

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE WORLD

NO special occasion is needed, these days, for attempting a discussion of the general human problem—that is, the problem of the world and the individual. It is a problem made universally pertinent by the exceptional awareness of it among the thoughtful persons of every country. And it is of course a problem which has already had extensive treatment in recent years, although, in most cases, the emphasis on the role of the individual is largely rhetorical, or traditionally "democratic," the important part of the argument being devoted to the question of what ought to be done by, to or for, "the world."

This point can be illustrated by a comparison between, say, a precisely developed plan for an international federated republic of democratic states, and one of the Socratic dialogues. Most outlines for international organization assume that the role of the individual presents no difficulty. He is dealt with as a more or less neutral unit from whom certain qualities and modes of activity are expected, in support of the "democratic" processes of the organization, once it has been established. The major concern in such discussions is with the techniques of social organization for dealing with human beings in groups. They are written, that is, from the viewpoint of organization, or of an organizing executive, and not from the viewpoint of the individual who confronts the world as it presently exists.

The Socratic dialogue, on the other hand, connects the individual with life. For Plato, the question of what a single man can or ought to do is as important, or more important, than ideal social arrangements. Among Platonic works, the *Republic* discusses both questions—the problem of the world, or social organization, and the problem of the individual—but even here, the moral situation of the single man is, we think,

given priority. The allegory of the cave suggests that individuals who have obtained wisdom must resolve to make themselves useful to society. Having found light themselves, they should return to the darkness of the cave and instruct those who remain in bondage to delusion.

Possibly, in this analysis, we have hit upon the element of greatness in any work of the mind. There have been various definitions of "great books," such as the one by Dr. Hutchins, who said that a classic is a book that is contemporary in any age. But *why* has it this "eternal life"? The answer may be given: Because it illuminates the living relation of the individual to the whole.

Take for example the *Apology*. Here is a man, Socrates, who is in trouble with the authorities. He is accused of spreading subversive doctrines. He has also been tactless and offended men of influence. He questions the conventions and disturbs one's sense of security. He claims that most men rely upon erroneous ideas for their security. Today, he might criticize the public school system as chiefly an instrument for distributing complacency and large amounts of historical misinformation. Or he might go about warning children against believing what their Sunday school teachers tell them. If he had been an officer in the Army in 1942, and had been ordered to take charge of evacuating the Pacific-coast Japanese Americans to internment camps, he might have cheerfully said, "No, I won't do it; it's unjust," and have hung up his uniform and gone home. There are literally hundreds of annoying things Socrates might have done, consistent with his character of the fifth century B.C., that would have got him into trouble with present-day authorities.

That was the situation of Socrates in the *Apology*. What did Plato make of it? First of all,

Plato makes clear that Socrates had two worlds to deal with, the world of his ideals and the world of men. This duality in human experience creates the moral tension in the dialogue. Socrates must choose between two worlds. For Socrates, the world of ideals has the greater reality. Socrates carries his ideals around with him constantly. He is immediately related to the highest truth he knows by the voice of his daemon, his inner God. "Ideal," for him, is something different from a desirable but nebulous opposite of the actual facts. His ideals represent the granite of absolute conviction. He seems to be in touch with a moral law which he can no more go against than he can defy the law of gravity. Socrates relates himself to the world according to this moral law, intangible to the senses, but the living truth to his inner eye.

Plato not only affirms this, but he also indicates that few men share with Socrates the same degree of moral perception. So, Socrates has the further problem of having to act as a moral man in an immoral society. Plato suggests that there is no formula or rule for guidance, here, but only individual wisdom. Socrates explains why he has kept aloof from politics for most of his life. A man with his principles would soon meet all sorts of trouble in politics. He had his work to do—work more important than political activity. But now he is old. Now he can afford to experiment with another kind of integrity, or the same integrity at another level of human relations. He will openly defy political injustice, corruption, and the pressure of organized prejudice. He will shock and challenge the mob. Before, he would not have done this, but now it is different.

Going from the *Apology* to the *Crito*, another situation occurs. Socrates is visited in prison by an old friend. The Athenian disturber-of-the-peace is awaiting execution. Crito explains that a means of escape is provided for. Socrates has only to say the word. But Socrates will not say it. Again he relates himself to the world, not according to the world, but according to his

ideals. Crito argues well. Socrates could do so much good with what remains of his life that it would be folly to die. But Socrates then examines the obligations of the individual to the political community. He will not be lawless merely to save his life. He will set against the principle of political obligation nothing less than the principle of moral obligation. Personal self-preservation is not a moral obligation, but an end of expediency.

In the *Phaedo*, we meet Socrates in still another setting. Socrates is the one to die, yet, surrounded by his friends and pupils, he is the most serene, the most sagacious, the most *secure*. He is keeping his compact with the heart of the world, and the rest does not matter. By obeying the moral law, he unites the world and the individual, thus solving the universal problem. He solves it, that is, according to Platonic philosophy.

And so, century after century, Socrates uplifts and inspires, as other men with convictions about the ultimate relationship—or moral identity—of the world and the individual have uplifted and inspired. Such men feel themselves bound to the heart of things, and the current of that heart pulsates through their lives and supports them. They do not define success or failure as other men define them. They are fearless, and they are free. At each moment, they know how to engage themselves in life, and how to make the engagement fruitful. Whatever it is they know, their knowledge is greater than the mutable facts of circumstances.

No book that fails to deal directly with how the individual may engage himself with the world can be of any great value. Books and plans and projects to change the world without speaking directly to the individual, to his life, his ideals, in the world as yet unchanged, are unrealizable dreams. They are psychological toys for the play of unhitched fancy.

The forward movements of history have always been the result of the actions of men who know how to relate themselves to the processes of the world. "Reaction," in its political and religious

significance, means the power wielded by some men over others to divorce them as individuals from the processes of development. Reaction always says to the multitude, "You cannot cause anything. Go home and keep quiet. Practice the virtues. Obey your king and pray to your God. They know best and will do what is necessary."

Reaction substitutes a king or a God or some experts for the heart of the world. It tries to break the compact between the individual and the moral law within himself. It builds towers of Babel to suggest an external path to a Higher Authority. It denies that the moral self in each man speaks a common tongue, claiming that the moral law needs intermediaries, priests, interpreters. It constructs dread fascist architecture—huge monoliths to typify institutional power, to awe human timidity and to overshadow individuality. It hates even the memory of moral independence. To the single, unorganized man, unrecognized on principle, it shows the faceless hostility of the world which—through either God or the Cosmic Process or the State—is said to "cause" everything. It tries to make him believe that he is himself only a fiction, and often it succeeds for a time.

This is the hereditary lie—that individual man is a powerless being. It was Tolstoy, in the nineteenth century, who first gave forceful analysis of this lie, in his *Christianity and Patriotism*. There, he exposed its psychological character, and the reason why the impotence of man seems to be a terrible fact instead of a lie. For it *is* a fact, if men *think* it is a fact. In other words, individual power must be self-generated by individuals. Only a moment of reflection is needed to realize this truth. The extraordinary power of an intrepid minority of free men grows from the independent self-respect of each individual in the minority. The dignity of a gathering of self-reliant persons, while greater because of their several presences, is not the product of mere number, but of the mature essence of each. There is something almost holy

about philosophical, self-reliant human beings. If we could use the word "holy" in this sense, we might free it of its theological stain and evolve new meanings which have long been lacking from our common speech. For at least a generation, we have been trying to solve the problem of the world and the individual with a language, first corrupted, and then mutilated—corrupted by sacerdotal religion and mutilated by scientific unbelief. The fact is that we cannot even approach the essential difficulties of our time without the language of a natural religion, a language with meanings unbetrayed by institutional misrepresentation.

Consider that millions of people believe in a creed without ever examining it for the principle of how man is related to the world, or to see whether or not the creed is worth believing in, and how such a belief will affect their estimate of themselves. They believe, and think that by believing they have done their duty by themselves and their fellows. Consider the millions more who deny every creed and every credo, content with the idea that by denying what the common herd accept they make themselves wiser than anyone else. The one is a natural, the other a sophisticated, laziness of mind. Both sell out for a mess of pottage—the rewards that come from joining with either organized belief or organized scepticism. And both attitudes, being diseases of the human spirit, produce in time the same mass psychosis—the impotence of despair.

Who could better represent conventionality in the twentieth century than a General—the leader of the armed forces of a great nation? In the military leader are focussed all the hopes and fears of the impotent mass. He is a symbol of what they depend upon. When he orders, they jump to obey. He speaks in the accents of irrevocable Necessity. He is the interpreter of both hope and doom. Yet the Chief of Staff of the United States Army declared, in an Armistice Day address in 1948: "The world has achieved brilliance without wisdom, power without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We

know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living." These sentiments would make Genghis Khan shudder with disgust. "Decadence," he would say. In a sense, he would be right, for here is a leader of men talking like Socrates, but almost certain to behave like Genghis Khan, in the name of "military necessity" and "national survival." Genghis Khan had sentiments to go with his aggressive actions. He engaged in the world process and believed in what he was doing. But now we have generals who find themselves invaded by the external forces of the world, who are horrified by the constraints of "history."

A French philosopher—a man who sees clearly, and is therefore entitled to be called a philosopher—has said that in this age we are all either victims or assassins. As a European, this man has lived through experiences which made his statement almost literally true. His idea was born from observation of the concentration-camp psychology, a point of view that is making increasing inroads on the rest of the world. This particular philosopher is one who believes that the world is irrational and man's presence in it, therefore, an *absurdity*. He is still a philosopher because he has attempted to give man's relation to the world some kind of explanation, and to offer a theory for meeting the human situation. The result is a philosophy of despair, but one with bravery in it, and the essence of the rational spirit.

So, we come back to the original problem: the need for an undespairing philosophy of life that brings the individual into relation with the world, which recognizes him as a power in the world. We need a philosophy that will restore to men the two worlds of Socrates—the world of ideals which cannot be diminished by its companion, the world of sorry facts. No man can deal wisely with the world of facts without faith in the world of ideals. He cannot even be a man, in the sense that Socrates was a man, without faith in the world of ideals. He has to feel that he has some kind of compact with the heart of the

world—a compact no god can sanctify or devil violate.

Books which leave this need out of account belong to the past, the past of our institutional delusions. They are variations, intentional or otherwise, of the hereditary lie. They are only campaign oratory, arsenic and old lace, so far as the future is concerned.

Letter from GERMANY

BERLIN.—This city is at the present time not merely an important zone of friction between world power blocks; it is also a battleground for two great cultural traditions, each with the ambition to be the only survivor of the struggle. Actually, by its past, Berlin is so thoroughly saturated with Western European culture and tradition that the Russian conquerors, despite perpetual efforts, have not succeeded in paving the way for an influx of Russian totalitarian "culture" and "science." Russian moving pictures are not popular and mean a loss for the theater owners. Their public lectures are visited by very few people. Their scientific ambitions are met with acid criticism in the non-Russian licensed papers and journals. It is fair to say that Russian literature and Russian movies which in former times were not introduced "by the force of weapons" were far more successful with the German public than their present surrogates.

In the battle against the Western cultural tradition (and against the common German taste), the Russians are steadily losing ground, just as they have lost it in former battles for German political consent and German public opinion. One of the many signs of this development is the opening of a new university in Berlin, the so-called "free" university (the term "free" hardly seems justified in a city which is not only beleaguered, but also occupied by *four* garrisons). Here, students who revolted too openly against the Russian state philosophy and the saturation of lectures and professors with Leninism-Stalinism can continue their courses in unprejudiced science and education. Naturally, a new university which does not submit to the pressing influence of the Russians attracts both students and professors, despite the dependence of the conditions of learning and the whole future of the university on numerous unsecure factors. The position of the "old" university has therefore become unstable;

several professors and many students have left for the "new" university, where they feel more at ease in customary cultural surroundings, and can either teach or learn what they think is important in relation to their own accepted values.

From the above, it may appear that the writer is not unqualifiedly enthusiastic about the "new" university, although he welcomes—as do all freedom-loving people—this newest defeat of Russian totalitarianism. What are his reasons?

Well, he thinks that the cultural tendencies of our time are corrupted and unproductive—not only in the East, but in the West as well. Culture, today, under the auspices of power politics, serves as a weapon. Present culture is a club with which one power tries to beat its opponents. Culture is openly dominated by the hunger for political supremacy, as in the struggle for Berlin. And—unfortunately—few intellectuals in this situation are courageous enough to refuse to take a position on one side only, or are willing to accept the disadvantages to themselves which would necessarily follow from any attempt at real impartiality.

It is quite clear that solution of the present crisis in Western and Eastern culture cannot be reached by war, but only by a meeting of these great cultures, under other and more favorable circumstances than now exist. This perspective determines the position of the clearheaded Western European intellectual. He does not take the position of one side and strive for the domination of that side. Nor is he impressed by the physically strongest weapons and their "persuasion." He knows that, in the end—in spite of the death and destruction of many generations—final victory will belong to the social and moral forces which are superior to military weapons.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

A LEADER IS HONORED

IT is some months since MANAS referred (in an editorial) to the Nagpur *Times* as a newspaper embodying the spirit and the promise of the new India. Having had opportunity to see it regularly since that time, we can report that the format and typography of the Nagpur *Times* are now equal in excellence to its editorial content, making the paper as pleasing to the eye as to the mind. It is, incidentally, of some interest to read through a number of issues of a paper published so far away as India, where customs and traditions are so different from our own. The interest lies particularly in discovering how strong are the ties of common ideals which might unite thoughtful people of India with thoughtful Americans, could there be an increased interchange of such reading material between the two peoples.

The Nagpur *Times* of Nov. 6, for example, printed an account of the almost national celebration of the birthday of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Indian Minister for States, who is greatly beloved by the Indian people. The Sardar (sardar is a title of respect, applied to high administrative or military authorities) was seventy-three years old on Oct. 31 of last year. On this occasion, the Nagpur *Times* observed editorially:

Sardar Patel is bound to be recognized as the man who saved India from disintegration, which was writ large in the hundreds of autonomous States left behind by the British. Perhaps India had the inherent capacity to absorb these States into her democratic order, but the credit must go to the Sardar for the concrete performance. It was due to his political acumen, his indomitable will and his bold decisions that the solution of the complex problem of the States was accomplished with such speed and facility. Delay in this matter would have caused demoralisation all around, and it was the Sardar who provided the necessary vigor and will to perform the historic task.

This passage gives some measure of the man, Sardar Patel, and the respect in which he is held in India, but what is of greater interest is the form

taken by the appreciation of him in his home province of Bombay. A country, state or province may honor a notable in various ways. It may erect a monument to him. It may tender him a public vote of thanks. It may offer him high office or honorary title, or it may appropriate a sum of money for his benefit. The Government of Bombay, however, did none of these things. Instead, it inaugurated a practical, although unpretentious plan for village improvement and offered it as a birthday present to the Sardar. According to this program—

Every year one village in each taluka or peth [a district encompassing about 100 villages] will be selected for being made into a model village. The selection of the village will depend upon various factors. The villagers should be prepared to do all the manual labour, particularly the unskilled labour, free of cost and also to contribute at least one half of the cash expenditure.

The sum of 500 rupees, to be contributed for the benefit of the selected villages by the Bombay Government, may seem small, but it is quite likely, as the *Times* writer says, that

the actual amount of the cash contribution is the least part of the story. The real force which will transform the villages is the voluntary contribution of free labor by the villagers and their cooperative effort to find better ways of living. The monetary assistance provided by the Provincial Government is only intended to act as a starter for a chain reaction. Once the scheme gets going, it will gather momentum of its own accord and the villagers will be enabled to realise that the means of salvation remains in their own hands.

This account is accompanied by the observation that the real life of India is in her seven hundred thousand villages—small communities where some ninety per cent of the Indian population spend their lives. The action of the Bombay Government is seen as possibly reflecting a shift in the basis of political power in India, away from the centralized control inherited from the British, and from the dictation of policies by well-organized and articulate urban interests,

and toward the rural areas in which are the homes of the great majority.

There is peculiar fitness in this action by the Bombay Province, with its overgrown metropolis—the city of Bombay—which might have been expected to show a greater concern for city affairs. Bombay, however, is also the home of Sardar Patel, whose life has been one of persevering devotion to the cause of the Indian masses—the villagers and peasants. The tribute of the model-village plan, therefore, is both appropriate and significant.

A final comment on Sardar Patel in another article in the Nagpur *Times* bespeaks the manner in which Indian writers may regard their strong-willed national leaders:

His insight into men and affairs has not made him a cynic or a doubter but has released in him infinite gentleness and human kindness. It is a far cry from 1916 when he first met Gandhiji who has been the greatest and deepest single influence of his life. Has the realist turned spiritual or has the spiritual vision mellowed a noble dictator?

If American readers tend to regard such appreciations as "extravagant," it will be well to remember the virtual adoration of the Founding Fathers in the United States, and to realize that in India's hour of destiny, Indians may quite naturally be moved to comparable high emotion. The principled action, elevated speech and unashamed idealism of such men as Washington, Jefferson and Madison have their modern counterparts in the present leaders of India. The American lover of his country could logically feel considerable nostalgia, when reading such utterances in the Indian press, and wish that a similar inspiration might reflect itself in word and deed in the United States of today. India has far to go, but so had we at the dawn of the nineteenth century and we might have gone much further.

COMMENTARY EXECUTION IN TOKYO

THE report by *Time* (Jan. 3) of the execution of the seven Japanese ministers and generals is a confusing mixture of conventions. There are several ways of looking at the event, each with its own logic and resulting train of reflections. *Time* employs them all, with the usual result of a story that touches off all the familiar "feelings," but leaves the event essentially meaningless.

First, there is the note of solemnity: the war lords who once ruled an empire larger than Alexander's, die ingloriously. (How the mighty are fallen.) Then, after mention of the delay of the execution caused by the Supreme Court of the United States, comes a brief summary of the past of the condemned men—why they were to die as "war criminals." In a lighter mood, *Time* reports Tojo's amused, "Okay, okay," responding in American slang to being told the date of the hanging. Tojo also expressed gratitude for the treatment he had received in Sugamo prison.

The seven men went unassisted to their death, and quietly, except for some *banzais* to their emperor. Tojo left a poem, a fragment of Buddhist sentiment (*Time* quotes it), and moments before dying he handed a Buddhist priest his false teeth and glasses to give to his wife and daughter. The *Time* editors saw a picture-angle in this detail and added a photograph of the two women kneeling before a shrine. (An interesting scene—bereaved pagans at worship.) One section of the story is captioned "Thirteen Steps." Why not? Thirteen steps upward into the gallows chamber give the occasion a lightly morbid *mystique*.

Public reaction in Japan is described as an expression of relief that the thing was over, coupled with murmured expressions of "pity." The same murmurs were heard when American troops, prisoners of war, were marched through Tokyo. The story attains a smart turn with the information that "Tojo & friends" were unable to suppress this popular sympathy for captured

Americans, during the war. The justice of the Tribunal, we are to think, is tempered with more graciousness than Tojo's rule.

The seven men were hanged after midnight following the winter solstice. The next day many Japanese were seen to pray at their shrines. They prayed for the seven men, perhaps, or for the peace of the world—no one knew, really, what they prayed for. The feelings of the victors, *Time* says, were likewise obscure. General MacArthur granted freedom to all remaining "Class A" war criminals, excepting the two whose trials had begun. And he asked for a day of prayer.

Our own feelings, however, are not obscure, although, like the *Time* story, they are somewhat confused in effect. They are made up predominantly of an overwhelming revulsion for the whole affair.

There seems to be no doubt that the executed men were barbarous and cruel in war. Their inhumanity was direct—vulgar, you could say, and not like the clean, impersonal mercilessness of an atom bomb. A tribunal representing eleven victorious nations voted for the seven men to die by hanging. The hanging was supposed to express the contempt of the world for their actions. A soldier's death before a firing squad was not for them. A few hours after the event, people thousands of miles away were reading about the "quavering" voices of seven old men shouting honor to their emperor, and then walking up the thirteen steps to the hangman's noose. People were reading that Tojo's wife and daughter would have his glasses and his false teeth to remember him by. In *Time*, the naked ugliness of the event was covered over with bits of Shakespearian symbolism, historic irony, the spice of human interest, and bland comment on the confusion of the times.

Whatever the implications, it seems necessary to observe that the sole element of dignity in the hanging of these men was contributed by the victims. This should be recognized, apart from any question of the "right" or "wrong" of the

affair. The judges could hardly bring dignity to the occasion. The judges were also the victors and imposed a victor's verdict. The manner of the execution was intended to remove any quality of dignity from the ending of these men's lives. With respect to publicizing the event, the formal part of the execution was doubtless quite "correct," but the overtones, the significance broadcast to the world, made it something obscene, something which never should have taken place.

We have no alternative to suggest. There is nothing in our ethical credo to tell us what ought to be done to the men whom other men have called "war criminals." We find it psychologically impossible to step in, somewhere, to the train of logic produced by war and to argue about greater or lesser evils. And it is enough, we think, to endeavor to place the event in the framework of common humanity, so that it may condemn itself.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

IT seems about time to take note of certain teenagers who are heading for federal penitentiaries. We have discussed juvenile delinquents before—but are not discussing them now. This concerns the young men who refuse, on what they claim to be moral grounds, to serve in the military training program of Selective Service. We shall speak frequently in approbation of such instances of social and political defiance, in order to be consistent with the view, by now characteristic of this column, that intelligent youth ought to feel severely "maladjusted" and uncooperative when they begin to participate in the affairs of a world that is manifestly running in the wrong direction.

A bulletin issued late last fall by a group of extremely deliberate non-registrants reports that fourteen youths have already been arrested for a refusal to comply with the requirement of the Military Training Act. These boys, however, simply say that they are unwilling to perpetuate the war system. The first to be sentenced was Ralph E. Cook of Portland, Maine, aged nineteen. The judge who gave Cook two years in the federal penitentiary admitted his "natural reluctance to commit a high-minded person to a prison sentence," yet felt in duty bound to deal stringently with the case, since registration for military service is "the keystone of the system devised by Congress." Such young men as Cook, of course, can't make much of a case in a Federal Court. They *are* guilty of violating an Act of Congress. But they nevertheless have the right to a public statement before sentence is passed. Such statements have often been excellent. It is true, as most of these youngsters have pointed out, that we are not now being called upon to defend our shores from direct attack, but instead to cooperate in a program of military preparedness—a program we once vociferously denounced.

Nothing is so unsettling to authority as the Single Individual who defies a rule, a law, or a tradition for reasons of his own; a not unreasonable fear is born that, unless the strictest measures are taken with such "anti-social" persons, an increasing number of people may take into their heads to evolve their own moral bases for behavior. While the judge who sentenced Ralph Cook saw "no alternative to a two-year sentence," he readily found the alternative of a suspended sentence for the next case to come under his jurisdiction—one involving the forging of government checks. The reason is plain: the law or the State can "classify" and deal with ordinary criminals; it can even classify divinity students whose voluntary removal from the normal walks of life dissuades us from taking them seriously. Cook, however, was an unusual divinity student; he was guaranteed exemption, but he knew that others refusing military service for reasons identical with his own would not be able to claim religious deferment, and therefore he refused to accept deferment himself, evidently feeling a loyalty to all comrades, "divinity" type or no, in the struggle for the rights of individual conscience.

A letter to a small town newspaper in California, the *Monterey Peninsula Herald* (Sept. 14), by a twenty-year old Carmel youth must have raised a considerable number of questions in the minds of readers. This youth, Douglas Calley, spoke with the vision that international statesmen ought to possess, yet distinguished himself from most modern statesmen by determining to *do* something about his expressed convictions. It seems to us that the editors of the *Monterey Peninsula Herald* performed a signal service for the cause of Civil Rights by printing on page one the story of Calley's determination to break a Federal law. Few newspapers would risk popular censure by publicizing such disturbing views. We reproduce a portion of Calley's statement:

"The Constitution of the United States guarantees us against required military service. Amendment XIII: Neither slavery nor involuntary

servitude, except as punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States. . . . In order, therefore, to follow and uphold the supreme law of the United States, I must object to and disobey the recent enactment of Congress requiring registration for military service or training, for I hold that enactment to be unconstitutional. . . .

"The penalties of another war, of a backward and uninformed people, far exceed any transitory penalty, for I consider the life and happiness of those to come important, and that we take the responsibility for their happiness by bringing them into the world. Eventually people will realize what they are doing when they prepare for war. Someone must point the way. . . .

"The great teachers of all times have implored us to follow certain rules, or suggestions. . . . Is military conscription in keeping with these? . . . Non-violent resistance is the way of cooperation among nations. . . . We must rely on good will, on non-violence, on brotherhood, rather than on the force of arms if any civilization is to survive.

"Under the present law, there is no provision for conscientious objectors, as there is purported to be. A few are guaranteed deferment, but all but 'religious' (objectors) are not recognized.

"In consideration of the preceding arguments. I feel it incumbent upon me to refuse to register."

Our reason for calling attention to Calley and Cook and their brothers without arms is very simple: we wish to encourage, at all costs, parental consideration of the meaning of determined youthful deviation from accepted patterns of behavior. Our civilization, however unconsciously, seems to be moving inexorably toward the obscuration of man's capacity for individual moral choice. Incidentally, if Calley or your own boy should go to prison—and Calley probably will, along with a considerable number of others—we suspect that he may learn a great deal more about His Society in that environment than he would in the more conventional incarceration in the Army. Conscientious objectors in England, serving prison sentences during World War I, found both the inspiration and the factual material which made widespread prison reform in England possible in ensuing years. In the United States

during World War II, various prison reforms, and reforms in the administration of mental hospitals, were spearheaded by men who were either serving time in prison or assigned as attendants in understaffed state institutions.

FRONTIERS

Early Man, the Unknown

NEARLY every adult member of this generation has absorbed certain familiar impressions of the supposedly scientific account of the origin of man. Probably the most influential bit of propaganda for the derivation of the human species from some apish ancestor is the series of busts, modeled, as we recall, by J. H. McGregor, which stand—or stood—in the capacious halls of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. There, decade after decade, classes of school children have peered with wonderment at the monstrous *Pithecanthropus erectus*, the "Java ape-man," of almost fabulous ugliness and bestiality. Others in the series are the Piltdown man, of somewhat more human mien, and the Neanderthal man, who roamed over nearly all of Europe many thousands of years ago. Finally, the Cro-Magnon men, who walked erect and seem to resemble the present American Indians, are represented as being the first thoroughly human race (in the modern sense) who replaced the barbarous Neanderthals some twenty-five or thirty thousand years ago.

And that, the school children are led to think, is the line of the ascent of man, from jungle brute to modern civilization.

We have never liked the facial expression of *Pithecanthropus* and confess an unwillingness, early conceived, to own him as an ancestor. Likewise, the crouching Neanderthal excites no reverence for the remote human past. So, in these more sophisticated days, it comes as a welcome revelation that anthropologists themselves are of more than one mind concerning the actual line of human evolution. According to Dr. Loren E. Eiseley, Mlle. Henri-Martin, daughter of a well-known French archeologist, has within a year discovered a human skull about half a million years old, definitely of the modern type. It was found beneath hard stalagmites in the floor of a cave in the Charente (a Department of southern

France), in association with artifacts and the bones of animals that have been extinct since the second ice age. As Neanderthal man is generally dated about 100,000 years ago this skull, which is that of a woman, represents a race which preceded the ugly Neanderthals by 400,000 years.

This discovery, described by Dr. Eiseley in the October *Scientific American*, is a virtual bombshell to conventional anthropology. It has commonly been assumed, although without much supporting evidence, that the present type of mankind is somehow related to the primitive species represented by the Neanderthal and other fossil remains. John J. O'Neill, New York *Herald Tribune* science writer, summarizes the usual view as holding that "the high-brow Homo Sapiens made his appearance on the earth after the primitive types of men disappeared and that he is a descendant from them. Any evidence to the contrary has been dismissed as unreliable." If, therefore, the half-million-year-old highbrow skull found in France cannot be so "dismissed," considerable hash may have been made of a large amount of anthropological theory dealing with the genesis of man. The skull, says Dr. Eiseley, has "nothing of the Neanderthaloid about it." To drive his point home, he adds: "This woman could have sat across from you in the subway and you would not have screamed. You might even have smiled."

Dr. Eiseley, who is professor of anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania, believes that the trail of human evolution goes back some seven million years. "It is," he says, "a trail shared apparently by giants and dwarfs, by all manner of strange humanity. Year by year their bones accumulate in our museums. Year by year we sort and rearrange and ponder."

Back in 1927, in a seldom-mentioned article published in *Science* for May 20, Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn remarked: "The antiquity of man is now to be reckoned not in thousands, but in hundreds of thousands of years, and we foresee the soon approaching period when it will be

reckoned in millions of years." Dr. Osborn himself, in this article, placed the "prologue and the opening acts of the human drama" as far back as sixteen million years ago, "in the Upper Oligocene period." He was at that time the only distinguished opponent of the ape-human theory of the origin of man, and we know of no comparable scientist who holds similar views, today. Nevertheless, his survey of the then existing anthropological evidence, together with his deductions from biology and psychology, seem to us both sound and impressive. We invite our readers to study his article.

Dr. Osborn points out, as de Quatrefages noted in his *L'Espece Humaine* more than seventy years ago, that while the Simiidae (family of apes) are natural climbers, living chiefly in trees, the forerunners of present man were ground-living and adapted to rapid travel and migration over open country. Early man walked upright, while the apes go on all fours. In man, the evolutionary tendency was toward shortening arms and lengthening legs, with development of the tool-making thumb. In the ape, the tendency has been to lengthening arms and diminishing legs, with loss of the thumb and absence of tool-making power. The psychological comparison is similarly weakening to the ape-man hypothesis.

Dr. Osborn believes that while man may have had an arboreal stage in his evolution, it did not relate man to the anthropoid apes, for the following reason:

Dollo has stated the law of the irreversibility of evolution. The brachiating hand of the ape was used as a hook—apes do not grasp a branch with the fingers and thumb but hook the whole hand over the branch, as trapeze workers do today—and the thumb was therefore a grave danger. If man had gone through a long period of brachiating in the branches of trees he would have lost his thumb.

Another principle invoked by Dr. Osborn is that known as the Biogenetic Law, which states that the history of the species is contained or somehow represented in the history of the individual. The embryonic bands and feet of

unborn human infants, Dr. Osborn points out, reflect nothing of "the attenuated ancestral fingers of an ape-arboreal stage, resembling those of gibbons, chimpanzees, or even of gorillas, but they are short and blunt like modern human hands." Nor does the embryonic human thumb resemble the thumb of a hypothetical ape-like ancestor. Of further significance, not mentioned by Dr. Osborn, is the fact that the development of the brain has a different order in apes and humans. According to de Quatrefages, "In the ape the temporo-spheroidal convolutions, which form the middle lobe, make their appearance and are completed before the anterior convolutions which form the frontal lobe. In man, the frontal convolutions are, on the contrary, the first to appear, and those of the middle lobe are formed later." The French zoologist was also impressed by the fact, noted by Gratiolet, that the human intellect and brain cavities increase with the age of the individual, while the anthropoid seems to undergo a retrograde development—being in youth bright and intelligent, and growing dull-witted and more bestial with maturity. Laconically, de Quatrefages suggested that from such evidence it seems more likely that the apes are retrograde descendants of men, than that men developed from an anthropoid stock!

These matters seem not to be discussed at all in modern works on anthropology. We found a news note in *Science* for Aug. 8, 1924, in which a British anthropologist, Dr. Charles Hill-Trout, was quoted as recommending that skulls of young anthropoids should be used for study, instead of those of adults, since immature skulls would probably represent the ancestral type more accurately. Little more is said, however, except to point out that, "contrary to what has been most generally held, it is the anthropoid ape and not man which has departed most from the ancestral type." But in this case, the Piltdown skull is held to be the "ancestral form," so that deviations from a type only 150,000 years old—now that a "modern" skull 500,000 years old has been discovered—may be of dubious significance.

It is not our purpose to minimize the seriousness of scientific search for facts concerning the origins of man. Great discoveries have been made, and doubtless more are to come. But what seems wholly unnecessary is the erection upon extremely scant evidence of elaborate theories dealing with human evolution as though some actual scientific certainty existed on this subject. When anthropologists let themselves go in this way, sociologists and historians feel free to carry the argument several steps further. Take for example the following passage from James Harvey Robinson's *Mind in the Making*:

. . .there *must* have been a time when the man-animal was in a state of animal ignorance. . . . He was *necessarily* self-taught. . . . His mind *must* have corresponded with his brutish state. He *must* at first have learned just as his animal relatives learn—by fumbling and forming accidental associations. . . . Of mankind in this extremely primitive state we have *no* traces. . . . Man in "a state of nature" is only a *presupposition*, but a presupposition which is *forced* on us by compelling evidence, *conjectural* and inferential though it is (pp. 86-87—our italics).

Why insist upon what is admittedly "conjecture" with all those "musts" and a "necessarily" ? Why not say, simply, "We do not know"?

Until such claims of the brutishness of the lineal ancestors of the present human race are supported by more evidence than is presently available, we shall report with pleasure all disconcerting findings such as that disclosed by Prof. Eiseley. Even if the ape- or brute-man theory were true, there would still be no scientific justification for asserting it without substantial proof, and encouraging the social and ethical theories implied by a bestial human origin. But we are not at all persuaded that the theory *is* true.