the war I was horrified to hear from so many of the wives of civil servants from Malaya and Singapore the story that their husband had for years been conscious of the weaknesses of the position, had protested, but had done nothing more. They had behaved like English gentlemen, and by so doing surely share in the culpability.

I had thought that this subject might be dealt with in a speech of reasonable length. Clearly this is not so. It requires a book, and much more study than I have had time to give it. Time is running short, and I can only make a few more random comments, to be taken up perhaps in discussion later.

There is a general difficulty in preserving one's integrity, of being true to oneself and of thereby preserving one's capacity for

usefulness and at the same time satisfying one's conscience. There are also, in each different calling, particular difficulties associated with the rules of professional conduct appropriate to each particular vocation. These are fairly obvious in such a calling as the Press. To avoid an action for libel is not sufficient. A reporter or an editor must really endeavour to present the truth to his readers, even if it is only the truth as he sees it. The "no news is the best news" is wicked. The headline, "Duke of Edinburgh divorce report denied" is not an honest headline or poster, but there are many almost as bad. I once suffered myself similarly. Returning from England, I was faced with posters all over Sydney, "A.B.C. Chief divorced—Secretary named." Strictly speaking there were only a few of us to whom the title chief could have been properly applied. I knew that it wasn't me and in fact it was none of the others either. This sort of thing is not good enough.

The man who interviews a prominent person on television is not doing an honest job if he sets out to make an ass of the man whom he is interviewing or to trick him into an indiscretion. I do not think that even politicians are fair game to be treated in this way. The purpose of an interview is to reveal the truth, probing is allowable, and penetration is necessary, rudeness and sarcasm are intolerable.

The documentary provides a fruitful opportunity for distortion. When these things were really done "live" the opportunity was less. Now they are all done on tape. This means that three to four times or more as much tape is filmed as can possibly be used. The producer has then the fullest opportunity to distort by re-arrangement, or to falsify by omission. The classic was in the Mavis Bramston Show when the answers actually made by the Prime Minister were affixed to totally different questions and was very amusing, once. It was horrifying when one realized how easy it is to do with modern techniques. I have myself suffered the consequences of this sort of thing many times. In two special cases which I remember I was convinced in my own mind that the interviewer had been less than impartial in his selection and presentation of facts. There is always a temptation to slant comment in the pursuit of a story. Only the highest integrity in the persons actually engaged in the making of programmes can protect the public, and the public itself is much too gullible to see through the appearance and to understand what is being done to it.

Doctors and lawyers, I am sure, have their own problems of this sort, but I have promised not to attempt to define them from a position of ignorance. There is probably just one I should like to mention, because it seems to me to be common to almost every profession, namely the acceptance of more work than one can honestly perform. This seems today to be a weakness common to all professional people in a way which was not the case even thirty years ago. It is tied up, of course, with high income tax and with the difficulty of providing superannuation for individual professional workers, but it is also tied up—dare I say it?—with the urge to expect more out of life in the way of rewards in standards of living and comfort and luxury than our fathers thought necessary. Its result is a lower standard of service to the patient or the client, longer delays, and even perhaps perfunctory treatment. If the prime purpose of a profession is to serve and the provision of a livelihood only a secondary objective, then perhaps the work volume accepted should be a subject of conscientious inquiry.

In a field about which I know more, the same danger exists, the danger of making everything too big, because of the quite legitimate demands for capital expenditure or an increasing diversity of special activities. The school of my childhood was different, and in many ways disgraceful. It wasn't even really cheap; but it was small. The Headmaster could and did know everyone; the boarding houses were small and really did reproduce a sort of family atmosphere. The classrooms were dark, dirty and disagreeable; the curriculum was narrow and unimaginative; the facilities for extra-curricular activities were entirely non-existent, except for sport, which was compulsory, universal and abominably compelling. But the assistant masters, who were not particularly well paid, were in many cases first-class, and on them the school depended. I do not wish to return to the tempora mercifully acta of my childhood, but I do wish to point out that modern schools have paid a price for their glossiness, the price of size, and consequently of impersonal treatment. No Headmaster of a school of over a thousand boys can be readily available to boys, let alone to parents. He can devolve his authority and trust his subordinates, but it isn't quite the same thing. Yet in order to preserve the school competitively and in order to make satisfactory provision for all the amenities which now seem necessary, numbers have to be increased in order to spread the cost of the overheads. This is not done without paying a price. Does anyone remember an excellent book, "The letters of an

Indian Judge to an English gentlewoman"? In it he suggests that the price paid for the increased efficiency of the administration of India may have been too great for the return received. "I think that we badly need", he writes, "an allround simplification, for a vicious circle arrives, in which the money taken to pay these taxes is more than absorbed in dealing with the rows that arise over their collection." In earlier days, when the Indian Civil Service was administered by a few first-class people operating from make-shift buildings at least the cost of government was more appropriate to the capacity of the people to pay. This will soon be a problem in New Guinea, as in all countries where you impose Western standards upon a country too poor to pay for them. Nearer at home something like it is also a problem.

A schoolmaster, one might expect, should be comparatively free from assaults upon his integrity. There is comparatively little outright bribery. Geelong Grammar School, at least, was never sufficiently full to make the selling of places for boys a very profitable enterprise. At Glamorgan, things were a bit more hopeful and the suggestion did at least once arise. More subtle is the approach which indicates that the prospective parent has noted the need for a new squash court or swimming pool. There are seasonal presents, though these regrettably stopped short below headmasters, but most, not all, of these were genuinely meant and the only danger was how to avoid hurting the giver if one refused or to remain completely unaffected if one accepted. There are the variations on the theme, "An apple for the teacher", but boys are usually so transparent that these approaches are easy enough to resist.

The pressures upon the integrity of a headmaster are more subtle, indeed so subtle that sometimes we are unaware that they are pressures or that our integrity is involved. A headmaster may believe that it is almost the prime purpose of a school to make boys think, but the masters most likely to be effective in this process are always those with heterodox opinions and views unpopular with the majority of parents. While endeavouring to restrain the masters within reason, he must resist the pressure of parents and council to get rid of them.

If he believes that his responsibility is to each individual soul committed to his care, he must resist the temptation to make life easier for himself by getting rid of difficult cases on the grounds that they may corrupt the rest. On the other hand, he must be strong enough to know when he is beaten and suffer the

blow that failure inflicts upon his vanity when poison is being administered in larger doses than the body politic can resist or absorb.

Knowing the harm that a really incompetent master can do, he must harden his heart even against an old friend or a man with personal and family problems. To do so requires courage; not to do so is a betrayal of integrity.

At all times he must fear the delusive appeal of obvious success, either in sport or in work, when he knows that these are not really the mark of a good school or satisfying to his own conscience.

If he is a headmaster of a Church school, he must share with the clergyman the agonizing dilemma of deciding how much of his own doubts it is legitimate to disclose to those who look to him for certainty of faith.

In all these cases, and in a host of others like them, he must be his own judge. I don't think that I have ever heard of a headmaster whose staff did not think of him at some time that he was a cunning and unscrupulous deceiver. The alternative is to be a real beast, and hope that they will acknowledge a just beast.

In all the affairs of man he finds himself on the horns of a dilemma, condemned to make daily decisions between two courses neither of them, in most cases, absolutely right or absolutely wrong. He will be helped to be right more often than not, and even to gain a reputation for being so on certain conditions. He will not elevate his own opinions self-righteously in such a way as to exclude the possibility that others who disagree with him may sometimes be right. He will lay down the law as little as possible in general terms. On the other hand, he will continually struggle with himself to build up within himself a code of behaviour to which he can always or nearly always adhere. This involves self-knowledge, understanding of his own weaknesses and strengths and a definition of his objectives in the particular work, responsibility for which he has undertaken.

Having done this—and this is the indispensable preliminary of anything else—he will not conform to the general mode of thought by which he is surrounded. He will continue to be himself and to order his life as far as possible without fear and without looking for favours. He will have enemies who dislike him, and critics who despise him, and he will try as best he may to look on both indifferently; for as a previous quotation said, "the ability to weigh two duties and balance them against each

other is the measure of human worth and dignity". If he can have some success in this he may reach the point of deeming himself and even being deemed "reasonably honest". To ask for more in this life is to ask for too much.