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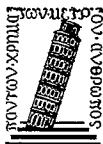
1939

Vol. III

No. 4

THE EVALUATIVE ATTITUDES OF JONATHAN
SWIFT

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THE PRINCIPIA PRESS, INC.
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA

Price of this number, 40 cents

THE EVALUATIVE ATTITUDES OF JONATHAN SWIFT*

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Adopting, as a working hypothesis, Spranger's theory that men are to be understood through their evaluative attitudes, the writer proposes to estimate, in accordance with this theory, the relative prominence of the basic motives in the personality of Jonathan Swift.

Spranger (20) classifies all men into six general types: theoretic, economic, aesthetic, social, political, and religious. These represent basic interests in personality by which human behavior is to be explained. The reader unfamiliar with these types is referred to Spranger's original work, or to any recent textbook in social psychology (1).

As an aid in estimating the relative prominence of these motives in Swift's personality the writer employed *A Study of Values* (2), a test constructed for the express purpose of measuring these interests. Vernon and Allport (25) have shown this test to be successful in differentiating occupational groups, and it also has been found to correlate well with Strong's *Vocational Interest Test* (7, 8, 21). For these reasons *A Study of Values* may be considered fairly valid as a test of general interest factors in personality.

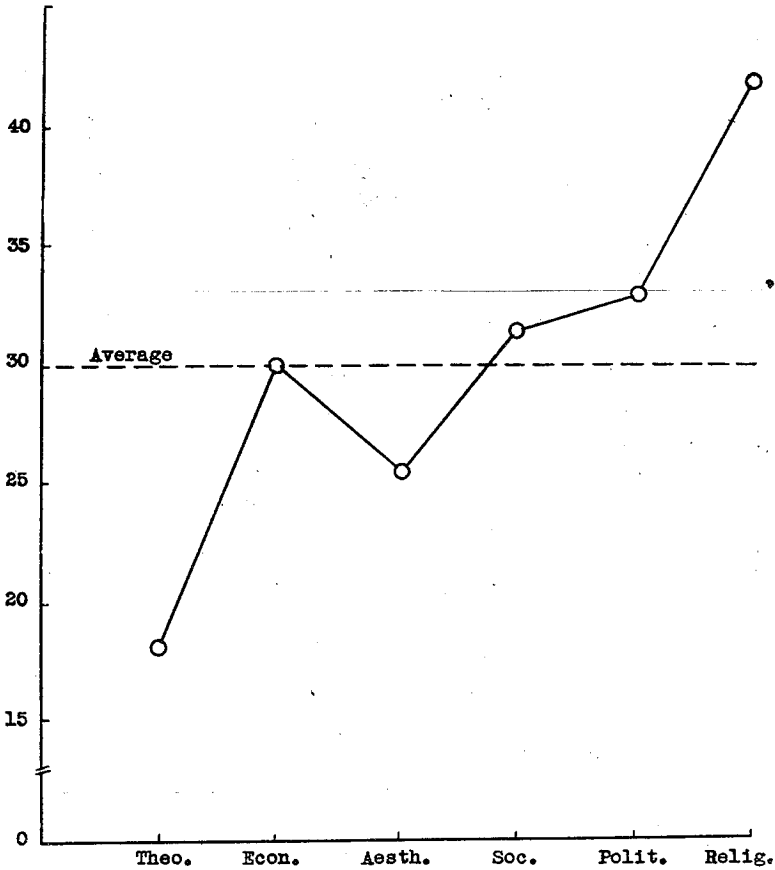
From various biographies, as well as from the works of Swift himself, data were secured which enabled the writer to fill out for Swift *A Study of Values*. It is hoped that by use of the standard set of questions furnished by this test, an impartial and fairly accurate evaluation of Swift's basic motives has been achieved. That such hope is not vain is indicated by the reliabilities of .77 for the theoretic, economic, aesthetic, and social scales; .84 for the polit-

*Recommended for publication by Dr. Norman C. Meier, February 11, 1939.

ical, and .87 for the religious scale. The reliability of the entire test is .81.¹

The results are shown in Figure 1. There it may be seen that

FIGURE 1



Profile of the Evaluative Attitudes of Jonathan Swift.

¹Adapting to this purpose the assumptions for the interpretation of r as a coefficient of determination (10, p. 305) the reliability of each scale was computed by finding the square root of the per cent of questions for which data were available. The reliability coefficients thus indicate completeness of data.

Swift was governed first of all by religious motives, secondarily and perhaps equally by political, social, and economic motives, then by aesthetic, and last of all by theoretic ones. The numerical scores are in order 42.0, 33.0, 31.5, 30.0, 25.5, and 18.0 for religious, political, social, economic, aesthetic, and theoretic scales respectively. Scores on the political, social, economic, and aesthetic scales do not differ significantly from the average, but scores on the religious and theoretic scales do so markedly.² In the interpretation of these scores it should be remembered that they indicate relative prominence of interests rather than absolute values.

In Table I are listed: (a) the questions of *A Study of Values*; (b) the responses characteristic of Swift; and (c) the references upon which decisions were based. All references to Swift's own works are by title, and unless indicated otherwise the pagination is that of the *Oxford Standard Edition* of his works. Other references are indicated by the names of the authors.

TABLE I

Questions and Characteristic Responses³
of Jonathan Swift on *A Scale of Values*

1. The main object of scientific research should be the discovery of pure truth rather than its practical applications.

(a) Yes: theoretic; (b) No: economic.

References: *A Voyage to Brobdingnag* (Chap. III, p. 127; Chap. VII, p. 158); *A Voyage to Laputa* (Chap. II, pp. 186-7, 191, 195; Chap. IV, pp. 208-9; Chap. V, pp. 212-221); Masson (14, p. 14); Orrery (15, pp. 82-3); Quintana (16, pp. 20, 55).

²*A Scale of Values* was so constructed that scores above 37 and below 24 indicate significant deviations from average values.

³The items quoted from *A STUDY OF VALUES* by Allport and Vernon are reprinted by permission of, and special arrangement with Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers. Readers of this article who may be interested to score themselves on these items should secure a copy of this test with a manual of directions from the publishers. Thrice scoring tables are not presented here.

⁴The response characteristic of Swift is italicized.