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# NEW BEGINNINGS

IT may be a hard saying, but a good many things that the Western world has been proud of don't seem, now, to have been worth doing—not, at least, for the reasons we have given for doing them and being proud of them. England, in the nineteenth century, girdled the world with colonial administration, bringing the standards and concepts of British civilization to yellow, black, and brown people in a score of distant lands. In the twentieth century, the United States shipped the products of its magnificent industrial system to as many or more places, and these were followed by our "cultural" output in the form of Hollywood movies. There are scores of books and articles celebrating the personal integrity of the British civil servant—his unswerving devotion to duty, his loyalty to the ideal of impartial administration. A visit to an American factory or a motion picture studio, likewise, is rich with the romance of technology—of the almost miraculous mastery by human beings of the recalcitrant materials of earth, making them do precisely what we want them to do, and with a cunning of coordination that staggers the imagination.

The pertinent contrast is between honor and skill in the little things—or perhaps it would be better to say, in *limited* rather than little things or fields—and the lack of these qualities in the big things. The civil servant may do the "right" things, as he sees them, but those things may be entirely irrelevant to the people he does them for, or thinks he is doing them for. And when he begins to realize this—to recognize that the native tribe or race he has inspired with awe for his personal bravery, and even taught to imitate him in many ways, needs rather to blunder along on its own, without help or guidance from a more sophisticated intruder—he has come upon one of the basic dilemmas of his personal life, and not only of his life, but of the life of the culture which educated him. The technician, too, when he grows into maturity as a man, is likely to find his work without savor any more. He might be compared to a Tibetan craftsman who has devoted his life to the making of prayer wheels—devices turned by wind or water, and supposed with each revolution to print upon the natural elements the "prayer" inscribed upon the wheel—when he begins to wonder, toward the end of his career, whether prayers repeated in this mechanical fashion can do anyone any good. Suppose the inventor of television or one of them—there were, doubtless, scores of inventors involved in the development of television—came across one of the recent reports by educators on the effect of nightly sessions with television on schoolchildren—how drowsy and apathetic they are each morning in class: How would he feel? How *ought* he to feel?

Both people in the government service and people in technology are often without imagination. They may be like the gunner John Steinbeck describes in *Sea of Cortez*, who, when asked if he knew what happens when the shell he is firing strikes, answered, "Of course not. Those shells travel so far that you couldn't possibly see where they land."

Of course not. It is not his business to mix humanitarian or social questions with his professional work. His responsibility, his interests, do not reach that far. And the civil servant who never really wonders about the people he is governing—what they need or want, and whether, actually, he has any competence to determine what they need or want—can be doing the best he knows as a specialized human being.

But there are also people who begin to question, after a time, the meaning of the way in which they are spending their lives, and this may

be a frightening and personally disastrous experience for them. To seem to be convicted of having wasted your life is a serious matter. But to whom or to what can such a man turn? He is surrounded by imposing institutions which have no comprehension of the new language he is trying to learn. He is an infant revolutionary without a party, a neophyte without a master, a monk without an order.

He has no place to go because the culture in which he lives has a "one-world" theory of life, and because the groups which pretend to have other theories have all sold out to the one-world idea in reality, no matter what they claim or propose. What is this "one-world" theory? It is that submission to the objectives, the means, and the self-justifications of present-day political and commercial institutions is the only "practical" course for human beings. It is the theory which returns the civil servant to his Charge-of-the-Light-Brigade conception of duty; which makes the engineer or technician close his mind to anything but the beautiful moral neutrality of metal, wood, and stone, of steam, electricity, and atomic energy.

For a man to feel that he is caught in a trap of circumstantial futility is a terrible thing to face. This, or something like it, has driven diplomats and scholars to suicide within the past two or three years. It is causing others to accept the intellectual and moral shackles of government and industry, or of totalitarian and militarist ideologies. But it is also driving some men to a new kind of birth—into a life where honor has a different meaning, and skill another application. This life is one in which a man does less and less of the things he no longer personally believes in, and more and more of what he thinks is worth doing. He has, in short, two jobs, the job he is giving up and the job he is taking on.

Such men—the men who are making this kind of change in their lives—of necessity move slowly. The only rapid way to accomplish a change is through political revolution, and this, experience has shown, doesn't really change anything, of itself, so long as it accomplishes changes *for* people, instead of in them. Nobody knows how to accomplish changes in people, except the people who change themselves, and they are not sure, either, just how it is done. The difficulty with education in integrity, in sympathy, in understanding and altruism is always in the fact that their final definition has to be abstract. The trouble with missionaries, for example, is not that they lack integrity, but that they want to define integrity in specific terms for others. They try to teach a code of behavior, not moral principles. The trouble with the politician is that his integrity is often at war with his need to win an election—but if he doesn't *see* the conflict, his integrity may be unimpaired.

At times it seems that the more integrity a man has, the less he is able to participate in the works of this world. And that, in one sense, may be actually the case. Maybe Bronson Alcott had to fail as a school administrator in order to succeed as an educator. Some people, doubtless, will find this idea annoying. But why? Is it because the thought of a life of cultural vagabondage such as Alcott lived is unattractive? But Alcott accepted that kind of life because it happened to go with the things he believed in. To regard Alcott's example as some sort of reproach is to suppose that Alcott's life is the pattern of integrity for us, too. The whole point is that we need to study what integrity means for us, not what it led to, for Alcott. Many men were crucified by the Romans, but only one of them was a Christ. And he was a Christ least of all because he was crucified. He was crucified because the rest of the people of that time couldn't stand having a man with his integrity around. The crucifixion was their idea, not Christ's.

The depression excited by the prospect of the grim circumstances which seem to accompany a life of integrity is, after all, a confession that we don't really believe that a moral world exists. The fear of what will happen to us if we start to strike

out for what we think is right is a tribute to the "one-world" theory of life. It is also an effect of the all-or-nothing doctrine of salvation. We build houses, one brick at a time; we walk step after step; we grow to manhood slowly, according to numerous organic cycles which arise from one another. But we want to be saved all at once; we want to change the world with one great revolution, or one more war.

But the slow awakening to the ideal of a wholly constructive existence depends upon a gradually changing environment. Growth is a matter of direction much more than of degree of obvious, concrete achievement. The statistics on homespun cloth produced in India under Gandhi's inspiration are doubtless ridiculously small when compared with the output of the great mills of Manchester, or mills in India, but homespun cloth is also a web of intangibles—in it the warp of deep human need unites with the woof of individual reconstruction. *Khadi* has helped to establish the principle of independence and self-sufficiency for countless Indian peasants who did not know, until they tried, how much they could do for themselves.

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that integrity is peculiarly allied with poverty and primitive methods of livelihood. Integrity always seeks out the way of life that is most free usually a way that the political and commercial institutionalism of the time has left uncorrupted because of its apparent unimportance. The man who seeks freedom always tries to go back to beginnings, because beginnings represent the closest we can come to natural relationships between man and nature and between man and man.

Today, however, it is impossible to go back to economic and political beginnings, except in idea and principle. And for this, we need the power of a disciplined imagination, and a greater faith than we have heretofore possessed in the reality of moral law. What, actually, does "beginning" mean, in human terms? Among other things, a beginning means any time in the course of a man's life, or the life of a community or people, when there is a clear perception of ennobling human ends and a general comprehension of the means by which those ends may be obtained. It is a time when a man who has been working to make implements of destruction says to himself: "I do not know what other men feel about these things, or what they ought to do, but I, for one, am finished with all this. I cannot believe that the good life, for me, or for anyone else, can be born from death-producing technology. I do not think that any way of life that needs these tools of destruction to save it, is worth saving."

It is a time when no man will do to others what he would not do to himself or his family, for their own good—when he begins to see that there is no good for individual or national or racial man that is not also good for all humanity.

These are simple matters. They represent, therefore, real beginnings, for the truth about our lives is always simple—it is the lies which are complex. Unfortunately, we live in an age when a man must learn to say "no" in order to say "yes," in order for him to be able to make his plans for the positive values of human integrity.

# *Letter from* GERMANY

BERLIN.—The social position of woman in industrial nations has changed considerably during the past 100 years. Woman has improved her situation by taking part in industrial work and through help from the movement for emancipation of women. Recent legislation in the Eastern Zone of Germany (in the so-called "German Democratic Republic") was apparently passed to further this process. In addition, there is a law in preparation which is called by Prime Minister Grotewohl the "Magna Charta of complete equality of rights" for both women and men. The purpose of this letter will not be to discuss the new law, which is not yet published, but to take advantage of a subject well suited for showing the profound change in Socialist aims.

When, in former years, Socialists and Communists in Germany and Russia spoke for equality of rights, they meant the elimination of injustice to women, Jews, Negroes, children, workers, and other strata of society, and they aimed at the complete emancipation of man from all social oppression. *Now*, however, if Socialists and Communists in the Russian sphere of influence unite in the effort to shape or support the policy of the totalitarian regimes with regard to labor, political opponents, etc.—a policy which means forced-labor camps and concentration camps, prohibition of strikes, a strong police force—it becomes quite clear that the underlying reason must be sought elsewhere than in humanitarian philosophy or in efforts to "emancipate the working class." Examples of this changing motivation are revealed by developments in Russia, where woman labor has become more and more important during the process of rapid industrialization, and because of the heavy economic drains of war and preparation for war. The supposed needs of industrialization and preparation of war by the Soviet Union today reach deep into the German Democratic Republic. It is easy to imagine that the newly prepared "Magna Charta," providing for equal rights and equal pay for women on every job, has no other aim than to draw more woman labor into the factories and to make jobs more attractive by higher wages.

Many writers now speak of the primacy of politics over the economic structure of society. They seem especially wrong when we regard the changing motives of Socialist aims. All those originally humanitarian aims now seem replaced by economic purposes hidden under a thick layer of ancient phrases and would-be "progressive" attitudes. Communists in Russia do not fight any more against economic exploitation and suppression, because they are themselves overwhelmed by the urge of economic "necessities," and they "streamline" their propaganda to this end. Seeing the change of meaning behind Marxist slogans, one rather arrives at the conclusion that "economics" reigns with still greater and more unbridled power than before. And this is probably an important trend to recognize in our history. In present political and peace—*i.e.*, war—propaganda, only rapid industrialization and the subjection of a mass labor-force to its needs are stressed.

Because these economic aims cannot be openly declared as such, and because rapid industrialization under the pressure of competition from surrounding countries had to be effected by superhuman efforts under inhuman conditions, and because the mind is not able to perceive all the layers of distinction between inner meaning and the "surface" of things, it becomes understandable why totalitarian countries have a vocabulary which we can only define as a big lexicon of *lies.* Falsifications of means and ends become necessary when the truth is so gruesome and unbearable as it has been in Russia under the stress of competition for more than 30 years.

Thus the processes of "economization" and of falsification go hand in hand. The final inhibition of those processes might be brought about by simple suffocation from the quantity of goods produced, and the consequences in all social fields; and, at the same time, by enlightening man's consciousness with knowledge of the meaning of social life.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENT

# *REVIEW*
## NOTES ON HUMAN NATURE

IT has probably occurred to a number of readers that one sort of fiction discussed here from time to time is concerned with a type of human beings who are not really alive, morally speaking. The routine gangster story is a kind of puppet show in which the actors respond to the mechanical manipulation of the author; or, from another viewpoint, the characters are creatures of their environment, so that the books in which they appear are really books about environments, presenting a sociological scene rather than actual human beings in difficult or degrading situations.

These are the formula stories, two-dimensional chronicles in which the forces of sordidness, passion, bitterness and fear are the protagonists with the major roles, and for which the alleged "characters" are mere vehicles. Nearly every kind of popular fiction has a typical formula. The Western story is one kind, the detective story another. The "confession" type of love story relies upon certain stereotyped sentiments or repressed desires in the reader, while the conventional women's magazine story is equally routine, although its stereotypes are set at the country-club level, seeming, therefore, more "respectable."

But what, actually, should determine whether or not a story earns the genuine "respect" of the reader? Are the characters in Henry Green's *Nothing*, to pick a book that reviewers have highly praised, any more alive than the hooligans and underworld types of, say, Budd Schulberg? They have good manners, they speak good English, and, doubtless, they mix good drinks, but the reader may easily have the same feeling of revulsion after turning the pages of *Nothing* as that produced by reading a book about Haitian "zombies." The zombies "live" by their reflexes. But so do the people in *Nothing.* The adult characters were morally dead long before Mr. Green's imagination captured them for his book, and the young people seem virtually unborn. Perhaps the author is really laughing at his readers, and named his novel to signify his complete contempt for the kind of human beings he writes about. Some of the books of Aldous Huxley betray this loathing for the people that move through his pages; a similar feeling seems present in the short stories of George Moore (to recall a writer of an earlier generation).

A number of questions arise concerning this kind of writing. First, why is it widely praised and widely read? One obvious answer is that it produces a sense of the familiar in the reader, while requiring no effort of the imagination. A stereotype is like a popular tune; it affects the sentiments without stirring the mind. It does not disturb—one need not take it seriously. Stories of this sort are read for the same reason that people fall into the habit of using clichés in their speech.

Another question is more psychologically searching. What is there in human nature that likes to substitute stereotypes for *life?* A well-known writer for the pulp magazines once counselled others wanting to sell their stories in this market "to avoid originality like an argument on religion." Good advice, doubtless, for writing for the pulps, but *why?*

A psychiatrist or an analyst could probably give technical accounts of these reactions in the jargon of his profession, but we should not be much wiser for this assistance. What we are after is a better understanding of the pulpy stuff in ourselves, which yields to the cliché, which prefers the certainties of stereotypes in fiction to any evidence of moral struggle and independence in the people we read about. There is more, of course, to human beings than mere responses to their environment. But a book which pretends there isn't—which seems to confirm the theory that human beings are really helplessly caught in the mold of circumstance—is a book which makes no demands upon us. Such books are easy to write requiring nothing more than "technique"—and easy to read, involving only a spongy

receptiveness to the expected and the commonplace in human behavior.

One source of confusion probably lies in the fact that every human being is a channel for both types of expression—the original, effort-making, and morally free, and the imitative, exploitative, and reflex-produced expression. In one mood, a man may feel himself vastly above the everyday commerce of psychic impressions which pass between human beings—the kind of "conversation" so effectively lampooned by Wortman for many years, and the cheap "so-what" type of rejoinder which can often be predicted in dialogue before it is made. Yet a little later, the same man may expose his own vulnerability to suggestion by echoing the common talk, jargon or stereotyped opinions of a literary or artistic coterie and, catching himself in this habit, resolve never to patter the thoughts and attitudes of other people. What is it in us that does the "catching," that makes the resolve?

Human nature is apparently dual. At any rate, human beings are capable of living and expressing themselves entirely in terms of individual integrity, and they are also able to behave like rubber stamps, and to reduce the idea of integrity to mechanical conformity to an external code. The latter process amounts to a terrible debasement of the vocabulary of idealism, having one archetype in the reduction of philosophical principles to dogmas of religion, and another in the transformation of social conceptions into the formulas of nationalism.

These facts about ourselves—and they seem to be facts—suggest the unpleasant conclusion that we function as conscious moral beings only a part of the time; that the rest of the time we are acting exactly in the way that the Behaviorists and Determinists claim that we act all of the time. If this is so, then it becomes easy to understand the phenomena of mass movements, in which millions of people are made to behave according to the pattern conceived by astute social managers, demagogues and dictators. The rule of a Jehovah, a Hitler or a Politburo is a rule which depends upon admitting the reality of only the plastic, unintegrated stuff of human nature. The literature of totalitarianism is the literature of determinism, conformity, and conditioning.

The literature of moral existence which means existence for and upon the basis of the meanings grasped and accepted by individuals—never portrays men as by nature puppets and offprints of their social surroundings. In great literature, the man made by his environment is a man who failed to become entirely human. He is still an embryo, psychologically speaking, and the drama of existence can have no focus in his life.

# *COMMENTARY*
## PRAISE AND BLAME

IT is often thought that an unconscious tribute is the highest form of appreciation. Praise that is unexpected and undeliberated—which is not praise at all in any real sense is valued above all other responses. It is not merely a pleasant remark to gratify the particular person involved, nor a concession to prestige or status, but rather partakes of impartiality and considers with even justice, and appropriate gratitude, the intrinsic worth of an achievement. The possibility of receiving such commendation is one fortunate aspect of a policy of anonymity. But no less fortunate is the other side of the medal, sometimes called "blame," for this, too, may be a priceless boon—truth unmodified by personal considerations. MANAS is published out of a belief that both praise and blame of persons are an unnecessary impediment in the process of growth in intelligence.

Anonymity does not connote lukewarmness. MANAS as a magazine has definite convictions: first of all, the simple conviction that principles have reality. The validity of the particular principles MANAS employs in investigating human dilemmas is left to the individual reader to determine, if the project interests him—and the editors naturally hope to inspire such interest. But it is beyond the province of the impersonal investigator to attempt a proof of his hypotheses. These, if they are worth anything at all, are embedded in his own mind with evidence he has independently accumulated. The evidence is incommunicable, being compounded of such intangibles as inference (which two minds draw exactly the same inference from experience?), intimation (mysterious faculty born, perhaps, in a realm distinct from the world of reason), the bent of imagination, and the line of vision previous experience has defined to our sight.

Anonymity is not an end in itself, but as a policy it allows concentration on essentials. Principles, not personalities, are the remedy for our disintegrated civilization. MANAS, by continually re-working applications of the principles that are its foundation, aims to encourage similar activity—with the same or other principles—on the part of its readers and friends. Keeping one's convictions in mind and in action may be more enlightening in the long run than the attempt to arrive theoretically at the "only true" principles, which then, all too often, are left to lie fallow. Principles may not have a life of their own—the point is debatable—but a mind without them, it is certain, has no independent existence.

# CHILDREN
## . . . and Ourselves

SOMETIMES, it appears to us, the best use to which we can put serious articles on contemporary issues is to try to condense and simplify central arguments sufficiently for a child to understand them—and then try them out to see if our children do understand them. Not only would this be a natural means of contact between the almost-impossibly-complicated adult world and the minds of children, but we ought also to learn a great deal more ourselves, from what we read. Efforts in this direction would offer us a more rigorous training in the use of analytical logic than would any academic course ever invented. It is not easy to find the "real issue" of any question and put it in simple terms, even though Plato's Socrates made it seem so.

Of course, in any such experiment, we might find ourselves handicapped by a lack of suitable material—at least until we become skilled in summarization and analysis. The majority of articles today are purely informative, dealing with only one small phase of modern life, whereas the Issues which can be discussed and debated are the best material for education. Education proceeds with a perception of broad principles which, one finally learns, may be shown to have bearing on innumerable "specifics."

There are, however, a number of pieces of writing which deal with subjects of considerable breadth—the issues involved in religion, the issues involved in the social responsibility of science, and the issues involved in race relations, and the issues involved in war. "Even children" can come to understand the basic arguments involved in the Released-Time religious instruction programs, and become concerned about the matter. Who should try to be more concerned or better informed than they? And parents who wish to help them see why such things are important can make use of good controversial examinations of this problem as aids to their presentation to the children. Parents might even read the Supreme Court decision outlawing one form of Released-Time (McCollum vs. Champaign, Illinois Board of Education), endeavoring to get behind the legal verbiage to the basic principles.

Parents may help children to grasp some of the issues involved in "the social responsibility of science" by reading, and reading again, such public statements as those of Norbert Wiener and the other atomic scientists who declined to continue working on atomic weapons.

Louis Adamic's magazine, *Common Ground*, affords a medium for clarifying racial issues, though here more thinking than reading is needed. Let a child ponder whether the practice of racial equality would be really worth "a lowering of real estate values"—and less spending money at home. If it wouldn't be worth some sacrifice of his own, "racial equality" is just a pretty sentiment. He should be helped to realize this.

And then we arrive at the war issue, whose endless ramifications affect modern life on every hand—and likewise our habits of thinking. Here the child needs fresh, unorthodox viewpoints to stimulate his capacity to think for himself. In this area the Pacifists have a great deal to say to us, for they view a generally accepted war-society with extremely critical eyes. Their perspectives are fresh, in the sense that the perspectives of the minority are always fresh to the majority; certainly the history of minority groups in the United States has been the history of new and valuable concepts.

We have had in mind from the start one particular article on the moral issues of war, an excellent example of the sort of writing which can be translated into terms for the consideration of a child. The name of this article is "Meat in Due Season," by Milton Mayer, who has been on the faculty of the University of Chicago, worked with the Great Books Foundation, contributed articles to numerous magazines, including *Life* and the *Saturday Evening Post*, and has achieved the reputation of a most unorthodox Pacifist. (This article first appeared in the May, 1950 issue of

*Common Cause* and has been reprinted in pamphlet form by Fellowship Publications, 21 Audubon Ave., New York City.) This article is a criticism of what Mayer calls the "non-Pacifist World Government Movement." He is attempting to show that, while the Pacifist may well be considered "crazy" in some respects, he is a lot more logical than the person who talks peace, and talks "arms to preserve the peace" at the same time. To give Mayer momentary support, we might repeat a remark recently passed on to us—that "being a Pacifist between wars is like being a vegetarian between meals." Here are a few samples of Mayer's method of condensing and establishing contentions in terms simple enough for children to understand and discuss:

> No advocate of world government is impressive waving a petition in one hand and a sovereign sword in the other. Having put up the sword, the pacifist may be unimpressive, too, but there is no danger of his being misunderstood. He advocates world government not with one hand, but with two. The nonpacifist is bound to be misunderstood by the heathen Chinee—and the infidel Russian—as he stretches out the petition to them and they ask, they of little faith, "But brother, why do you keep your other hand behind your back?"
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> The nonpacifist thinks that men have to choose between the evils that are visited upon them. He does not seem to understand that the choice is not of evil, but of evildoing. He casts out love with fear of the greater evil and recommends the lesser evil, which always turn out, in the end to be war, which always turns out, in the end, to be futile. The Devil is a traveling man, and his disposition does not improve with punishment. Hitler was nastier than Hohenzollern, and Stalin shows tendencies to be even nastier if possible, than Hitler. When *they* lose, they win. When *we* win, we lose.
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> We advocates of world government—except for the pacifist advocates—are prepared to shed the rest of the world's innocent blood if our movement fails, and that is why our movement will fail. We will then say that we have no choice, but when Field Marshal Keitel said the same thing, we hanged him at Nuremberg. If we insist that German and Japanese—and, I suppose, Russian—persons have choice, then we must insist that American persons have choice, too. Instead, we insist that we haven't. We want a world government of free men when we are unwilling to be free men ourselves. When we are told to kill, we kill. "What choice have we ?" says one of the nonpacifist advocates of world government who dabbles in hydrogen bombs on the side. "I am only a soldier," said Keitel.
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> No man can extricate himself from war, but any man can extricate himself from the intention to make it. The Holy Roman Empire, the Congress of Vienna, and the League of Nations did not disarm the world by a single man. The United Nations has not disarmed the world by a single man. But any single advocate of true world government can do more than all these false world governments ever did. He can disarm the world by a single man, and perhaps, by his example, by one or two more. "What good would it do?" says the nonpacifist, and so, because he cannot do good (by which he means changing the course of history), he accepts the lesser evil of enrolling one man, himself, in the world's evildoing. He cannot make a move to extricate himself, not from war, but from making war. He wants peace, but he cannot drop his gun to go and get it.
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> The pacifist does not see how he can bring justice to the world by bringing injustice to it. Nor does he see how he can export what he hasn't got. So he sets about trying to get what he hasn't got. What he seeks is the good which alone is within a man's own power.

# *FRONTIERS*

## Superman—New U.S.A. Version

A SURPRISING number of people seem to have learned about "Dianetics," which science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard identifies as "The Modern Science of Mental Health," since the issuance by Hermitage Press of his book bearing the above combined title. *Time* carried an extended review of Hubbard's progress in establishing himself as the prophet of the "poor man's psychiatry," but was careful to straddle the fence in case he later succeeds in marketing his wares to M.D.'s and psychiatrists.

Comment on Dianetics is a difficult procedure, for Hubbard's 410-page potpourri of encomiums on the success of his "auditing" technique for releasing psychophysical tensions involves innumerable freshly coined terms as well as a new definition of mental processes. While we may anticipate the unholy joy with which some writer for the *New Yorker* will probably soon bandy remarks about Hubbard's Amazing-Fiction style—his "get those engrams," "bouncers," "holders," "aberees," and "pre-clears"—and anticipate also that many psychologists will say Hubbard himself suffers from an aberration of the first magnitude in claiming that he has evolved something New, the real question is, what is interesting people in this pulp-writer messiah? The first answer is obvious: Everybody can do Dianetics on everybody else—just like Canasta.

In the second place, Hubbard's central principle is that *all* of people's troubles come from things done *to* them. Certainly, in our industrialized-for-war civilization, a great number of things do happen "to" people, but Hubbard goes further than the staunchest determinist-psychologist in maintaining that no one is *ever* responsible for his own unhappiness. This is balm indeed. How reassuring to know that our marital infidelities, our wife- and child-beatings have been inevitable results of painful emotions forced upon us by someone probably our parents in our earliest years, or even before we were actually born! Hubbard claims that specific cellular memory exists in the foetus, soaking up, negatively, while in the womb, every parental word spoken in physical discomfort. These impressions are labelled "engrams," and their function is purely destructive, since they serve as blocks against the proper working of the "analytical mind." Incidentally, Hubbard's apparent discovery of the profound influence exerted upon adult life by "engrams" acquired during the prenatal period is his greatest claim to originality.

Mr. Hubbard, of course, would probably object strenuously to being represented as holding that no one is ever personally responsible for his own unhappiness, but we feel that no other interpretation of what he says is logically possible. For he postulates that man is "naturally good," and that the analytical mind can make *no mistakes*, if given correct data for computation. This first appears to be something like Plato's rule that "no man consciously does evil," but actually it is a much larger claim. Plato, in his Socratic dialogue, does *not* imply that the only cause of ignorance is what other people do to us. To Plato, the "rational mind" was more than a biological machine, but to Hubbard it is not, his statements about man possessing "free choice" being as incompatible with his fundamental determinism as are similar statements propounded by Catholic theologians.

So we submit that one cause of Hubbard's popularity is his proposition that "there is no evil" save the twisting of our mental fibres by external forces. It is, moreover, easy to accept this ultimate view today; a substantial groundwork of preparation has been laid; the determinist biologists and psychologists have done their bit. Hubbard simply goes the latter one better by his claim that the "original" nature of man is good—our analytical minds are *presently perfect* mechanisms for achieving happiness, if we can but eliminate the effects of pain caused us by circumstances beyond our control.

Another strong appeal of Dianetics is the "Become-a-Superman" twist. All men, Hubbard tells us, have a certain amount of "life-force." This force powers both our minds and our bodies. When "engrams" exist, they impede the expression of our optimum mental or physical energies. We are dull-witted, we suffer psychosomatic illnesses—including almost all of man's known ailments. Release the engrams, which may be done through sessions of

auditing by a friend who takes us back on our "time track," and we become New Men, capable of higher I.Q.'s, better eyesight, and a more satisfactory love-life. Hubbard tells us that even many men of great "life force" suffered from particularly strong engrams: Alexander the Great, he contends, died at the age of thirty-three because of engrammic influence. Had Alexander been "cleared" during the course of his conquest of the world, Hubbard enthusiastically remarks, he might have lived to be eighty after conquering the world with even greater ease.

We have to pause here, do we not? This illustration suggests a hiatus in Hubbard's thinking. On this theory, Alexander; "cleared," would have been a "good" superman. His conquest of the world would then also have to be recognized as "good." Now, Alexander might have been a nice person to have conquer the world, especially if he were "cleared," but some people aren't too keen on having any one perform this thankless task, and we are among them. If a man loses his drive when his "engrams" are removed, he becomes less a superman than before; and Hubbard's theory allows only for the increase of energy. The illustration of Alexander, selected in what was probably a moment of carelessness, allows one of the basic weaknesses of Hubbard's theory to come inadvertently to light. What, really, will determine that "cleared" people will become either happy or benefactors of their fellowmen? In the meantime, Dianetics is such a glorious oversimplification of the problem of Good and Evil, there is little wonder that it is being bought wholesale.

Another embarrassing question is this: Who is going to determine who the "Clears" are? We already know of one individual who claims to share this distinction with Hubbard, but somehow, despite the fact that his attainment is apparently authenticated, we just don't feel convinced. When these Clears get together, the rest of us may have a rough time of it. And the following passage, taken from Hubbard's concluding chapter, sounds a bit like Big Brother talking in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*, does it not?

> Perhaps at some distant date only the unaberrated person will be granted civil rights before the law. Perhaps the goal will be reached at some future time when only the unaberrated person can attain to and benefit from citizenship. These are desirable goals and would produce a marked increase in the survival ability and happiness of Man.

Hubbard in some ways reminds us of Professor Kinsey, because, in dealing with the popularity of his writing you have to try to deal with two entirely different kinds of things at once. First, there are the contributions to the field of psychiatry, and these may be appreciable in both instances. But it is also necessary to consider that a "Dianetics movement," like a "Kinsey-justifies-all" movement, cannot be a good thing for people if they are allowed to join on the impulse to absolve themselves from the necessity of thinking. Here Hubbard is very weak as a moral uplifter, for, on his theory, man does not have to *think* himself through the blocks to his happiness. He just gets someone to audit him, and the bad things, automatically re-lived and brought to his "analytical mind" when the proper point is reached in reverie, go away. Passivity, whether in hypnosis or a Hubbard reverie, seems an illogical means for becoming stronger thinkers and men of greater will-power. Hubbard apparently gets results, but do we know *all* the psychic effects of "auditing" treatment?

Hubbard has focussed attention on two points of possibly great significance. The first is the influence of prenatal conditions on adult life, suggesting a tremendous increase in the area of parents' responsibility for their children. The second is that we must learn to live *through and beyond* what is painful unless we want to carry around permanent blocks to our potential psychological and moral strength. Here, we think, Hubbard is right, even if we don't agree that an auditor who puts us in reverie affords the best means for struggling through our psychic weaknesses. Hubbard insists that no one can remove his own "engrams." We doubt whether anyone else can do it nearly as well as the man who has them, though other methods might have to be used than those set forth in the Code Book for Dianetics Auditors.

## *Has it Occurred to Us?*

THE sensation of heading "up wind" often seems to have a psychological influence, and we may wonder if snatching a breath in the teeth of a stiff breeze does not have more implications than the merely physical experience can yield. We are reminded of the difficult moments of life, the shocks sustained inwardly, the breathlessness that catches us when the bottom drops from out our world, or the lid blows off exposing us to the winds of heaven and leaving no solid ground for our standing.

Has it occurred to us that these moments, apparently an intrusion into an otherwise ordered and comprehensible existence, may be part of a life that is entirely disconnected from our personal situation? And that this strange life—lived briefly, intermittently, but more intensely than our ordinary one—is worth studying?

Mystics have spoken in veiled language of transcendent experiences, and poets by metaphor have suggested other planes of human life. Yet glimpses of poignant reality are vouchsafed to every man, and if we are not to separate the evidence from the fact, we must affirm that the poets and mystics are widely understood only because they speak universal experience. But perhaps, beside the beautiful language of the poet's expression, our private world is stark and meagre. When we stand on an inner height and look out upon our world as if it belonged to someone else, we ask—Can this wordless void be that out of which an easier tongue made music? All *we* have for speaking of such things are time-worn phrases, which mean little in themselves, and nothing at all to one who has not had the experience.

Probably the most stirring of our experiences are not meant to be boxed up immediately in words. Still, after a time, the reverberations penetrate so far inside us as to be beyond reach of surface disturbances. Then, may we not encounter one who needs the assurance that other men have known this deep perplexity and the odd clarity, the eerie calm with the unaccountable feeling of urgency, that somehow exist side by side and simultaneously in the other world that is fleetingly ours? Mysteriously we awake there, coming to our senses "in the teeth of a wind." The wind always dies, eventually, or we discover that imperceptibly we have returned to our daily round. But a wonderment remains.

Men and women in isolated and extreme circumstances are known to reach these balancing points of perception, when one of life's major themes unfolds in great simplicity within their consciousness. Their account may be inadequate, but the experience is incontestable and its reality is untouched by the skepticism of second-hand authorities.

The age of dramatic physical hazards seems removed from our time. Desperate and dangerous ordeals are not unknown, but they seem only to descend balefully upon helpless victims who submit, as a rule, with bad grace: there appears to be no alternative. Yet, every so often, a breathtaking emergency catches us at the top of our bent. We grasp power, seemingly, from the very enormity of chaos, from our own amazement and incredulity at the turn of fortune. Ordinarily, we would turn and scuttle before the adverse winds of fate, but this time they are only invigorating. Braced and empowered we face into the wind, and its strength merely enhances our achievement as we make headway against it. We do not need the poet's help, nor the mystic's seconding; words fail us. The reality is the being and doing; telling, explaining, or proving matter not.

Has it occurred to us that the silence which cannot be lifted from such experience is itself significant? Is it not well for a certain portion of human life to be incommunicable, in order that we may realize, now and then, how man can meet and master the most baffling hardships—discovering, in the process, a standing power he might not otherwise have suspected? To one whose courage is arousable, the fates show another face of strengthening challenge, affirming that the age of human adventure has not disappeared with the passing of physical frontiers.