

## NO HIDING PLACE DOWN HERE

A CIVILIZATION which is habitually contemptuous of its past—we don't do *that* any more—and increasingly fearful of its future has no place on earth to go. It is a little saddening to look eastward at the brave young republics that are just starting out on their national careers: what a world this is to grow up in! The idealism of the statesmen of India or Indonesia is something to wonder at, for what supports their bright dreams of oriental social democracy? Perhaps it is the simplicity of their people, the untarnished ardor of old-young races who are discovering the promise of education and are savoring the taste of political freedom that they have experienced, thus far. This is a subject worth returning to, for the recapture of the feeling of dauntlessness is worth almost any sacrifice, provided we can be sure that it is real.

But for the young-old races of the West, the situation is different. How can a man read the daily newspapers and preserve humane attitudes? How can he maintain humane hopes even if he stops reading the daily newspapers? One way of hiding the omens of the future is to coarsen one's sensibilities and to ignore the *quality* of present-day life. This has been done for us, of course, on a mass scale, by the brutalization of war, but the private conscience remains, an isolated nerve exposed to the paroxysms of the world's animal pain. And in the quality of this pain, perhaps, is the chief suffering for human sensibility. If there were anything noble, anything redeeming, about the pain of the world, sensibility could bear it. Prometheus, moved by altruism and self-sacrifice, could wear his manacles with pride and suffer the vultures sent by Zeus with the dignity born of his high purpose. But we have no Promethean explanation of our pain, which springs from self-hate and self-disgust. We cannot say,

For that to men we bare too fond a mind, but  
only that we distrust one another, and do not know

how to sacrifice, even if we would.

Let us look at the record. Brock Chisholm, director-general of the World Health Organization, recently told the delegates of the World Union of Peace Organizations, meeting in Switzerland, about a substance so potent for death that seven ounces of it could wipe out the entire human race. Anybody—anybody who knows how—can make this bacterial poison, Substance "X." The resources needed for making atom bombs do not apply in the case of biological warfare. And of course, there are "Y" and "Z" as well as "X," and doubtless other lethal substances. Dr. Chisholm told the peace groups that another war could mean the destruction of go per cent of mankind.

Is this idea any less hideous than the Calvinist doctrine of Predestination, under which the great majority of human beings were foredoomed by the Creator to everlasting torture? Are we any less crazy than the fearful dissenters of sixteenth-century England, who, as Taine observes in his *History of English Literature*, burdening their minds with the pitiless doctrines of Calvin, admitted that the majority of men were predestined to eternal damnation?

Many [wrote Taine] believed that this multitude were criminal before their birth; that God willed, foresaw provided for their ruin; that He designed their punishment from all eternity; that He created them simply to give them up to it. Nothing but grace can save the wretched creature, free grace, God's sheer favor, which He grants only to a few, and which he distributes not according to the struggles and works of men, but according to the arbitrary choice of his single and absolute will. We are "children of wrath," plague-stricken, and condemned from our birth; and wherever we look in all the expanse of heaven, we find but thunderbolts flashing to destroy us.

Taine tells of persons who went about groaning on the streets, sure that they were among the damned, and of others who hardly ever

slept because of the same horrid fear. "They were beside themselves, always imagining that they felt the hand of God or the claw of the devil upon them."

But they, we shall perhaps say, imagined this awful destiny, while the threat of atomic and biological warfare is *real*. Is it? Where is the error in claiming that this threat, if not the work of human imagination, is certainly the consequence of apprehensive imaginings? Who would invent an atomic bomb, anyway, except from the insane fear that someone else might invent the same or comparable weapons first and wreak destruction upon us? If a scientist had developed the bomb and turned it over to the military without feeling the stimulus of this obsessing fear, would not his sanity have been questioned by many?

People wonder how, even in the furious days of the Reformation, any considerable number of humans could worship a God that had promised to damn without appeal all but a handful of the elect. But what about the strange heroism of the Japanese physicists who, shortly after the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, cabled congratulations to J. Robert Oppenheimer and his Los Alamos colleagues for their "fine job" in completing the project of nuclear fission? While this parallel is grossly inexact in some respects, there are features of similarity that ought not to be overlooked. A basic objectivity suggests that the outlook on the world in the twentieth century is much the same as that in the sixteenth century. In both cases, men accept the fate of being the toy of irrational, unpredictable and vastly malevolent forces. The doom is the fact of importance, and whether it is administered by God in the next world, or by atom bombs in this one, makes little difference.

Evidently, the materialism for which the atheist philosophers of the Enlightenment had such great hopes has not released us from fear. We have changed only the Powers That Be, and not the way we feel about them. Already the theologians of the new order of Fear are preparing

our minds for "adjustment" to the facts. Now that Russia has a Bomb, too, we are told that certain practical steps must be taken at once. We must improve our espionage service, for one thing. Radar might give only an hour's warning of atomic bombers overhead, while better military intelligence could possibly reveal enemy plans months in advance. We are warned that the U. S. is doubtless honeycombed with potential saboteurs and spies, already. We must prepare for, and even expect, "terrific devastation." The defensive arrangements of each war of modern history are generally found to be "one war behind" the progress of military science.

This must not happen to us. We want no new-model Maginot line to lull us into a false sense of security. Alertness and daring on every front of military technology must be our program and our gospel of national defense. Division strength must be matched, mobile forces strategically placed, fire-power in the air equalled everywhere. The Red Air Force is said to have 16,000 combat planes right *now*.

Then—to go on with the doctrine—there's psychological warfare. We should not forget that reliance on might alone is unChristian. Peace is a creation of the spirit. Brigadier General Bonner Fellers, in charge of psychological warfare against Japan, under MacArthur, has explained:

At the very time when we were destroying them by bombing, psychological warfare changed the minds of the Japanese who had been indoctrinated to hate us. Why, then, can't a similar campaign of truth dissemination, in peace, influence the Russians—who, from my observation in Russia, already like us—to demand a liberal government? In the cause of world peace this campaign should be attempted.

Another of Gen. Fellers' suggestions (in *Human Events* for Oct. 5) is that from the half-million Russian refugees and Red Army deserters now in Europe we select volunteers to return to Soviet territory as secret agents to stir up a movement for "a liberal government in Moscow." This would give Stalin something to do besides plan for political expansion and war.

Dr. R. E. Lapp, research physicist, in *Must We Hide*; endeavors to supply reassurance and consolation to our disturbed minds. The atomic bomb, he suggests, is here to stay, and we might as well get used to the idea. He writes:

Much of the revulsion against the use of atomic weapons arises because the very newness makes it seem more horrible. A careful cataloguing of the injuries resulting from the use of the automobile would also be impressive but any proposal to outlaw the automobile would be considered ridiculous.

In some respects, he points out, the bomb is no worse in its effects than flame-throwers—that is, of course, if the explosion itself doesn't kill you—and flame-throwers, apparently, are nothing to get excited about. It comes to mind that neither atom bombs nor flame-throwers are as bad as hell-fire, which lasts forever, according to *its* experts.

Recently, on a page showing a portrait of Joseph Stalin as a winsome, poetically sad-eyed child of about twelve years, *Life* (Oct. 10) discussed Atomic Control under the sub-heading, "It is more necessary and seemingly less attainable than ever." In the same issue, a feature article about Robert Oppenheimer quotes this extraordinary administrator of the atom bomb project on the question of international control of atomic weapons.

I am [he says] somewhat discouraged by the limitations of the objective to the elimination of atomic weapons, and . . . this *is* interpreted as "Let us go back to having a good clean war." I think that if one solves the problem presented by the atomic bomb, one will have a pilot plant for the solution of the problem of ending war.

Oppenheimer, who is something of a philosopher and a student of oriental religion, has elsewhere remarked that, in playing a part in the development of this immeasurable power of destruction, "the physicists have known sin." It is as though, without wishing it, the physicists have found themselves initiates of some infernal Holy of Holies—the searing mark of the Beast is upon them and they wear it with a moral restlessness

born of inner rejection and outer impotence.

Brock Chisholm, having described the menace of biological warfare, betrays a sense of inadequacy with regard to the present capacities of the nations to maintain peace. The world, he said, needs *mature* people to manage its affairs, yet the delegates to international conferences are neither mature nor even trained in the affairs with which such conferences must deal. Maturity he defined as the ability to function mentally at least two generations ahead of one's time. The mature individual assumes the good intentions of others and is tolerant of them even when evil intentions are manifest. The loyalty of the mature man is to the entire human family instead of to some national group. But, Dr. Chisholm told the representatives of the peace organizations, "The trouble today is that the world is beginning to behave as though such people were available." He seems to have little sympathy with this illusion, for he adds: "As long as people come to U. N. concerned with their petty prestige, importance and profit, or with those of their little nations, they can only worsen instead of bettering the perilous plight of mankind." Those who do measure up to Dr. Chisholm's standard of maturity are helpless, he thinks, "because they will not be supported by their national governments and are under instruction of their State Departments and Foreign Offices."

It may or may not be significant that while physicists see no defense against the atomic bomb, and no place to hide from its blasts, and while one of the best of modern psychiatrists and head of the U N Health Organization recognizes few if any modern leaders capable of *making* peace, Greece is shooting conscientious objectors to war, the United States is imprisoning non-registering resisters of conscription, and France has jailed Garry Davis, internationalist and world-government advocate, for his sit-down picketing of a French prison where a French conscientious objector—unrecognized by French law—has spent the past nine months.

Perhaps, in some wider perspective than ours, Garry Davis and the C.O.'s are crackpots, too, along with fearful and deluded militarists. But perhaps, again, without the dignity of office and the prestige of state, they only *look* like crackpots; and maybe they look that way only because we live in a world too proud to look backward and too frightened to look forward—a world, in short, that wants to freeze the dubious "security" of the present into an eternity of nervous inaction.

It seems no wonder that people who want to do something more than mourn the hopelessness of the present outlook should look like crackpots to those who still expect the world to "muddle through" without any essential change in ways of doing things. Even so, rejecting the ways of the world is hardly enough. We don't quite know how to put it, but we think the real answer will involve a rejection of the fear-breeding illusions of the modern world—a rejection as firm and uncompromising as the rejection of the fear of eternal damnation by the free-thinkers of one and two centuries ago. We have, in other words, to find some stand of independent philosophy which is as immune to the threats of atom bombs and bacterial poisons as to the vindictive decrees of a jealous Jehovah. This means a conception of man as essentially a moral being—invulnerable to earthly or celestial criminals, the victim only of himself, of his own ignorance, his own fears and falterings. This is a formula for human greatness, of course, and urges both a spiritual origin and a spiritual destiny for mankind. The point is: Can we accept less and be satisfied with our destiny—or affirm less and gain the capacity even to survive?

## *Letter from*

### ENGLAND

LONDON.—At any time, the annual conference of the political party in power in England is an important event. This year's meeting of the Labour Party was of special significance. The prophets scanned the deliberations for signs and portents, in view of the General Election next year. No one can say that the result of the proceedings inspired confidence in either the party or the government. The honeymoon of full employment and "free" social services in an illusory prosperity is nearly over, and the real remedies for present ills do not lend themselves to facile electioneering propaganda. Enterprise, hard work, restraint, and self-discipline, are admirable virtues; but these are not the kind of words that catch votes in normal times. And what political party in a democratic state can hope to get into power without resort to what Dean Inge has described as "the half-formulated superstition that the ballot-box is a kind of Urim and Thummin for ascertaining the will of God"?

The dilemma is inherent in the political warfare out of which emerges from time to time the bedizenment of modern governments. It is especially noticeable in a party which was built originally on dreams of brotherhood, to be realized by a series of progressive reforms (violent revolution had no part in the thoughts of the early English pioneers), and which is now learning the lessons of the retreat of moral principles in face of the accepted values of political and economic organizations. Easy to talk of fraternity or class-solidarity when one has no responsibility for implementing policies! Difficult to remember the vision when all around are the insignia of office and authority! It was inevitable that the contradictions inherent in a party where idealists (however misguided) jostle careerists, and much incense is burnt to malice and envy, should work themselves out in feelings of frustration. The simplicity of the early social gossellers (many of whom were Christian reformers) has given place to the political oversimplification which asserts that people can be made both happy and good by the betterment of their physical conditions. This is flying

in the face of experience, to say the least. It is a reflection in the human mind, grappling with the mechanism of a runaway civilization, of that "twilight of man's spirit" to which General Smuts referred in a Press Conference in London last June.

One of the most cogent criticisms of present trends was made by a non-political observer in 1938 (Walter Wilkinson in *Puppets Through America*). He there remarked (writing of the U.S.S.R.): "How a socialist regime could so stupidly seek to imitate the essential structure of capitalism is an historical idiocy that wants a lot of explaining." Nationalisation changes nothing of fundamental value in the relationship of man to his environment or his fellows. That is probably why General Smuts said he found that while individually the character of the British peoples was unchanged, "*en masse*, they were subdued and showed that they sensed a drift"; they seemed to feel that "something overpowering was settling their fate, that they were no longer free men, and no longer creators, but acceptors." This is not peculiar to England; but the British people are perhaps more aware of the feeling than are others.

The truth is that materialism has invaded all our thinking in religion, science, and social philosophy. The cause or causes of the impoverishment of the world's resources, and the failure of increased productivity in factory and workshop to improve the world's economy or to make people happy, are not material at all, but spiritual. The fundamental malaise is that we have all been taught falsely to regard self-interest as the criterion of a good life, and to war upon our fellows for what we conceive to be our rights. Just as we have looked upon the earth (in the words of Mr. H. J. Massingham) "as an enemy to be conquered, not a friend with which to co-operate, nor a complex multiform subtle and elusive organism which demands all our powers of understanding," so political and economic theories are intent upon depersonalizing the human being until he becomes conditioned to inhuman processes. That is the tragedy always of the idealist who has embraced "realism" as a means to power.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

## REVIEW

### POWER AND CORRUPTION

THOSE belonging to the great lay majority who first heard of Lord Acton through a quotation in *Life or Time*, who know him only as the man who said—"Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely"—and have since wondered what manner of man John Acton was, and whether, indeed, this pithy epigram of his represents a law of human nature, or is, on the other hand, only occasionally true, will probably find the context of this famous quotation intensely interesting, as we did.

The phrase occurs, not in one of Acton's essays, but in a letter to Mandell Creighton, author of *History of the Papacy during the Reformation*, and later a Bishop of the Church of England. Having a great admiration for Acton, Creighton sent him two of the volumes of this work for review in the *English Historical Review*, of which Creighton happened to be editor. When he received the review, he described it as a "savage onslaught" on himself, and entered into a correspondence with Lord Acton about it. Finally, Acton tempered it somewhat and the review was printed in 1887.

John Acton (1834-1902) was born of a German mother and an English father and succeeded to the latter's baronetcy. He was raised to the peerage in 1869 through his friendship with Gladstone, whom he much admired. As a Catholic, born of parents who were both Catholic, Acton was denied admission to Cambridge University because of his religion, but, ironically enough, in 1895, after his fame as a scholar and historian had reached full flower, he became Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge and outlined the plan for the *Cambridge Modern History*. This sort of irony seems characteristic of Acton's career. Although a devout Catholic, he was an inveterate foe of the dogma of papal infallibility and almost suffered excommunication

for his views. He was the student of Ignaz von Dollinger, the distinguished "Old Catholic" theologian of the University of Munich who refused to submit to the infallibility decree promulgated by the Vatican Council in 1870, and was excommunicated within three weeks of his decision. Acton strongly supported his teacher, but was not disciplined in the same way, perhaps because he was too distinguished a layman to be sacrificed by Rome.

Acton was in Rome throughout most of the sessions of the Vatican Council—the first ecumenical council since the Council of Trent (1545-63)—and he is credited with having organized the minority opposition to the decree. Acton is also supposed to have been the source of the reports of the deliberations of the Council which were published in the form of *Letters from Rome* in an Augsburg paper. A summary of the contents of these letters is given by Gertrude Himmelfarb in her introduction to the recently published edition of Acton's essays (Beacon Press, \$5.00):

The pope and his entourage, they [the letters] charge, did not hesitate to apply the most subtle as well as the most open pressure upon the assembly: bishops were deliberately threatened with physical discomfort, they were told that resistance to the dogma of papal infallibility was a blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; the whole stock of papal privilege—the bestowal of sees and titles, special rights, benedictions and dispensation—was tossed into the battle, and fifteen empty cardinal's hats were dangled over many more vacillating heads. Nine-tenths of the prelates were silenced because they could not speak Latin readily, others by the choice of a hall in which the acoustics were notoriously bad but which provided a regal backdrop for the papal throne. The procedure and the entire order of business were decided upon by commissions appointed by the pope himself. Meetings composed of more than twenty bishops were forbidden and strict secrecy was enjoined, except in the case of Manning [an English Ultramontane] and three other infallibilists who enjoyed special papal dispensations to divulge appropriate information to selected confidants. The details of machinations and intrigues crowd upon each other in a dismal spectacle.

The irony of Acton's career continues in the fact that he, a convinced Catholic, found fault with the study of the Reformation popes by Creighton, a Church of England divine, chiefly on the ground that the historian was too "tolerant" of the behavior of these Roman prelates. Addressing Creighton, he wrote:

You say that people in authority are not to be snubbed or sneezed at from our pinnacle of conscious rectitude. I really don't know whether you exempt them because of their rank, or of their success and power, or of their date. The chronological plea may have some little value in a limited sphere of instances. It does not allow of our saying that such a man did not know right from wrong unless we are able to say that he lived before Columbus, before Copernicus, and could not know right from wrong. It can scarcely apply to the centre of Christendom, 1500 after the birth of our Lord. That would imply that Christianity is a mere system of metaphysics, which borrowed some ethics from elsewhere. It is rather a system of ethics which borrowed its metaphysics elsewhere. . . .

. . . I cannot accept your canon that we are to judge Pope and King unlike other men, with a favourable presumption that they did no wrong. If there is any presumption it is the other way against holders of power, increasing as the power increases. Historic responsibility has to make up for the want of legal responsibility. Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men, even when they exercise influence and not authority: still more when they super-add the tendency or the certainty of corruption by authority. There is no worse heresy than that the office sanctifies the holder of it.

As a "test" of Creighton's "tolerant" views, Acton recalls the case of a sixteenth-century pope who induced the Italian government to set a price on the heads of certain of its subjects—"presumably Protestants." Time passed, but no one claimed the reward. Finally, a papal minister wrote to the government in question that the Holy Father was becoming impatient, and "hoped to hear soon of some brave deed of authentic and remunerated homicide." The point of the test is: How has history treated this incident? Acton sums up:

The writer of that letter lies in the most splendid

mausoleum that exists on earth; he has been canonized by the lawful, the grateful, the congenial authority of Rome; his statue, in the attitude of blessing, looks down from the Alps upon the plain of Lombardy; his likeness is in our churches; his name is upon our altars; his works are in our schools. His editor specially commends the letter I have quoted; and Newman celebrates him as a glorious saint.

Is it essential—for salvation within the communion of Rome—that we should accept what canonization of such a saint implies, or that we should reject it? Does Newman or Manning, when he invokes St. Charles [Borromeo], act in the essential spirit of the Roman system, or in direct contradiction with it? To put it in a Walnutshell: could a man be saved who allowed himself to be persuaded by such a chain of argument, by such a cloud of witnesses, by such a concourse of authorities, to live up to the example of St. Charles?

Lord Acton was a man in whom scholarship and the integrity of an independent conscience were perfectly and harmoniously joined. He seems to have written no sentence which does not strike fire. Catholics often complain that no one who has not "the faith" is competent to write about their religion. Here is a historian whose faith was so strong that he placed the austerity of truth above everything else, and he is even more valuable a teacher in this than as a critic of the Reformation Popes and the infallibility dogma of 1870. To read Acton is to realize that a historian who lacks great moral convictions is not worth reading at all. Dipping into his essays is like being baptized with the spirit of intellectual honesty. The cant about everyone having a "bias" is better exposed by the study of a man like Acton than by any carefully argued critique of relativism in historical theory. Acton rises up and smites distortion and deception. Suppose he is a partisan in some respects: his partisanship springs from moral ardor and not from a sickly avoidance of "unpleasantness" or of the challenge of circumstances that cry out to be righted.

Two essays in this volume are of particular interest. "The Protestant Theory of Persecution" is as useful for its theoretical analysis as for its facts, and the latter, from Luther's urgent hatred

of the anarchistic Ana-baptists to Calvin's determined murder of Servetus, are important to anyone who supposes that the Reformation was intended to make an end of religious intolerance and the rack and the stake. The other essay is "The Background of the French Revolution." This revolt, Acton shows, was not so much directed at the establishment of a "new order," but was rather an attack upon the principle of order itself. There was more, of course, to the French Revolution than this, but a more lucid explanation of the Reign of Terror than the following would be difficult to find:

Continental jurisprudence had long been overshadowed by two ideas: that torture is the surest method of discovering truth, and that punishment deters not by its justice, its celerity or its certainty, but in proportion to its severity. . . . Therefore, no attack was more surely aimed at the heart of established usage than that which dealt with courts of justice. It forced men to conclude that authority was odiously stupid and still more odiously ferocious, that existing governments were accursed, that the guardians and ministers of law, divine and human, were more guilty than their culprits. The past was branded as the reign of infernal powers, and charged with arrears of unpunished wrong.

Of the theorists of the Revolution, Acton wrote:

. . . all these fractions were called Liberal: Montesquieu, because he was an intelligent Tory; Voltaire, because he attacked the clergy; Turgot, as a reformer; Rousseau, as a democrat, Diderot, as a freethinker. The one thing common to them all is the disregard for liberty.

Was Lord Acton a Catholic partisan, here? One thing that enthusiasm for Acton does not do—which makes us free to express it—is persuade the reader to believe what he says without reflection. For example, instead of taking his famous saying about Power as an axiom, we are led to question it, to doubt it, and to think that, as stated, it needs another dimension in order to be unqualifiedly true. Perhaps the popes, bishops and kings with whom Acton, as a historian, was mostly concerned, were uniformly powerful and bad, but are there not other

greatnesses and powers than those of priests and princes? Where power means the power to coerce, then, doubtless, Acton is right; perhaps this is all he meant to say.

## A MATURE STATESMAN

IN justice to the present, it should be remarked that India, in sending Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan to Moscow as Ambassador to the Soviet Union, has chosen a representative who, according to his own statement, fulfills the qualifications of a "mature" human being (see Brock Chisholm's definition of maturity in this week's lead article). Speaking of his appointment to this post, Dr. Radhakrishnan said:

We are working under the great leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. If there are political conflicts, there are two ways of overcoming them. One is to give a knockout blow and defeat and destroy, and establish your own supremacy. That is what is called the power solution.

There is another way—trying to appreciate your opponent's point of view and working out a reconciliation. That is the "knowledge" solution.

We in this country are wedded to adoption of the knowledge solution, and in my endeavor in Soviet Russia it will be my business to interpret and understand their policies and also to interpret and make them understand our policies today.

*His* predecessor in Moscow was Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Prime Minister Nehru's sister, who was recently appointed Ambassador to the United States.

Dr. Radhakrishnan *is* an internationally known educator, author of the authoritative two-volume work, *Indian Philosophy*, and the first Eastern scholar to occupy the Spalding Chair of Eastern Philosophy and Religions at Oxford University. His recently published translation of *The Bhagavad-Gita* (Oxford University Press) was noticed under Review in MANAS for Oct. 5. The spirit of this man *is* suggested by some passages from an article which he contributed to the British journal, *Philosophy*, for July, 1937:

Humanitarian sentiment is not effective enough to change men's minds. The question of peace or war is not simply a matter of political arrangement. Peace is a state of mind. So long as individuals are filled with restless desire and do not have peace in their hearts, it is madness to expect peace in this world. While resolved to renounce nothing, this generation

wishes to enjoy the fruits of renunciation. A new simplicity, a new asceticism is what we need. . . . If science and machinery get into other hands than those of warring Caesars and despotic Tamerlanes, if enough men and women arise in each community who are free from the fanaticisms of religion and politics, who will oppose strenuously every kind of mental and moral tyranny, who will develop in place of an angular national spirit a rounded world view, who can tell what might be done?

# CHILDREN

## ... and Ourselves

LAST week we endeavored to supply a few practical suggestions concerning ways to help a child embroiled in the incessant and often careless "feverish activities" of youth. Parents are usually able to realize that little of their own experience is of value unless it has been carefully assimilated and converted into what we call "learning." Yet, on the other hand, we cannot escape seeing the inadvisability of trying to force children to give up certain activities in which they have developed their own independent interest.

It must often have come to the minds of serious educators, whatever their epoch or specific contribution, that children need much of the solitude which gave birth to their own inspirations. For there have been no "great" men who have not lived, at times, in solitude. And this must mean that the very process of learning, if it is to be thorough, must involve quiet reflection. The mind, and whatever it is that we frequently call "intuition," must have at least *temporary* shelter from the influence of external stimuli. So, perhaps, our children, today more than ever before, need opportunity to sense the beauty and dignity of quietude and aloneness. There are intriguing mysteries, moreover, which may partially unveil themselves to any human being, no matter how young, when he lives or thinks "alone" for a sufficient amount of time. Why should it not even be possible for the child's love of adventure to be channeled partially in this direction by the suggestion and example of parents?

The most easily understood and universally applicable of all Plato's symbols, it seems to us, is that of the Philosopher-King. The ideal administrator according to Plato, is the man who regards philosophical contemplation as an essential part of his duty to the citizens he helps govern. He is to know the qualities of Virtue and Justice because he devotes a portion of his life to living outside the realm of manual productivity,

warrior discipline, and politics. Surely this ideal can have meaning to everyone. We all, to some degree, feel the need of becoming our own "philosophers-kings," as well as our own economists and politicians. And the state of philosophical wisdom cannot be attained without prolonged meditation.

If we examine the tradition of adventure itself—that tradition which all young persons quite rightly worship—we will note that there is something infinitely appealing about *solitary* adventure. Children who find stimulation in unfathomed recesses of their own natures by reading of the struggles of Ulysses and other Greek heroes, must respond in especial to the self-reliance represented, which, in a sense, is not to be separated from the ability to be alone with one's thoughts and aspirations, regardless of hostile surroundings. The quest of many of King Arthur's knights were quests undertaken by a single man who had a single purpose, in the face of overwhelming odds. And with no flippancy intended, it may even be imagined that Tarzan in the jungle and the Lone Ranger on his spectacular nightly maneuvers are glamorized by the fact that they know how to be alone.

Not one of the almost innumerable weaknesses in our cultural habits surpasses that of the fear that we shall be left alone with our thoughts. At the outset, then, it might be assumed that no parent can expect to affect children with the recommendations we are suggesting unless he, himself, has learned to make and use wisely his own opportunities for solitude. This would require at least a temporary shutting out of radio, television, and that streamlined variety of reading which enables us to procure the maximum of information or the maximum of emotional titillation with the least thought. If a child knows that a parent requires a definite proportion of quiet time in his daily life, and if the child respects that parent, he can very easily be encouraged to try a similar procedure. It might be mentioned, too, as an important aside, that the parent who

takes time to sit and *think* will find the child interested in what he has been thinking about if the child inadvertently interrupts. A greater respect for the parent may also be generated in such an atmosphere.

It would be unrealistic to assume that most children are ready to seat themselves quietly in front of the fire to practice "reflection." But it is probable that most children may be encouraged to discover for themselves that solitary trips on foot, bicycle, horseback, or boat provide a stimulation *inside* themselves which group sports fail to duplicate. The quiet of the mountains or the quiet of a boat upon the ocean can demonstrate this in a way which no words can adequately represent. A definite claim can be made that the child who once enters this area of experience satisfactorily will seek it out again.

Of course, the intention behind such encouragement for children should not be to produce unbalanced introverts. It is not passive aloneness which is to be encouraged, but an active struggle to align one's conflicting and overlapping desires—a struggle which can prove most rewarding. There are *rules for thinking* which are as old as time and which may be suggested to the child. For instance, to accomplish anything significant of this sort, it is necessary to assume a detached or "impersonal" point of view in respect to oneself. The child *can* learn to think about his own life as if he were viewing it through the eyes of another person, and thereby attain his own measure of that "objectivity" which is so highly praised in scientific circles.

Incidentally, we suspect that the surest approach to any of the real values symbolized by the word "religion" is just such a one as we have described. The men whose depth of religion has also meant depth of perspective for all the details of daily living are not those who depend on creed or formulas, but rather upon indefinable transcendental states of mind, attained when they have faced themselves in solitude. And is the whole question of a higher mental and "soul"-life

separable from the inability of most moderns to absorb and assimilate experience?

# FRONTIERS

## Social Science—Again

A SUBSCRIBER writes in criticism of a measure justified of the recent discussion of "Science and Moral Freedom" (MANAS, Oct. 19). The subject was the application of scientific method to social problems, dealt with in connection with Bruce Stewart's "Challenge to Social Science" (*Science*, Aug. 19). Our critic says:

Among other points made, the review indicated that the application of the scientific method to sociology is safe neither in the hands of individuals nor institutions although somewhat more safe in the former. Farther along you deplore the extension of "the empire of scientific 'objectivity' over the entire realm of human action [because] it becomes a kind of technical fascism."

I should like to know how this bias of the individual and the institution can be gotten rid of without a greater extension. With the problem stated as I have stated it the allusion to fascism seems to be a red herring, for certainly true science and fascism are as incompatible as opposites can be.

At the outset, we should like to underline the word "technical," which was intended to indicate the special sense in which "fascism" was used, and then to concede that, even so, the implication may have been unjust. But rather than go over the ground covered by our previous discussion, we shall endeavor to discuss the general problem anew, as possibly a better way to clarity for both ourselves and our correspondent. In any consideration of the use of science as a means of shaping the conduct of human beings, ultimate questions of philosophy arise. Science for man means science for the good of man, but science which operates for the good of man without having a clear idea of *what man is* may be only a blind technology which does human society a vast disservice. Should this be the case, then the term, "technical fascism," certainly applies.

Social science, of course, is still very

"young," being wholly without basic principles as yet. It would be unfair, therefore, to insist upon a "final" definition of man, at this stage. But any general evaluation of the field and objectives of social science ought to include a clear statement of the decisive part played by the conception of man in the working hypotheses of this branch of science. It is absolutely necessary, we think, for the social scientist to adopt some broad humanist platform with precise—even if only *pro tem*—definitions of the scope of human possibility.

Obviously, if it is to do any good, social science will have to affect and may materially alter the procedures and policies which have grown up around a number of practical technologies. Every branch of human activity is deeply involved in technological processes. Agriculture, industry, transportation, communication—each of these fields represents an elaborate technological structure which has evolved more or less upon the assumption that man is primarily an economic animal. Now a "scientific" view of man which does not question this assumption, but submits to it, will develop a corpus of sociological theory quite different in implication and effect from the consequences that would flow from, say, the assumptions of Gandhi about the human being. A Gandhian sociology would be founded upon a radically different conception of the highest good for man, and its mechanisms would be equally divergent from those which are typical of Western industrialism. Is it unreasonable, is it "dogmatic," to assert that a social science which sees no primary challenge in this comparison can claim no real awareness of the human situation?

At this point, there is an obvious pertinence in reviewing a few of the questions to which social science has no answer. What, first of all, are the ends of human life? This question is usually met by listing what may be called the necessities of physical survival, to which are added certain "psychic satisfactions." But suppose the essential human ends are transcendental rather than mundane? A social scientist would probably say

that he cannot be expected to indulge in metaphysical speculations, but must limit himself to *demonstrable* realities. This is well and good, so long as he does not deny the *possibility* of transcendental ends for human beings, nor ignore the fact that such ends, if they are real, ought to be the basis for all ultimate value judgments in human life.

The crux of this problem has been excellently stated by Ortega, in his *Toward a Philosophy of History*. We shall quote it at length:

Scientific truth is characterized by its exactness and the certainty of its predictions. But these admirable qualities are contrived by science at the cost of remaining on a plane of secondary problems, leaving intact the ultimate and decisive questions. Of this renunciation it makes its essential virtue, and for it, if for nought else, it deserves praise. Yet science is but a small part of the human mind and organism. If the physicist detains, at the point where his method ends, the hand with which he delineates the facts, the human being behind each physicist prolongs the line thus begun and carries it on to its termination, as an eye beholding an arch in ruins will of itself complete the missing airy curve.

It is the task of physics to ascertain for each fact occurring here and now its principle, that is to say the preceding fact that causes it. But this principle in its turn has a principle, and so down to a first original principle. The physicist refrains from searching for first principles and he does well. But, as I said, the man lodged in each physicist does not resign himself. Whether he likes it or not, his mind is drawn towards the last enigmatic cause: of the universe. And it is natural that it should be thus. . . .

That science is incapable of solving in its own way those fundamental questions is no sufficient reason for slighting them, as did the fox with the high-hung grapes, or for calling them myths and urging us to drop them altogether. How can we live turning a deaf ear to the last dramatic questions? Where does the world come from and whither is it going? Which is the supreme power of the cosmos, what the essential meaning of life? We cannot breathe confined to a realm of secondary and intermediate themes.

Ortega says he cannot live without pursuing the meanings behind these questions. We agree—

agree that a life which ignores them is a life abandoned to sub-human ends. And from this stance in social philosophy, it seems only reasonable to look skeptically at a social science which either implies or declares that such questions are irrelevant to its investigations. Social science, it seems to us, can derive its own relevance from nowhere else. Social science must take its first principles from philosophy or acquire them clandestinely from the uncriticized popular assumptions of the age. Social scientists cannot be only Positivists—technicians without a theory of knowledge—so long as the objective of their science is the good of man.

To our way of thinking, it is a fact given in human experience that all men, social scientists or not, pursue the good, and have, therefore, some sort of theory of the good. We think that the theory of the good which is represented by so important an undertaking as social science ought to be explicit and categorical, not hidden and more or less unconsciously held. For social science, as it comes to be applied science, will exercise a vast psychological influence. Its prestige will be an immeasurable cultural force. And applied social science will be *institutional* science, subject to all the limitations and defects of other human institutions.

Our correspondent has asked how the bias of an individual or a group may be corrected. We know only one way of correcting bias: the clear establishment of first principles and the rigorous development of their implications together with a constant comparison of theoretical conclusions with the facts of human experience. But human science must take cognizance of *moral* facts, and moral facts are most difficult to define. Therefore, we ask, not for finalities in definition, but for a setting of the human problem in moral terms. Is there any other way of setting it that would be "scientific"?