VOLUME III, NO. 27
JULY 5, 1950

WANTED: A NEW IDEAL

UP to about twelve or fifteen years ago, a man of good will had no difficulty in finding causes to champion, issues to contest. There were dozens of versions of the social dream, all of them honestly conceived, all of them holding some sort of promise of fulfillment for the man who wanted to put his shoulder to the wheel and push. From the turn of the century until about 1935, he could still use his best intelligence to choose a side, and then get to work. This period could be called the golden age of the social imagination. It was a chaotic period, perhaps, with World War I coming in the middle of it, but even the war produced an extraordinary reaction among intelligent people. The post-war literature of the 1920's and early '30's was far more impressive than anything which has appeared since World War II. Not only the second war itself, but a number of other developments along with it, produced a kind of intellectual and moral fatalism or passivity; the general feeling is that the problem of war has grown too big and too complicated for a humanitarian movement to cope with.

Socialism is hardly an issue any more. Even the socialists seem to think so; at least, they exert far less influence and manifest far less energy than they did a generation ago. The evolution of the modern Communist State has presented a question which the socialists can answer only with a phrase—"democratic socialism." Most people—even those without any "stake" in the present economic system—would like to see how well socialism will preserve the freedom of the individual, before giving it any support at all. And the prospect of another war, of course, pushes the hope of political freedom entirely out of sight.

There is the rhetorical controversy focussing around the term, "Welfare State." Here, again, a State organized for total war is bound to be both a Welfare and a Police State. How can anyone except a Tolstoyan anarchist or an absolute pacifist come out against the Welfare State? Condemn it, that is, with any intellectual consistency? And even supposing that a free enterprise economy does offer more freedom and abundance than a system under total State control, how much does that abundance mean, how long will it last, in a country such as the United States, which has a budget of $14,294,252,300 for national defense? We Americans are the rich people, we have the highest standard of living in the world, now, or at any time, and in 1948 we received the highest personal income in all our history—212 billion dollars. Yet, in that same year, according to Robert Heilbroner in *Harper's* for June:

> One out of every two single-dwelling individuals lived on less than $1,000.
>
> One family out of ten got along—to the extent that a family could get along on $20 a week or less.
>
> Out of forty million families in the nation, ten million shared in the greatest boon in history with an income of less than $40 a week—just over $13 per person.

Meanwhile, in the same issue of *Harper's,* Fletcher Pratt tells us that the big escort carrier ships built for the Navy, when fully equipped, are fabulously expensive. Just the sixteen planes aboard one large carrier, he says, cost more than enough to have bought an entire carrier and everything in her in 1941. The "enormous cost of mechanized warfare" is no figure of speech. And from *US News World Report* for June 16, we learn that later this year the Government will start a civilian defense program against the atomic bomb which is expected "to snowball into an effort measured in billions of dollars." All large cities of the nation are to have underground shelters, "target" cities will be given rapid evacuation highways, and some factories will be put underground. Estimates of the cost of this public works program go as high as 100 billion dollars, and there are also elaborate plans for privately financed construction in connection with basic industries.

Our "abundance," in short, is to be spent in preparation for war. Military necessity respects no ideologies and is indifferent to human ideals. *UN World,* keeping in step with the "realistic" spirit of the times, retained a group of German Generals to analyze the military power of the Russians, and in June presents the conclusion that the Russians can put 30 million men into battle, have 100,000 first-class tanks, and could occupy all Europe, excepting Spain and England, "in a few days." With this sort of prospect as a possibility, it is doubtful that very many people will interest themselves in the project of social reform. The question of national survival is far more insistent. Questions such as a more equitable distribution of the national income lapse into insignificance beside the all-important issue of military power. In times like these, the man who speaks of social justice has a position very like the local clergyman who is invited to open a convention of the Elks or the Shriners with a few words of prayer. He gets nominal attention, for the sake of appearances, but what he says has no connection with the things which are uppermost in the minds of his hearers.

The same sort of apathy attends the activities of working class movements. Fifty years ago, Gene Debs was a great leader of labor who had won the hearts of hundreds of thousands of working people. He helped them to have a vision of a future worth striving for. He had no alliances save those with his ideals and he acknowledged no power but the righteousness of his cause. Where is there a man, today, who occupies a similar place in the labor movement or the social movement? Not only men, but the times, too, have changed. Debs went to prison for his contempt for the first World War, and what he thought it stood for. Norman Thomas, the inheritor of the party of Debs, has become a mere journalist who gave "critical support" to the second World War, and who now writes about the mistakes of nations, men and parties. And what, indeed, is there else for him to do? The pattern of national development has been much the same as the pattern of the world. Power is the only issue, today, in the area of international relationships. And when nations must act in a theater where only power—immediate and irresistible power—is recognized, the inner freedom of the nation gives way to the purposes of generating total power.

The industrial development which has made military power so prominent a factor in the affairs of the world at the same time created a complex organizational unity within the nation. The legal regulation which has come through intricate systems of taxation, the laws governing the relationships of employers and workers, the close contact between government officials and manufacturers, as a result of the wartime economy—all these factors have transformed the modern industrial society into a complicated mechanism of interdependent parts and processes. It is impossible to do very much to change these relationships without seeming to threaten either the welfare of the civilian population or the military power of the State. No one—or almost no one—thinks in terms of social revolution, in the traditional meaning of this expression, any more, and such "progress" as is gained comes almost entirely through long ordeals in the courts, without much of either participation or understanding by the rank and file of "common men." Thus all hope, all enthusiasm for better conditions of life can find expression only through the institutionalized channels of legislature and courts, and must of course be subject to the dilutions and controls imposed by the guardians of national security.

It seems fair to say that the days of social idealism are just about over. This may be a major heresy, but there is no point in continuing the pretense, practiced for over a generation, that after the "next war" we shall be able to make a new start and to do all the things we are prevented from doing now. Nor is there any sense in looking upon war as some sort of uninvited intruder that has destroyed all our fine plans. Wars are either implicitly a part of those plans, or they result from causes which our social idealism failed to take into account. It is even conceivable that the humanitarianism which formulated our social ideals was too much a reaction against injustice, and not enough a philosophy of positive human good.

The simplest and most popular way of meeting difficulties of this sort is to ignore them—to brush

aside the confusions and moral uncertainties which they produce. The liberal press, today, is very nearly sterile on all subjects except that of the loss of civil liberties. The "Dangerous Thoughts" series running in the *Nation* has more vigor than any other department or type of article the *Nation* prints, yet the mourning of the loss of our liberties will do nothing, of itself, to save them. What is wanted is an analysis of the objectives which have made those liberties seem less important than other things. The liberal position is reminiscent of Augustine's appeal to the Lord to cure him of the lusts of the flesh—but "not yet." The modern liberal fears the onset of a completely totalitarian pattern, but argues that it is "not yet" necessary.

It is a fact, however, to which all history testifies, that while human idealism changes its forms, from epoch to epoch, it never dies out. And the idealism called "social" may be reborn, after this period of doubt and frustration, in some new mould of human activity. The "social" idea, after all, does not contain the sum total of human aspiration. We may discover that typical social idealism often embodied a kind of totalitarian psychology without being conscious of its presence. Social idealism was almost entirely devoted to the economic welfare of the masses of mankind; it preached, "Seek ye first the kingdom of Plenty, and all things will be added unto you." We have been seeking this kingdom for a hundred years or more, in the name of social idealism, and now, all things are rapidly being subtracted from us.

Historically, the conventional idealism which preceded the cycle of social idealism often took the form of spiritual egotism. It proposed the private objective of personal salvation. There were the virtuous and the pious, who were to be saved, and there were the sinning and the damned, who were not. Not unnaturally, when, in the eighteenth century, the revolutionary spirit asserted itself and declared for the political freedom of mankind, an instinct of altruism in the rebels provoked considerable contempt for the private compact with God by which the virtuous secured their hope of salvation. In time, personal virtue became almost a mark of reaction—at least, it had little or nothing to do with the social good which was now the great objective. The idea of the moral individual was increasingly discounted until, in the communist theory of "objective morality," it was lost sight of entirely. The communist believes that there is no good, no morality, except that which serves the ends of the party organization; and as the ends of the party cannot be served unless the party gains total power, the only moral act is the act which adds to the power of the party. The communists have not been alone in their contempt for "old-time" moral values, but they are distinguished from other believers in "social idealism" by the fact that they have pushed this system of social morality to its logical limit and openly declared their views as a virtual metaphysic of materialism.

The position of men of liberal tendencies who revolt against the communist extreme is often equivocal and generally confusing. By cultural habit, they feel they "ought" to support without question all programs which propose to take power away from the capitalist and employer interests, yet they are beginning to sense the apparent futility in a mere exchange of power. Even apart from the decisive effects upon all classes of the war economy, there is evidence that the struggle for power along the old lines of the social movement no longer has any practical meaning. But after this is recognized or felt, what alternative is there left for a man of good will? He will hardly be inclined to fall back on the shibboleths of private enterprise, as a substitute for his former hopes for a better society, for he knows that industry and commerce are still dominated by the acquisitive motive and still engaged in profit-taking, without any basic change in attitude or practice. He knows that if, as a result of government regulation and progressive labor organization, an equalization of power has taken place, the vast increase in taxes and in the power of bureaucracy and officialdom has tended to drain off the major rewards of industrial productivity. Already the sluggishness of a "managed" economy is felt by employers and workers alike, and even if both would agree to a return to old laissez faire practices, in the hope of regaining the uninhibited vigor of past cycles of prosperity, the shadow of impending war assures

that, if anything, there will be more government controls instead of less.

Small wonder, then, that in France, England and the United States, there is a noticeable recrudescence of the anarchist spirit, a growth of absolute pacifist sentiments, and a casting about for new sources of moral inspiration. So long as social idealism included the dynamic end of human freedom, the idealism was sincerely conceived and the goal of material justice could be sought without discouragement. Today, however, the idea of society is inseparable from the idea of the State—making the social ideal over into the ideal of the "good" State, with its benevolent State apparatus of bureaucracy. But so long as the State stands as a symbol of coercive power, the State is a threat to the ideal of freedom, and the practical negation of goodness and benevolence. Finally, in a world haunted by the fear of war, what else can a State become, except an increasingly powerful instrument of coercion?

Pessimists who watch the frantic preparation for war in every part of the world declare that only a spark will be needed to set off the conflagration. War, they say, is irrational, and rational restraints can hardly control a tendency which is by nature without sense or reason. An optimist might answer, however, that whenever the familiar channels of human idealism are absolutely stopped up, as they seem to be, today, the pressure of hopes and aspirations backs up in human beings as inevitably as any other sort of accumulating natural force which demands an outlet. He could say, also, that the release of these hopes in some new direction depends largely upon an understanding of what has happened to the old outlets for moral energy.

The reviving interest in religion, the multiplication of cults, the fascination of miracle-dealing pseudo-science—these are only some of the avenues that human hopes are finding to explore. Most important of all is the slowly emerging conception of man as a psychological and moral individuality, instead of a physical and economic and political unit. The social idealism of the past two hundred years grew up around a conception of man which was independent of the theological dogmas describing man as a sinning being who had to be saved by divine intenention. The theological conception led to multiplying cruelties and disasters, and so was rejected by the new idealism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. And now, as the revolutionary and scientific conception of man reaps its harvest of frustration and destruction, we are again awakening to the need for another and perhaps truer formulation.

We can make our peace with the disasters, for these, as nothing else, release great masses of men from old delusions. But now, in the midst of disaster, we must ask ourselves the same old question: What are we? What sort of ideal will serve us best in tomorrow's world? Is it possible to conceive of a program and goal which can never become separated or different from service to the welfare of Man?

Letter from
JAPAN

TOKYO.—Events are moving rapidly toward the eventual banning of the Communist Party in Japan. General MacArthur, by purging 24 members of the Red party's Central Committee on June 6, has for all purposes set the pace for the Japanese, who had been urged on two previous occasions by the Supreme Commander—on July 4, 1949, and May 3, 1950—to outlaw the Communist party because of its program of violence and destruction.

Just two days before the drastic SCAP order to the Japanese Government, delivered in the form of a letter from General MacArthur to Prime Minister Yoshida, the Japanese people went to the polls and almost completely rejected the Communist candidates. Out of the 132 seats contested, the Reds managed only to salvage three—and one was immediately eliminated as the successful candidate fell under the SCAP purge axe. Moreover, as soon as the polling places were closed on election day, the Government came out with a strong statement voicing its "determination" to outlaw the Communist party. This came as a surprise since the Government had been telling the people throughout the election campaign that no action would be taken against the Reds.

It is generally believed that both SCAP and the Japanese Government acted speedily on this matter in view of the manhandling of several GI's by a score of Communists during a pre-election Red rally. The Communist demonstration proved to be one of the most rabid anti-American and pro-Soviet meetings ever held in this country. The growing intensity of the Communist propaganda war against the Occupation has kept pace with the increasing sentiment among the people that they want an end to the foreign rule which has continued now for almost five years.

But the Communists were guilty of a serious misjudgment in believing that an anti-Occupation sentiment was at the same time anti-American. They reckoned without the traditional fear the Japanese have had pounded into them for several decades of the Russian and Communist threat to Japan's security. Thus it was that the very campaign of arousing hatred against the American Occupation proved the Communists' undoing at the election.

This serious repudiation of the Communist candidates was believed by many to be sufficient to call off any talks of banning the Red party. But SCAP and the Japanese Government have apparently interpreted the people's rejection of the Communists as a go-ahead sign to cripple the Red party beyond repair. The purging of 24 Central Committee members—the "brains" of the party—is an action from which the Communist party will find it difficult to recover. And now the Government is on record as seeking a ban on the party.

There are, of course, various reasons for and against taking such drastic action against the Communist party and many of them are not peculiar only to Japan. They are arguments which have been hashed and rehashed in many democratic nations in various parts of the world.

As a whole, the Japanese people while anti-Communist are not in favor of prohibiting the Red party entirely in Japan. An artificial measure against the Communists reminds them too much of the actions taken against the Reds by the military clique. Thinking people shudder at the close parallel between the presumedly "democratic" government of today and the ultranationalistic totalitarian government of yesteryears. What was done in the name of fascism not so long ago is now in the process of being repeated in the name of democracy. The irony is not lost upon the Japanese people.

The outlawing of the Communists will naturally result in their being driven underground—for all purposes they have already disappeared from the public view. And going underground can only be followed by a revival of the secret police, the dreaded "thought police" of the past. Further, the banning of one political party—duly recognized under the Constitution—might set a precedent for the outlawing of other political groups, or could be applied to other spheres of activity.

It is pointed out, of course, that some step must be taken against the Reds because they are

undermining the very foundations of a democracy which has given them every protection under the law. Action against the Communist party is thus explained away as a defensive measure designed to protect democracy from falling victim to a vicious Fifth Column. But is it not true that by banning any group, the bases of democracy are shaken more than the Reds could ever attempt because purges and outlawing by their very nature entail the loss of key freedoms by a minority? Is it not an admission that democracy has no innate defense against the onslaught of communism?

It would seem to us that the only real and true armor of democracy against any other ideology is its display of convincing superiority over whatever lures communism may have, and should be left to the good sense of the people to reject or accept—or else democracy will fall into the same category of an oppressive ideology which democracy's exponents are berating. Communism is forcing Japan's infant democracy into a crucial test.

JAPANESE CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
STORIES FOR CHILDREN

IT seems natural, these days, for parents who were themselves brought up on Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen to look about for other stories for their children. The bitter tragedy of the Little Match Girl may have a place in literature, but hardly in the nursery. The tale of Hansel and Gretel and their adventures with the old witch who wanted to bake them and eat them has its share of thrills, but these can be dispensed with by parents who still recall their own childish horror at the prospect of cannibalism, even in fairy tales. Mother Goose, too, needs considerable editing, for what possible value can there be for little children in the mental images of cradles crashing to earth and of people being kicked downstairs?

This is above all a time of the questioning of tradition, and surely the traditional literature for children needs questioning along with everything else. It is not that the "fairy tale," as an imaginative form, ought to be discarded, but if it is retained, it should be done deliberately, and with full awareness of the values supplied to the psychological life of children by what we commonly call "the supernatural." A good fairy tale, of course, is not really supernatural at all, but is rather an allegory in which the more abstract or moral elements of human experience are personified by apparently supernatural beings. It is a way of conveying moral ideas without moralizing. But a fairy tale is also a kind of folk memory of that wonderful past when all the world was thought to be alive with unseen beings, and the commerce of man with Nature, visible and invisible, was a vital reality. There seems to be a kind of impiety in regarding fairy tales as though they were merely fictions invented for the entertainment of the young, without allowing for that sense of reverence for the ancient deities and sprites which gave the fairy tales of tradition their compelling appeal.

A book for children really ought to be selected with the same care that one picks out a scripture to study. The thing that is so extraordinary about children, in comparison with grownups, is their trust in their parents and teachers, and their lack of resistance to a kind of instruction that adults find extremely difficult to put up with. Very likely, the child accepts without much question—when the mood of his relationship with older people allows—direct discussion of the ideas of duty, of kindness and consideration for others, for the reason that his own psychological life has not yet been confused by the complex hypocrisy of the age. Then, too, the child—the small child, that is—is at the beginning of the process of acquiring his own foundation for moral judgment; he has as yet no "egoic" reason for feeling that instruction in moral ideas is some sort of intrusion upon his integrity as a moral agent in his own right. So, on two counts, "moralizing" is not offensive to the child. For the adult, a moral discovery ought to be always a personal discovery, and the business of growing up, although it is doubtless other things as well, seems essentially to involve an increasing insistence upon this right of private moral discovery. Literature for children, then, should take into account this transition from moral instruction to moral discovery.

Sophia Fahs, in compiling and retelling the stories included in *From Long ago and Many Lands* (Beacon Press, $2.50), may have had something like this in mind, as well as other considerations of importance. First of all, this book was obviously put together with the idea of meeting the needs of children of seven, eight and nine years, and not simply to sell another collection of stories. As the title indicates, the stories are drawn from the folklore and legends of many peoples. The theme of the book is an old Chinese proverb, *Under the sky all men are one family.* The end-papers are illustrated with the script of this proverb in sixteen languages, representing the tongues in which the stories were originally told. There are fables from the Jataka Tales of ancient India, some of Aesop's fables, stories from the Bible, from the Upanishads and from Chinese, Japanese, Greek, European and other sources. In the field of religious lore, Miss Fahs is to be congratulated for her impartiality in presenting three tales of wonderful births—the births of Jesus, Buddha, and Confucius—with no favoritism shown

for any one of the great world religions or philosophies.

The plan of the author is told in the Preface:

> . . . these stories have been chosen with quite definite principles in mind. On the one hand, we have deleted from the book old stories that seem to have no valuable meaning. On the other hand, we hope that no tale in the book will be told primarily to teach a moral. These stories represent the thoughts of people of long ago. The characters in them are not heroes whose actions are to be copied. They are men who, long ago, experimented with new ways of living. Always the child's own thoughts should be encouraged. That we should think differently sometimes from even the best of men of long ago should never be a surprise.

The author has excluded stories of witches and fairies who can "do magic," on the ground that when magic is linked with the ideas of good and evil, it may seem that "the good child is magically rewarded and the bad child is punished." "We do not care," says Miss Fahs, "to encourage young children to wish magical help out of difficulties, nor do we wish to frighten them by picturing unreal forms of punishment." Later on, when they are older, she thinks, the children may be able to interpret tales of magic in terms of "common fears, wishes and ethical standards," but such stories are omitted from this book.

This point may be arguable. The idea of magic has an honorable naturalistic heritage from ancient polytheistic systems of religion and need not imply a mere capriciousness or release from responsibility, although it must be admitted that many stories of magic would support the judgment of the author. However, the stories that are retold in this book do not suffer from the omission of others, and many parents will find *From Long Ago and Many Lands* a volume of great usefulness. The only thing that might possibly be noted in criticism of the collection is its somewhat prosy quality. There is an imagery of the mind that children can appreciate, and simplicity of vocabulary need not mean a dull or flat style in storytelling. But parents—especially the parents of younger children—can easily learn these stories and tell them in their own words, trusting to the inspiration of the moment to provide improvisations that will give the tales new life. Not only this, but the telling, rather than reading, of a story to children will establish a unique bond of interest, helping to create a natural flow of feeling from mind to mind. So doing, parents may discover for their children something of the "magic" that these stories otherwise lack.

COMMENTARY
THE CHANGING "FACTS"

ONE thing that may be accomplished by the increasing pressures of modern life is the elimination of "academic" materialism. A man has little difficulty in accepting sententious intellectual notions about the meaninglessness of things, so long as he is under no pressure to make them practical. R. H. Tawney tells of an early nineteenth-century statesman who protested indignantly to a clerical reformer—"Things have come to a pretty pass if religion is going to interfere with private life"—and the current evaluation of philosophy is much the same. Mr. Glicksberg, whose view that all philosophy must undergo the mutilating censorship of "science" is quoted this week in Frontiers, also makes it plain that poetry alone may have the privilege of a minor independence of scientific conclusions; and poetry, as everyone knows, need not be taken seriously. Poetry does not deal with the real world of "hard facts."

Just what the "hard facts" are, however, is open to question. In a world bewildered by failing hopes of security of any sort, a man's idea of what is real is likely to change. The hardest facts are the facts he is up against, and the practical philosophy he decides upon will deal with those facts first, without much attention to inherited academic notions.

The "hard facts" of the interpreters of nineteenth-century science were born of the contest of scientific controversialists like Thomas Huxley with the orthodox theologians whose "facts" about Creation, the Vicarious Atonement and Salvation were rapidly softening, even in those days. Today, the war between science and theology is over, and the facts used as weapons by philanthropic agnostics like Mr. Huxley have lost their weight and much of their impressiveness. Materialism, in short, which was the philosophic conclusion from the facts used by the scientists in their attack on theological dogmas, is no longer a burning issue.

Curiously, yesterday's hard facts of science now serve Mr. Glicksberg as a means to confine the range of human thought, which was precisely the use to which the theologians put their dogmas, seventy or eighty years ago. It seems obvious that a procedure of this sort, whether in the name of religion or science, cannot succeed. Instead, new conceptions of the facts of life will emerge, and new champions of human freedom will use them to overcome the pomposities and denials of an outmoded materialism.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

CONSIDERING a subscriber's problems encountered in discussing "questions about sex" with a youth, we endeavored to show that indoctrination is as poor a method of education in this area as it is in all others. The general trend among adults has recently been toward recognizing this; there is less use of the "frighten them off" method of preventing adolescent indiscretions. A good example of this constructive tenor of thought is found in a *Reader's Digest* article by Margaret Culkin Banning, entitled "The Case for Chastity" (reprinted in last year's *Reader's Digest Reader*). Mrs. Banning orients her argument around the contention that youth is most susceptible to suggestions which help them to distinguish immature and unintelligent actions from the mature and intelligent ones. As far as generalized psychological approaches go, this seems thoroughly sound. The child does not want to know what is bad, but rather wants to discover what is good. And he will listen to opinions concerning the nature of intelligent behavior when he will not allow himself to be frightened by bogies.

Yet Mrs. Banning still uses modified bogies—percentages. We really cannot persuade youths to accept a conventional morality by presenting them with imposing statistics about what presumably happens to those who deviate. One of the strongest motivations in human behavior is the desire to disprove statistics—in other words, to be the exception. This is a good desire, and not a bad one. It is rooted in the urge to transcend the ordinary. When you tell a person not to do something because it is dangerous, with the odds against him, you are not necessarily restraining him. You may be challenging him.

We should like to suggest an improvement on Mrs. Banning's otherwise commendable approach. There is no compelling case for "chastity" in the terms she chooses, for chastity is considered a physical condition, and her argument for keeping this condition is mainly statistical. What is needed is a re-definition of the word chastity, one which will expand its meaning to include attitudes of mind. Chastity of the mind—freedom from those obscenities and perversions of attitude which coarsen human relationships—is what is most important, and fully as important in marriage as before or outside it. One reason, incidentally, why young people who really think will find it difficult to accept over-simplified categories of good and evil is because they instinctively realize that many relationships within marriage are about as hopeless as anything can get. A relationship unsanctified by marriage might seem to them better by comparison—and might actually be better.

The modern adolescent, too, confronts a different kind of problem today, such as is presented by the psychological influence of the *Kinsey Report.* The major influence of the Kinsey publication on the average person is, as has been argued by a *Harper's* commentator, "Justification by Percentages." The *Kinsey Report* tells us a lot about a lot of sexual deviation; the problem of *individual* right or wrong in sexual affairs seems relatively inconsequential if one reasons that nothing he does will do more than change statistics by a fraction of a per cent. And this, we think, gets people far off the track. We do not find the truth by taking a vote; if we did we would still believe that the sun and the planets revolve around the earth, for this is what most people thought at the time of Copernicus. We are even less likely to discover the best sort of behavior by reviewing the sex experiences of men who don't mind telling about them. The *Kinsey Report* is of no help whatsoever to the inquiring youth, except in establishing the suspicion that if what Kinsey implies is true, the adults he knows are a pretty hypocritical bunch. And not only does it fail to tell him anything important about the procreative instinct, and how its accompanying emotions may best be expressed—it even forgets to mention

procreation, except once, briefly, and in passing. The *Kinsey Report* focusses attention entirely upon the physically sexual, or sensual, proclivities of man, and leaves entirely out of account the most important thing of all, the relationship of romantic and procreative feelings to the responsibility for children.

We should ourselves put the whole matter very simply, to an adult as well as to an adolescent: maturity is a state at which we arrive by equalizing freedom and responsibility. Mature expression between the sexes cannot be achieved if entirely divorced from some sort of willingness to bring children into the world. If men and women, or boys and girls, completely divorce sex experience from the thought of potential parenthood, they are *playing* at something, rather than living it—and will not find anything really worth their while. They may find, instead, a growing dissatisfaction with their relationships, for nature has a habit of refusing to be disparted. Whether we are talking about natural resources or the affairs of the sexes, it seems to be a fact that the person who takes, and shows no willingness to give, is robbed of much that he might otherwise achieve. The wastelands caused by human greed and immaturity are far from beautiful, and so are those relationships between the sexes existing entirely on independent desires to indulge biological whims.... We sometimes wonder if all "moral problems" in the sexual field might not vanish if enough men accepted the belief that no interrelationship of the sexes is sufficiently rewarding and constructive unless accompanied by a willingness to bring children into the world with the partner. Would not this view lead an individual to eliminate involvements with those he cares so little about that the thought of sharing the responsibility of a child with them seems distressing? In any case, it suggests a constructive and effective approach to the minds of thoughtful adolescents. If they retain in their minds the question, "Would I ever like to share the responsibility of a child with this person ?" they will often save themselves time and confusion by eliminating various potential intimacies—for if one is consciously sure that the sharing of parenthood with someone would not be desired, that person becomes less attractive, even if the idea of immediate parenthood does not presently appeal to him in relation to anyone.

FRONTIERS

The Contribution of Science

IN the *Scientific Monthly* for June, Charles I. Glicksberg, a professor of English at Brooklyn College, endeavors to tell his readers how Science has affected the modern mind and to describe the part that scientific knowledge may legitimately play in the shaping of a man's philosophical convictions. His subject is "Science and the Literary Mind," and the first part of this article is made up of good-natured jibing at the literary figures who have revolted against the influence of science. Literary people, the author implies, are lacking in the Spartan temper enabling them to feel at home in a purely material universe powered by blind cosmic forces. He writes:

> What arouses so much animus in the literary mind is the philosophy of science, its view of the universe. In a world stripped of divine authority, there is no governing principle of absolute justice, or mercy, or lovingkindness, no promise of heaven and no threat of hell. Man is orphaned in the universe, and Energy, not the human personality, is the central protagonist on the cosmic stage of Space-and-Time. The writer finds such a universe of discourse not only "undramatic" but insufferable. It robs him of faith in the freedom of will and the unique importance of creative genius. . . .
>
> The scientific outlook now suffuses our whole mentality. It has altered, as Whitehead indicated, not only our metaphysical presuppositions, but also the imaginative contents of our minds, with the result unfortunately, that modern man has become a divided being. Mechanical determinism is at war with his fundamental and enduring faith in progress, in self-determination, in the high destiny of mankind.

These, in general, are the charges against science, and Mr. Glicksberg has two sorts of defense to offer against them. First, he suggests that such depressing dogmas about the nature of things are not the specific conclusions of physics or biology, astronomy or anthropology, but abstract ideas which are implied by the method of scientific research. They are, you might say, methodological, not philosophical, assumptions. His second defense seems to be that, even if they are "true," a brave and spirited intellect will still find poetry and wonder in the natural world. In short, Mr. Glicksberg believes that while science has destroyed the possibility of serious metaphysical inquiry, "there is no inherent incompatibility between belief in the scientific method and faithful devotion to the arts." He continues: "Failure to recognize this simple fact works havoc with the literary conscience and drives many writers to adopt some spurious metaphysical or mystical system." No mention is made of metaphysical or mystical systems which are not "spurious," and the only hint that such systems might be possible lies in a brief gesture of respect to Prof. Whitehead: "If Whitehead is right, and the conception of scientific materialism is unsuited to our present situation, then we shall have to undertake the difficult work of revision." The latter idea, which may be of the greatest importance, is left with very little development.

But what, exactly, is the function of science for modern thought?

> . . . science [says Mr. Glicksberg] is not a generator of belief or value, it merely sets the conditions under which valid beliefs about the universe and man's place in it can be held. Empirically it studies the facts of the actual world and devises hypotheses, theories, "laws," to interpret the facts thus brought forth. The hypotheses and the factual observations interact, one verifying and fructifying the other. Facts in themselves are neutral and meaningless. Theories without empirical substantiation are irrelevant, and such speculations must rightly be rejected as "metaphysical." It is the scientific method which offers a self-regulating process of testing the canons by which judgments are formed and accepted as valid. Science does not provide prescriptive dogmas nor formulas of thought nor even the bare material of poetry. It merely confines the poet when he ventures beyond the realm of direct, personal experience and indulges in lofty philosophical generalizations, proffering his views on human nature and his universal conclusions on life. Science exercises no monopoly and has no private pipe line to "truth." It does not even maintain that it deals with all aspects of experience.

With several important corrections, this seems a fair enough statement. Science, as defined by Mr. Glicksberg, is certainly no generator of beliefs or values, and as the most important truths relate to

values, it may be agreed that science has no private pipeline to "truth." What, then, does science contribute?

> Science, like poetry, offers perspectives from which the world of phenomena may be viewed. It cannot be *proved* that there is nothing beyond the physical, since such a postulate is beyond the realm of empirical verification, but it can be shown that such "metaphysical" premises are neither efficacious nor fruitful in practice, and that is all we have to do in the case of much "literarious" nonsense on the subject of science.
>
> . . . Science simply goes ahead with its patient task of exploring the world of nature on the principle that empirical knowledge is better than a mystical hunch.

The more carefully one studies Mr. Glicksberg's article, the more bewildering it grows. His sentences are lucid enough, and at times he seems to display a fine impartiality. Then, suddenly, we are asked to agree that because metaphysical reality is not found in physical experience, metaphysical theories are incapable of proof and probably nonsense. Poets, therefore, must never venture upon "lofty philosophical generalizations" or hint at "universal conclusions on life." This seems the assumption of an even more "divine authority" for science than that claimed by any previous point of view which the scientific outlook might have displaced. And when, at the end of his discussion, this writer closes with a text from Bertrand Russell, presenting the British thinker's bleakest pessimism about the "sure doom" of death which "falls pitiless and dark" upon all mankind, we have, in unmistakable form, a "philosophical generalization" which, although it carefully avoids loftiness, is nevertheless a universal conclusion on life.

Someone ought to explain to Mr. Glicksberg the elementary fact that a theory of mortality is just as "metaphysical" as a theory of immortality. It involves a judgment about the ultimate nature of things, and this, as the writer has made quite plain, is precisely what science denies to poets and, doubtless, to professors of English literature, too.

The contribution of science to modern thought is nonetheless great, and one could wish that Mr. Glicksberg had described it with more impartiality. The founders of the scientific movement revolted against a kind of "divine authority" which, through long centuries, continuously violated every principle of reason and justice and required the abdication of human reason as the minimum price of salvation. There is a principle of justice, a sense of justice, in every human being, and no amount of alleged "science" will ever be able to strip it away. This principle is not the same as "promise of heaven" or "threat of hell" and to lump them together as both being "metaphysical" assumptions and therefore nonsensical brings ultimate confusion to the sort of analysis this article attempts to pursue.

As for "mystical" hunches, Isaac Newton was full of them, and Einstein has much to say about the necessity of "intuition" for the practice of scientific discovery. And if mystical hunches can be productive in physics, why not even more so in the formulation of a philosophy of life? Josiah Royce, one of the best of American thinkers, once remarked that the mystic is the only pure empiricist. Royce would probably have agreed that mystical insight which stops at the "hunch" stage is of no more value than a lucky guess at the beginning of a cycle of scientific discovery—both must be rigorously developed to be of any practical use—but to give less reality to the inner feelings of human beings because, forsooth, they cannot be measured or weighed, than to sense-perceptions, seems a folly that is matched only in medieval theology.

Science, it is true, has torn down the ridiculous cosmology of dogmatic religion, and has taught human beings the spirit of impartiality in the search for truth. What higher praise can be given, or is needed, than this? Why press science into the service of anti-metaphysical attitudes, especially when this sort of dogmatism is not only unnecessary, but also impossible to maintain?