The President welcomed the Nixons back from their harrowing South American "good will" tour last May.

The Mystery of Richard Nixon

A Post editor's penetrating examination of one of the most disputed figures in America—the man who at the moment probably has the best chance of becoming the next U.S. President.

Reception committee at Caracas. Even Nixon's enemies admitted that he faced the mobs courageously.

By STEWART AL SOP

There is at least one point about that much disputed figure, Richard Milhous Nixon, which no sensible person can now dispute. Despite a surface blandness which sometimes makes him seem quite ordinary, Vice President Nixon is a most extraordinary man. Consider one measure of just how extraordinary he is.

Since 1836, when Martin Van Buren inherited the crown from crusty old Andrew Jackson, no Vice President has been nominated as his party's Presidential candidate. Yet already, two years in advance, Vice President Nixon has the 1960 Republican Presidential nomination sewed up in a nearly puncture-proof bag. And even allowing for the current low state of Republican fortunes, he unquestionably has a better chance than any other
After one of the most successful years the college has ever witnessed, we stop to reminisce, and come to the realization that much of the success was due to the efforts of this very gentleman. Always progressive, and with a liberal attitude, he has led us through the year with flying colors.

The young Nixon (right) with his parents, and brothers Harold (left) and Donald. Their father lived to be 77. Harold died of tuberculosis in his youth.

Nixon became student-body president of Whittier College by advocating on-campus dances. He personally disliked dancing but, as a good politician, knew how to pick a winning issue.

man to be the next President of these United States.

Yet to the vast majority of Americans, this extraordinary man remains a cardboard figure, oddly inhuman and impersonal. To his enemies—and he has, probably, more enemies than any other American—he is a cardboard devil, utterly without scruple or conviction. To his admirers—and they also number in the many millions—he is a cardboard saint, whose strength is as the strength of ten because his heart is pure.

Sometimes the dislike of Nixon is pure bile, undiluted by rational content, as in the case of the elderly lady in Whittier, Nixon's hometown in California, who telephoned this reporter to say: “I know it's against religion to hate anybody, but I just can’t help hating that Nixon.” The worship of Nixon can be equally irrational, for a case against Nixon—in some respects a strong case—can certainly be made.

The purpose of this report is not to please the old lady from Whittier, who will certainly go on hating Nixon to the end of her days. Nor is its purpose to please those to whom any criticism of the Vice President is tainted with treason. What follows is, instead, an attempt—to see through the cardboard figure to the human being underneath.

The maker of such an attempt should give his credentials at the start, since Nixon is one of those men—like Franklin D. Roosevelt—about whom no one can pretend to be wholly objective. Until rather recently, I inclined more to the view of the old lady in Whittier than to Nixon worship. Nixon seemed a shrewd, tough, ambitious politician, and not very much more. But especially in the second Eisenhower Administration, like many other Washington reporters, I found myself, almost in spite of myself, increasingly impressed by Nixon.

In certain almost impossibly difficult situations—notably President Eisenhower's ill-nesses—Nixon has handled himself brilliantly. Reporters who have covered him on his trips abroad, some of whom started as strong anti-Nixonites, have come back praising him for his deft sense of personal diplomacy; and, after his trip to South America, for plain physical courage in the face of that most terrifying of phenomena, a mob gone wild.

What is more important, Nixon has repeatedly displayed a knack—useful in a potential President—for being right. In the pre-Sputnik era
The Mystery of Richard Nixon

(Continued from Page 29)

last summer, Nixon's was almost the only voice in Administration raised against the policy of defense cutback and slowdown. He instantly recognized and publicly acknowledged the real meaning of the first Soviet satellite, when other Administration spokesmen were smugly attempting to laugh it off with weak jokes. He was the first to recognize that the recession was a serious matter, demanding a serious Government policy to deal with it. And it has been difficult for even the most cynical of the anti-Nixonites to detect a political motivation in some of the positions Nixon has taken, like his strong advocacy of the politically unpopular foreign-aid program.

I also discovered something else—that Nixon is a most interesting man to talk to. Unlike so many denizens of the Washington zoo, he never wraps himself in the American flag or recites his latest speeches verbatim to a restless audience of one. He talks politics sensibly and well. Indeed, where the subjects of politics and government are concerned, Nixon is something of an intellectual, as the excerpts from my notebook which accompany this article suggest. He has read a great deal, and he has thought a great deal about what he has read.

Nixon also has another quality which is hardly characteristic of most politicians—he listens. An interviewer is apt to find himself suddenly transformed into interviewee, with Nixon taking notes on a large yellow pad. State Department officials who have briefed him before his trips abroad, accustomed as they are to the glazed eyes and uninterested yawns of junketing politicians forced briefly to listen to the facts, have been amazed by Nixon's incisive questions, his intense determination to master the essentials.

Nixon, in short, is certainly far more than just another tough, shrewd, ambitious politician. But then, what kind of man is he? The best way to try to answer that question is to consider the kind of man, and the kind of boy, he has been, and then to try to understand the ways in which he has changed, and the ways in which he has not changed.

Among Nixon's critics and rivals, it is fashionable to scoff at the notion that Nixon has changed at all. And in one sense they are right. There are ways in which men do not change. The psychologists have proved that a boy's intelligence quotient at the age of nine will be about the same when he is forty-five. A born fool or a born coward will almost always remain so. As the Bible warns, a man cannot "by taking thought . . . add one cubit unto his stature."

Yet time and experience do change a man, not in his inner nature, but rather as saline deposits change the outer size and shape of a barnacle exposed to the sea. It is silly to suppose that a man of Nixon's intelligence and capacity to learn has been in no way affected by the extraordinary experiences through which he has passed. The following attempt to understand how Nixon has changed and how he has not, takes the form of a drama in three acts.

In Act One we examine the original barnacle—the boy who was father of the man. In Act Two we consider Nixon in midpassage, in the greatest crisis of his life, when charges in the 1952 campaign that he was the beneficiary of a "secret millions' fund" all but destroyed him. In Act Three we consider Nixon today, with six years of the Vice Presidency behind him, standing within a long arm's reach of the nation's highest office.

Start, then, with the bare bones of Nixon's early life, before trying to clothe them in a little flesh. He was born in 1913 in a hard-working, impecunious Quaker family, and he was brought up in the pleasant, sunlit Quaker town of Whittier, just outside Los Angeles. His school and college records have a Horatio Alger consistency. In Whittier High School, he was first in his class scholastically, president of the student body and a champion debater. At Duke University Law School in North Carolina—he went there on a scholarship and was graduated in 1937—he was third in his class, the equivalent of president of the student body and on the law review.

Even these bare bones tell something of the man. In Act One we examine the original barnacle—the boy who was father of the man. In Act Two we consider Nixon in midpassage, in the greatest crisis of his life, when charges in the 1952 campaign that he was the beneficiary of a "secret millions' fund" all but destroyed him. In Act Three we consider Nixon today, with six years of the Vice Presidency behind him, standing within a long arm's reach of the nation's highest office.

See Borden's TV shows, "The People's Choice" and "Fury" over NBC. ©1958, The Borden Co.
FIGHT TOOTH DECAY
WITH COLGATE'S WHILE YOU
STOP BAD BREATH
ALL DAY!

Brushing for brushing, it's the surest protection ever offered by any toothpaste! Because of all leading toothpastes, only Colgate Dental Cream contains Gardol.

FIGHTS BOTH BAD BREATH AND TOOTH DECAY ALL DAY—
WITH JUST ONE BRUSHING!

Colgate Dental Cream with Gardol is backed by published results of 2-year clinical research on the reduction of tooth decay. And of all leading toothpastes,* only Colgate's contains Gardol to form an invisible, protective shield around your teeth that fights decay all day... helps stop decay with just one brushing! One Colgate brushing stops mouth odor all day for most people, too!

M. SILVER

Richard would become a preacher, too, because he had his heart set on being a lawyer. She remembers when little Richard was sprawled in front of the fire, reading in the papers about the Teapot Dome scandal. He turned to her and said: "I know what I want to be when I grow up—an honest lawyer who doesn't cheat people but helps them."

Again and again, one catches echoes of that early pronouncement, with its note of faintly priggish, some old Whittier yearbooks, and that I suspected I might have found the origins of his wife Pat’s famous "respectable attitude." But call it what you will, a holier-than-thou attitude or a "very high sense of duty," Nixon comes by it honestly.

He Quaker background is very much part of him. His great-grandmother and his great-great-grandmother on his mother’s side were well-known itinerant Quaker ladies prevailing in the strong religious and personally charming old lady—she looks like Whistler’s mother with a ski-jump nose—hoped

Most children lose their fear of the darkness when they become teen-agers.

(Most children lose their fear of the darkness when they become teen-agers.)
It was to discover, from the boy's records, where he stood scholastically.

As this episode suggests, those other qualities in Nixon, his "ambition", "intractable" were also very much a part of the boy, as they are of the man. Nixon says of his father, Frank Nixon, "I guess I got him anyway, I guess I got him from him," and he is doubtless right. Frank Nixon, who died in 1956, was not a worldly success. His grocery store was brought in just enough to support the family, and the Milhous family tended to think that Hannah, whose family founded Whittier in 1877, had a better heart than he. Perhaps this explains why Frank Nixon, who suffered from bad ulcers all his adult life, was not a very large representative, and such a disciplinarian. At any rate, Nixon's mother apparently acted as the caretaker, and his father as the stick, in spurrring on the boys to try to be "good", not just at one thing, but at everything.

He certainly tried hard, as he has been trying ever since. And, although he was a bad football player, he was good at almost everything else. He was a good actor, for example. Dr. Albert Upton, his drama critic, remembers a play in which Nixon, as a badly off old innkeeper, was to appear alone on the stage, weeping. "He did it, if you just concentrate real hard on getting big lump in your throat, I think you can cry real tears." He did too—buckets of tears. I could always remember the play when I saw that picture of Dick crying on Senator Knowland's shoulder. But mind you, Dick is Nixon never sleeps.

He was more than good at debating—he was brilliant, the champion college debater in Southern California. Debating was taken very seriously at Whittier, almost as seriously as football, and being president of the Debate Team automatically made Nixon a very big man on the campus. The Rev. William Hornaday, now a well-known California preacher, then Nixon's debating teammate, recalls how shrewd Nixon was. "He used to pass me little notes, 'Pour it on at this point,' or 'Save your ammunition,' or 'Play to the judges, they're the ones who decide.'" Mrs. Norman Vincent, his high school debating coach, remembers, "He was so good it kind of disturbed me. He had a kind of kiwi idea, an argument, instead of meeting it head on, and he could take any side of a debate." Mrs. Antonio Bongio, his political science professor, still remembers the great Democrat. Moreover, the abilities that "kind of disturbed" her were precisely those which made Nixon a champion debater.

And Nixon was also a brilliant campus politician. The Whittey yearbook for his senior year records how Nixon became student-body president "in a campaign in which mudslinging was noticeably absent. Harry was a born winner, a deal for those who enjoy the social niceties, he stormed to his position." The share-cropper debate, a series of public debates, previously outlawed on that campus, Nixon disliked dancing, and still does, but he learned how to develop interest in the winning issue, even then. Yet the odd fact is that many of his classmates did not think of Nixon as a natural leader. They were under the impression that he "would put him down as the man least likely to succeed in politics.

Most Americans think of a politician as a charlatan and still is, anything but a backslapper. That is another note his contemporaries repeatedly struck in their letters about Nixon. "He was personally somewhat shy..." "...Definitely not an extrovert..." "...Basically aloof, very sure of himself, and very careful to keep people from getting too close to him..." "He was not what you would call a really friendly guy..." "...He tended somewhat to shyness..." Yet his contemporaries liked him. One lady classmate recalls that she "thought Dick Nixon was too staid. But she is an exception. Very few of his contemporaries felt really close to him, but all say he was all some, and all say he was all "good."

From all this, there emerges at least in rough outline a picture of the kind of boy Nixon was. There is the quite genuine Quaker strain, "the very high sense of duty." There is, as becomes an instinctive conservative, also a certain conventionality of outlook; Nixon has never got over his college boy's admiration for football heroes, and the club some he wrote for the Origonians is almost a take-off on the conventional college song: "Brothers together we'll travel on and on, with a new name of any Orthogonian." There is the fierce drive, the great ability, the first-rate mental equipment. There he second manager, to influence, to lead, and an instinct for the means of doing so. There is—especially worth noting for future reference—the brilliant mastery of debating techniques. There is the touch of the ham, which most successful politicians have. And there is something highly unusual in a politician, a withdrawn quality, a lack of easy warmth, a loneliness of spirit.

This, then, is the basic Nixon, the original barnacle on which the rest is built. Every one of the characteristics Nixon displayed as a boy is still clearly and visibly present in him. Now let us plunge into what would certainly be Act Two in any competent play about Nixon—the great crisis of the $18,000 fund. In two episodes of that crisis—both involving Dwight D. Eisenhower, and neither fully told before—we shall see that something new has been added to the original barnacle; that the earnest Quaker boy has somewhere acquired an amazing inner toughness of fiber.

But first, again the bare bones of Nixon's life. The years from 1937 to 1946 are quickly told. They were precisely the same years in the history of a good deal of some millions of other young men. After law school, Nixon became a junior partner with an old friend's law business. He was president of the Twenty-Thirty Club, and active in Kiwanis and in the Whittier little-theater movement. There were the interviews with Thelma Ryan—"Pat"—a high-school teacher and occasional Holly- wood bit player. He married her in 1940, and it was the brief stint in the Army, and then a commission as a Navy supply officer, with some months in the Pacific. In the fund speech, Nixon describes his army life as particularly uneventful. It was unusual in only one way—Nixon became an unusually brilliant poker player, and came back with a useful nestegg of poker winnings.

In 1946, Nixon, still in uniform, accepted an invitation from another family friend, a Whittier banker, to appear before a local Republican group which was then in a RabidHump campaign to oppose Representative Jerry Voorhis, a high-minded, well-entrenched Democrat. Nixon was chosen, and beat Voorhis in November in what he calls his "first real campaign."

He was elected easily again in 1948, and in his second term he decided to run for Senate—an- other "rocking, rolling" campaign. At the 1952 Republican Convention, Dwight D. Eisenhower selected his name from a list of suitable running mates. And in mid-September, 1952, when the campaign was just gathering steam, the story hit the headlines that Nixon was the beneficiary of a "secret $18,000 fund;" and Nixon was almost destroyed.

So much for the bare bones. But before going on to examine the great fund crisis, it is necessary to consider some new charac- ters in the dramatis personae of Nixon's career. One is his wife, Pat. Like Nixon, she is a busi- nesswoman. She, according to those who do know her, shares many qualities with her husband. Besides the interest in the drama which first brought them together, she shares with him a good intelligence, much energy and a strong ambition. Her chief influence appears to have been to magnify the qualities Nixon, to intensify those qualities, especially his drive and self-confidence, which were present in him from the first. She has acted as a sort of extra backbone for a man whose backbone already had great tensile strength.

The second new character is Murray Chotiner, who was Nixon's campaign adviser in 1946, and his manager in 1950 and 1952. Chotiner, out of politics now; in 1956, still-unproven charges that he had used his political connections in his law business destroyed his political usefulness. Nixon, who is still outspokenly loyal to Chotiner, considers it a "tragedy" that Chotiner became involved in "the kind of law business which does not mix well with politics." Chotiner, of "fair-to-moderate" abilities, is—or was—a remarkable political phe- nomenon in his own right. He managed campaigns for Earl Warren and William Knowland as well as Nixon, and he has often described as a political genius. He is a shrewdly humorous fellow, with something of a Hollywood touch about him—he affects such eccentricities as miniature watches worn as cuff links. He was fascinated when talking about the one subject on which he is a genuine ex- pert, and the one subject which really interests him—the art of winning elections. Chotiner, chief mentor in that art, in Nixon's early days, and there is no doubt that his influence on Nixon was profound.

Both Pat and Chotiner were on the campaign trail with Nixon, who was in trouble in the West Coast when the fund story broke on September eighteenth. Nixon's first reaction to the story was simple unconcern. It is impor- tant to note that the unconcern was quite genuine. Nixon nor Chotiner, who also knew about the fund and who was no political babb in the woods, had foreseen that the fund might be a political booby trap. The fund was never a "secret"—the treasurer, Dana Anderson, had publicly solicited contribu- tions up and down the coast. And Nixon and Chotiner regarded it as no different from any other political-campaign fund. Earlier,
Auto glass lets all the wonder in

A world of wonder awaits her wherever she goes ... and the magnificent auto safety glass areas by Pittsburgh Plate Glass Company in the whole 1958 Chrysler Corporation line give her a front row seat. (The Imperial on the opposite page is a striking example.) Do you realize that in just 10 years the glass area in a typical Chrysler Corporation car has increased an average of 76%? And every inch of this glass is PPG SAFETY GLASS — glass which measures up on every count to the rigid specifications set by the American Standard Safety Code for strength and optical clarity.

(Continued from Page 60)

... when columnist Pete Edson had asked about the fund, Nixon had given him Smith's telephone number and suggested that Smith could give him all the details.

But Nixon soon realized that he was in desperate trouble, especially when the New York Herald Tribune, the paper of his closest newspaper friend and collaborator in the Hiss case, Bert Andrews, called for his withdrawal. "That was the worst shock," Nixon has recalled. There were other shocks. Harold Stassen wired him, asking him to withdraw for the good of the party. Thomas E. Dewey telephoned him to say ("I hate to tell you this, Dick") that the consensus among his powerful New York friends was that Nixon should step aside.

General Eisenhower said only that Nixon must be as "clean as a hound's tooth," and Nixon was well aware that a number of those who had the general's ear were urging him to dump his controversial running mate.

Nixon himself thought briefly but seriously of withdrawing. But his wife Pat repeatedly said two things. "If you withdraw under fire," she said, "you will carry the scar for the rest of your life." And she said: "If you withdraw, Ike will lose.

Chotiner also maintained that Nixon's withdrawal under fire would defeat Eisenhower, and he insisted from the first that the crisis could be turned decisively to Nixon's advantage. "I did what I always do," Nixon has said. "I considered all the worst alternatives, as cold-bloodedly as I could, and reached an analytical conclusion — that if I withdrew, General Eisenhower would probably lose. So I decided to make the effort to stay on, if possible with honor."

Although he has not said so, it is clear from the events which followed that Nixon's analysis led him also to the conclusion that the key to his situation lay with Dwight D. Eisenhower. If his personal reputation and his political career were not to sustain a mortal wound, the general must exonerate him completely and on his own initiative. Nothing less would do. Moreover, Nixon must at all costs avoid being summoned to judgment, like a naughty little boy, to be punished or excused by an indulgent parent.

On Friday, September nineteenth, while the storm was still gathering force, Nixon accordingly issued orders—quickly conveyed to the general's train—that he would under no circumstances speak to anyone in the general's party except Eisenhower himself. Friday, Saturday, and the daylight hours of Sunday passed without the expected telephone call from the general, who was under heavy confusing pressures. Then on Sunday night, while Nixon was in Portland, the call at last came through from the general in Kansas City.

Nixon must have given a lot of thought to what he, a mere junior senator, thirty-nine years old, would say to the revered conqueror of Hitler. An ordinary man might have adopted a meek and defensive tone, giving his side of the fund story with much self-justifying detail. But Nixon is not an ordinary man, and he hardly mentioned the fund.

He started the conversation by saying flatly that he would withdraw if the general—and the Republican National Committee—so wished. The general replied that "this is not my decision—it is yours." Nixon answered immediately that he would be glad to take exclusive responsibility for the decision, either way. But first, he said, the public, and the general himself, ought to have a chance to "hear my side of the story." He warned the older man against listening to "some of those people around you who don't know a damn thing about it." And he concluded by giving the head of the ticket a small lecture about practical politics.

The longer there remained any doubt about whether or not he was to stay on the ticket, the more harm it would do, not only to himself but to the whole ticket. In a situation of this sort, a decision had to be made; it had to be made firmly, and it had to be made as quickly as possible. And, according to at least three people who should know—not including Nixon—and who recall Nixon's words with a certain retrospective awe, he concluded with a bluntly worded admonition which can be delicately paraphrased as follows: "General, in politics a time comes when you have to fish or cut bait."

It was an extraordinarily bold and aggressive line for a young man in Nixon's position to take. But it worked, as Nixon knew it must; Nixon could not possibly be dropped from the ticket without being given a chance to defend himself. Before that night ended, the money to put Nixon on a nationwide television hookup, which had hitherto been lacking, was quickly found.

Nixon's famous broadcast the next Tuesday night, September twenty-third, was his most decisive political triumph, transforming him from a youthful would-be Throttlebottom into the really major political figure he has been ever since. It is also still in some ways a milestone round his political neck; those who dislike Nixon often explain their dislike by pointing to that "tear-jerking soap opera about the fund." Yet it is interesting to read the

(Continued on Page 66)