

PSYCHOLOGY

Public and Private Attitudes Found to be Inconsistent

People Who as Individuals Approve Card Playing But Object as a Group Are Among Those Studied

THE "PUBLIC" attitude adopted by people when influenced by membership in church, lodge, or other institution, may be completely different from the "private" attitudes of the members as individuals. Thus, as church members a certain group may be opposed to card-playing with face cards although privately the individual members may have no objection to the practice.

So Dr. Richard Louis Schanck, of Syracuse University, found in a careful survey of a village in New York State, reported in *Psychological Monographs*, an official organ of the American Psychological Association.

Dr. Schanck attempted, in his survey, to find out just what the influences are which produce these "public attitudes." The impression that practically all other members of the institution hold the attitude in question and the feeling that others expect members to hold it seem to be important factors, he found.

In one of the churches, a certain old lady was very powerful in directing the affairs of the institution. She was the daughter of a former pastor, long since dead. More than half the church members held publicly that because of this connection, Mrs. Salt's views should be given special consideration. Of these members 87 per cent. thought all members held the same attitude while the other 12 per cent. were sure most members agreed.

An actual check-up of personal views of individuals showed, however, that only nine members, or less than a fifth of the total, would accord any extraordinary respect to Mrs. Salt's opinion in church affairs.

It is an error to think of the private attitude as being more real or true than the public attitude, Dr. Schanck points out. In fact the public attitude may be the more important because it is more likely to determine behavior.

"It seems that there is no such thing as a real man," he said. "A man when with the Romans may do as the Romans do. In the study just concluded people were found to possess at least two atti-

tudes on the same variable and perhaps under some conditions they might have more."

In a small community such as the one studied consistency in public attitudes of the same individual is necessary because all acts or words which appear outside the privacy of the family or intimate circle are likely to be circulated at large. What you believe as a Methodist or Baptist, you must also believe in your lodge or at your club.

In a large city, however, a business man might have a church, a business, and a private attitude, no two of them alike, on the same subject, prohibition, Dr. Schanck said.

Science News Letter, January 28, 1933

ARCHAEOLOGY

Vikings Given Praise As Empire Builders

THE OLD PICTURE of the Viking as a ruthless, fighting dog of the sea is a poor caricature, it appears from discoveries made through archaeological researches in Baltic countries. The new-style Viking picture shows these vigorous Northmen as astute traders, colonizers, and even founders of empire.

That Swedish Vikings were colonizers on a large scale and founded a Baltic colonial empire over 1,000 years ago, is pointed out by Sweden's chief antiquarian, Sigurd Curman. The Viking strategy was first to obtain possession of all important points, such as river inlets and sounds. From these vantage posts they could dominate the sea and its traffic.

In their trading ventures, the Vikings carried their small ships as far as the Mediterranean and Black Seas. They crossed the entire Russian continent, following the big rivers.

Recent excavations, especially in Latvia, have shed light on the Viking colonizing projects, and further revelations are expected. At Grobin in Latvia large burial fields in which Swedish men and women were interred have been found.

Science News Letter, January 28, 1933

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