

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

IT is time we stopped selling the human race short. Short-selling, for the benefit of those fortunate enough never to have been hurt by it, was a legitimate pastime engaged in by men who in the good old days were known as "Bears." In great trading cities they played the market "short" by bidding to buy stock below the asking price. Celebrated Bears once managed, through nicely-timed co-operative effort, to have large blocks of shares unloaded so that the price could move in only one direction—down. In happy hunting grounds pre-1930 this was a favorite indoor sport. A well set up member of the medical profession once explained to us how, by play of this kind while stocks were tumbling ten and twenty points, or by being ready to leap in and buy for the rise after the fall, it was possible to become far richer in a depression than in a boom.

It is time we stopped selling human beings short, just the same. We who read by history's light stand to gain nothing in that way. For where we trip ourselves up is in confusing human beings with human institutions, and they are not the same. Human institutions are born, reach maturity, disintegrate and die. So, obviously, do human beings, yet is it not just that superficial resemblance by which we are allowing ourselves to be deceived? Shall we, in selling others short, not be unloading our own stock, and so depressing the market in human souls?

It is an axiom in social psychology that "we tend always to act in accordance with the expectations of others." The theoretical postulate lends itself easily to empirical verification and, in our experience, has never failed of proof. In consequence, perhaps we hold an exaggeratedly favourable view of our fellow man and, if pressed too far, will readily say we find the human race magnificent.

Men live at all times, from early childhood on, with the pictures they have in their heads. Hence, when we hear someone vociferously selling our most-favored-species short, the accusation, of whatever kind, flips a switch in our brain and there, as though it were a fingerprint wanted by the FBI, is a picture. This is a moving picture—one of our own, and of the mind—and because we always have it with us and are never in the slightest danger of losing it, we know that every human being is a potential hero. Our one quarrel, therefore, with life as it is lived in a megalopolitan society, is that it too rarely furnishes the occasion for heroism.

The hero in our moving picture is the maker of change in a subway station. As we film the episode in our imagination, he is suddenly faced with a breathless citizen who tells him that one of the rush-hour express trains is immobilized down below because a woman has fallen while leaving the train, and her body is pinned between the platform and the steel car. All efforts to extricate her have failed.

The young man in the change booth, confronted with a situation for which nothing had prepared him, became in that moment a hero. Not only did he himself become a hero, but he enabled several hundred cowed New Yorkers to live out that day knowing they, too, could be heroes. For in the time that it took the change-maker to phone a warning along the line and to dash down the stairs to the express level, the heroic idea was born.

On the platform the usual crowd had gathered, and in their helplessness people who would normally never have exchanged a word were now voluble. At sight of the young man racing from above they gave way. There was only one thing to do, he said, and that was *to lift the*

train. A gasp welled up, and then, as the change-maker called for volunteers, the scene became one of uncommon splendor. Down onto the sooty dim-lit tracks one hundred and fifty men and women clambered. Marshalled from above into position, they put their backs and shoulders to some twenty tons of steel car—and *lifted it one inch and a half.* The inch and a half was all that was needed to free the woman's pinioned body.

Brushing themselves off, looking relieved and a little sheepish at this unaccustomed beginning to a working day, the two hundred-odd New Yorkers resumed their several unheroic roles, the woman was helped to the street, the change-maker (who would likely have failed any standard test in "aptitude for group leadership") returned to his cage, and the lights faded out on our moving picture.

We cannot, with such scenes to accompany us through life, sell our fellow humans short. There is nothing the matter with us that a change of scene would not cure in a hurry. It is the backdrop, the wings, the set, the props and the proscenium curtain that are wrong, and, because they are over-age, they are ready to come down. They have served their purpose; only a little while longer and they will be carted off to storage. The institutions that frustrate men's hopes, that enable others to seem the embodiment of evil; the carefully staged debates; the nimble little men scampering across boundaries waving watery blueprints: phantoms all, looming deceptively solid against a fabulous transparency.

Good, evil, what are these but mortal measures? Each of us is part good, part evil, with some mysterious "X" ingredient thrown in, making it impossible sometimes even for us to tell precisely which will come uppermost in a pinch. But the situation—there is the trouble zone. For the situation is a-by-product of the institution, and the institution a by-product of the goal.

And the goal? "Easy money." Unknown voices on the telephone offer college athletes "a chance to pick up some easy money." Unknown

members of a ring are picking up "easy money" dealing in narcotics sold to teen-agers in high schools. The pursuit of "easy money" leads mystery men to secrete gold in the trunk compartment of a car destined for Europe; the lure of speculation feeds the illicit East-West traffic and gold goes to a premium as money loses value. Who trades in smuggled gold and drugs? Who buys the diamonds hidden in false heels? Who are the men behind the betting pools on everything from numbers to elections? Under the very eyes of a vigilant state the demolition squad is silently at work. As Oscar Wilde so sagely said, "Each man kills the thing he loves. . . ."

So far as New York is concerned, and, more recently, the nation's capital, not a day goes by that does not bring to light the most unabashed venality. A "racket," from being a noise has become a national institution. The Soviets are no better: the regional editor of *U.S. News & World Report* combed the Soviet Zone to check up on Berliners disappearing, kidnapped often in broad daylight. "He found that police methods in East Germany match the gangster tactics of the U. S. underworld," and sent back photographs to prove it.

But is this any reason for selling mankind short? Albert Schweitzer would surely not believe it was. Europe between wars travelled just the road that we are travelling now. War does that to nations: it undoes them at the core. Europe is a political vacuum, the girders of its demolished institutions as bare to the sky as the German ruins that all the money of the occupiers has not even begun to rebuild. No use, really, to rebuild them; There is nothing for them to contain save the shells of dead institutions; and the Unconscious in the occupiers knows that. Yet simultaneously, pushing up through the decay of time like crocuses in Spring, there begins to flower in the blood-rich soil of Europe something Albert Schweitzer knew men must release, or die, "the idealism locked in every human heart." And will you sell that short?

It is altogether possible that we are passing judgment over matters that are beyond our jurisdiction. Watching the sere leaves fall at summer's end, we do not grieve, seeing the tree remain. The leaves, sodden with winter's snows and April rains, lie rotted, dank, and crumble to the touch. We do not say they are corrupt. Does wind corrupt, or snow or rain; does the ant, the beetle or the worm? Nothing in nature is corrupt. The law says everything that is must die, that the new may come to birth. Nature's law is man's law, too, and so every man is serving nature's purpose.

Corrupt is our word, meaning simply, "to break with." It serves us only so long as our sights remain too puny to enable us to train our gaze beyond the leaf-mold at our feet, to look up and see the buds. All things are good that serve a higher purpose, and if some men, for "easy money," pervert their institutions to ignoble ends, may it not be that the tree has no more use for them? Nothing but our foolish egocentrism persuades us to identify mankind with every falling leaf.

Institutions are human creations, and so subject to all the vicissitudes of human kind and human laws. Man is not a human creation. He can corrupt, as the worm does. He is corruptible, as the leaf is. *But man is not corrupt.* His institutions, with all their human imperfections, merely mark a late stage in his development; they are as impermanent as the fragile glassy shrouds from which the dazzling gossamer of a Monarch's wings take off in flight.

That is why, in the course of time, all peoples and all institutions arrive at the dead end which Mr. Harold Maine so excellently adumbrated in these pages. The people quietly detach themselves at the last. Vasari, in the Preface to the 1550 edition of his famous *Lives of the Painters*, wrote with deep feeling of Italy and "the glory that was Rome"—

For having seen in what way she, from a small beginning, climbed to the greatest height, and how from a state so noble she fell into utter ruin, and that,

in consequence the nature of this art is similar to that of others, which, like human bodies, have their birth, their growing old, and their death . . .

The institution of the modern state, in short, is too far advanced for anything that we can do or say to save it. Willy-nilly we are cast in the role of onlookers at the sublime and awesome spectacle. But shall we, just for that, sell all men short?

Only by releasing the bonds that hold unsuspected heroes captive in underground cages shall we ever frustrate the Communists' claim that it is *they* who have a world to win. So it is time we stopped selling humanity short. It is high time we plunged in and started bidding on the rise.

New York

CARY DESBOROUGH

Letter from **ENGLAND**

LONDON.—With the advent of a Labour Government, here, we are all sociologists! Even the non-academic trade unionist is wont to compare his standard of living with that of his fellow-craftsman in the United States, and, where he is employed in one of the industries now administered as a public corporation (*e.g.*, coal), he finds himself debating his precise position as a trade unionist in what is no longer primarily a profit-making concern. He may even feel disappointment at discovering that he now has to cope with an endless bureaucracy which has neither body to be kicked nor soul to be saved!

However this may be, it is the fact that we are forever being served up with the ingredients of sociological research. Thick volumes of statistics, tables, graphs, charts, and maps, leap out at us from every quarter, and, when to all these are added the variety of European and other economic agencies admonishing us to produce more and consume less, the ordinary person may well be forgiven if he should complain that our professional sociologists, aided and abetted by economists of different hues, have created a Frankenstein which threatens to devour what little is left of gracious living. What are we to say of this aspect of scientific research, so intent upon eliminating all the worth-while human qualities?

Of course, it may be said that Plato, too, studied the elements of human society, and, certainly, there was a revival of interest in the relation of man to the community during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as may be seen in the works of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. But the gulf is wide between Greek and these philosophizings and the sociology which took rank as a science in the late nineteenth century with the Positivism of Comte, the Utilitarianism of Bentham and Mill, and the evolutionary system of Herbert Spencer. These latter had little concern with an examination of the facts of the moral consciousness. Natural forces working blindly, they held, have made us what we are. The same forces, organized by an instinct of self-interest, were supposed to be capable of building the Utopia of the sociological laboratory.

In *Ends and Means*, Mr. Aldous Huxley wrote: "About the ideal of human effort there exists in our civilization, and, for nearly thirty centuries there has existed, a very general agreement." This was written in 1938, and one cannot help thinking that, pessimist as he is in most things, on this point Mr. Huxley is wilfully optimistic. In England, at any rate, and in most other countries, there exist the most divergent opinions as to "the ideal goal." Education has done nothing much except produce fractional man, and although it may be argued that fractions can reach agreement, it is too much to assert that the goal so defined can be anything but an inadequate compromise, lacking all inspiration. (Does the author of *The Perennial Philosophy* even agree with the Mr. Aldous Huxley who wrote, say, *Point Counter Point*, on "the ideal goal"?) Mr. Bertrand Russell has lately protested that in the present day people are extraordinarily specialized, and he thinks there is a good case for a conspectus of knowledge; but how would Plato come off in Lord Russell's conspectus?

Dr. C. E. M. Joad once asked, in a consideration of the relation of values to mind: "Can there, one wonders, be happiness without minds or persons to be happy?" His doubt conceals much truth. When the sociologist has finished his computations and surveys of tribal or civilized societies, are we to believe that the New Order has been brought nearer to achievement? Nothing in a perusal of sociological works recently published in this country suggests anything of the sort. Further, with men like Professor A. C. Hardy talking of telepathy as a possible item in moulding the patterns of behaviour among members of a species, even our ideas of evolution may have to be altered significantly. Inevitably, also, in that case all our sciences, including sociology, will have to be recast to take account of psychological factors of some potency. If man be a living soul, and not a mere mechanism of conditioned reflexes, we are going to need something more than the blue-print recommendations of sociological investigators to establish the good society. As things are, however, no one here has said with Marcel Babu, founder of a model community at Boimondau (France): "a man cannot be a bad workman and a good father." There is a world of implication in this view.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

NO INNER STORM

SELECTION of Rumer Godden's *A Breath of Air* (Viking) by BoM affords another interesting opportunity for contrasting Shakespeare's interpretation of man with that which characterizes much of modern writing. Miss Godden has deliberately based her novel on Shakespeare's *Tempest*, following with quite some faithfulness the general outline of one of Shakespeare's later and most deeply probing plays. But it would be a pity to read *A Breath of Air* without turning to the original play, for while the *Tempest's* characters are superficially re-created on an island setting, also like that of the *Tempest*, Miss Godden's "Prospero" is very different from Shakespeare's original characterization of a man who renounces society, only to return with an inspiration to serve his fellows. For Shakespeare, the struggle between duty and the desire to avoid responsibility, between hate and love, is plainly drawn. His is a warfare of the soul against some other portion of itself, which can only with difficulty be united with its higher alter ego.

This seems an appropriate place to introduce a view of the meaning of the *Tempest* presented by a young Indian instructor in a Bombay college. His discussion reveals the special competence for Shakespearean interpretation that grows out of a cultural background of metaphysical thought, as contrasted with the scientific rationalism of the West:

Virtue is not only virtuous but also victorious, triumphant, and villainy is not only frustrated, but also forgiven. These are dramas of reconciliation between estranged kinsmen; of wrongs righted through repentance, not revenge; of pardon and peace. Tragedy is fully merged into mysticism, and the theme is rendered in terms of myth and music, reflecting the grandeur of true immortality and spiritual conquest within apparent death and seeming defeat.

In this line of interpretation, the play presents an image of the glorious supremacy of the perfected human soul over all other things and beings. At the

peak of the evolutionary ascent stands Prospero, the representative of wise and compassionate god-manhood, in its true relation to the combined elements of existence—the physical powers of the external world—and the varieties of character with which it comes into contact. He is the ruling power to which the whole series is subject, from Caliban the densest to Ariel the most ethereal extreme. In Prospero we have the finest fruition of the co-ordinate development of the spiritual and the material lines of evolution.

Miss Godden, unlike Shakespeare, neither writes with intensity nor gives intensity to her characters. In common with the psychological temperament of our time, she chooses to give us a Prospero mildly confused rather than inwardly torn. Her Mr. Van Loomis sets up a private domain on a desert island for the sake of convenience and peace, not to fulfill a destiny. He does not return to the life he left behind in Scotland because of an inward moral compulsion, nor through any conscious desire to synthesize the values of his new perspective with the world of greater energy and chicanery, *but is instead simply moved by events and circumstances beyond his control*. And this, it seems to us, is the needed reference point in comparing *A Breath of Air* with the *Tempest*.

While Shakespeare has Prospero's undertakings symbolize the difficult odyssey of every man, Miss Godden has Van Loomis represent a mild, confused individual, whose destiny is never fully comprehensible to him. And all her characters follow the same pattern. None is heroic, none sees clearly any working of a larger or symbolic purpose in his life. Miss Godden's Prospero forgives his enemies when he becomes tired of his isolation, not when he sees a mystic vision of the ways in which all men can be brothers. In other words, the original Prospero's intent is trivialized, and the voices which speak for him through Miss Godden completely invert Shakespeare's almost religious purpose. The somewhat Promethean Prospero becomes the average man of little account, and the mystic powers invoked become "conjury."

It is necessary, of course, to make clear that no one has the right to criticize Miss Godden either for failing to understand Shakespeare or for failure to imitate him more carefully. We are calling attention to the contrast, not blaming Miss Godden for it. Every writer, in his treatment of a plot, reflects his essential outlook and philosophy, and Miss Godden is one who chooses to soften with whimsy the intensities of psychological drama. Evil, with her, is not very evil, and good is not very good, as the characters drift through what is only vaguely a symbolic experience. No one is very right and no one is very wrong—and no enlightenment is very inspiring or productive of great deeds.

We can always sympathize with Miss Godden's people, of course, but, just as in the dramatization of her *Black Narcissus*, we get the feeling that she doesn't believe any human beings can ever grow to be especially strong. She is another gentle debunker of the fire-and-steel-in-heroes school, which inspired authors of an age less given to trite deprecations of human character via stepped-down psychoanalytical attitudes. As a result, our sympathy for her characters is a sympathy in terms of those common weaknesses we share with them.

The last words of the *Tempest* are, "Please you draw near!"—the "you" of the cast including, as one commentator has put it, "in friendly form, the enemies whose evil he has overcome with good—the men he might so easily have shunned." Mr. Van Loomis, the new Prospero, stumbles to a satisfactory conclusion of his troubles, but the "drawing near" is the coming together of a scattered herd of sheep, not a joining through the compassion of a wise lover of all men.

Apart from these contrasts, Miss Godden does a beautiful job of portraying the state of mind of the native islanders, who are forced out of complaisance by the knowledge that a larger and more fascinating world exists beyond the ocean. Filipino is the prototype of those who are torn to pieces in the dilemma, whose originally clear

insights are gradually confused by the glamour and fascination of the mechanical age. The following passage is a good illustration:

Filipino was anything but empty; his mind was a shimmering maze of American advertisements, than which nothing can more subtly fill the mind; it was a maze of typewriters and newsprint, of race horses and refrigerators; gasoline and brown and white shoes; he had cut out as many of the things as he could and pasted them on the walls of his peaceful little hut, where he meant to learn them off by heart. He had shown them to Resurrection, who had looked at them and smiled and was not shaken; Filipino felt shaken to his depths. Now, sitting by Valentine, he had a sudden thought: all the things that you see you take into you, thought Filipino. If you like these things very much you take them deep into you, I like them very much, but if I take them all in, thought Filipino in alarm, what will be left of me? There will be no room for me. I shall be gone. For a moment he thought of tearing down all the pictures and throwing them in the sea, of going back to be Filipino. . .

The implications of this passage are interesting, and might possibly be applied not only to South Sea Islanders, but also to every percipient child when he reaches a certain stage of adolescence. If we think *we* may once have been such percipient children, could there not have been times when the opportunities inspired by ambition slacked their holds long enough for us to wish that we could *go back to be ourselves*—those selves which are not so far extended and involved in so many intricate ways? If we take "too many things into us," our perceptions certainly become diffused; it may be that many of the nostalgic dreams of middle or advanced age the longings for departed youth, are a sort of subterranean recognition that the "complications" were allowed to carry us too far away from clear knowledge of ourselves. As Miss Godden suggests, no man can escape this problem, but as Shakespeare might suggest, the solution could conceivably still be controlled by man himself rather than by chance turns of circumstance.

COMMENTARY **STRENGTHEN THE GOOD**

FROM Heinz Kraschutzki, chief educator at the Juvenile Prison of Berlin, has come a letter of such particular interest that portions of it may serve as a "guest editorial."

* * *

The old, so-called "Philadelphia prison system" consisted in isolating the men as much as possible from the outer world and from each other. The idea was to keep evil influences away from them. This went so far that the prisoners during their daily walk had to wear masks so that no one could see the face of any other. At religious services they were seated in separate boxes so that every man could see the parson, but no other prisoner.

The system failed, as its consequence had to be that the men, even apart from the hatred they felt, were alienated from life and after serving long terms were unfitted for a free existence. While this system has been largely abolished, its influence still persists. What we have today is the old system in a "relaxed" form.

Tolstoy, so far as I understand him, would have said: "Don't resist the evil influences, but increase the good ones!" Evil cannot be eliminated from life. It exists. But the Good can be made so strong that it is able to conquer the evil.

Look at the present world situation. Fervently the people who call themselves "freedom-loving" try to resist what to them is the evil of Communism. But how? By bombing towns, by killing men, by leaving in ruins the country they want to liberate.

Instead of fighting desperately with evil means against evil, Tolstoy would have strengthened the positive forces in the world. Instead of sending arms to Chiang Kai-shek (whose corrupt supporters soon sold them to the Communists), he would have sent food and clothing and machinery to poor China, winning

the hearts of the Chinese and making them invulnerable to any temptations from Moscow.

I am living in Western Berlin. When this city was in danger—or should I say, when the world believed it to be in danger?—then the West, the USA before all, sent not bombs and machine guns, but food, clothing, coal. As a result, Communism is simply dead, here.

Sending food, clothing and tools to the half-starved peoples of Asia would, I think, have a much better effect than the attempt to show that the West has more and worse means of destruction than the East.

CHILDREN **... and Ourselves**

A RECENT *Science News Letter* (Jan. 6) furnishes indication of the revolutionary impact of the Defense Department upon colleges and universities. It is predicted that approximately "85% of the 800 to 900 substantial, degree-granting colleges and universities in the country will be on a three-year speed-up basis by next September. This move will affect more than 1,500,000 students." The *SNL* dispatch continues:

U. S. Commissioner of Education, Earl J. McGrath, is considering calling a conference of outstanding college presidents to discuss the need for acceleration.

It is the thinking in the Office of Education that it will take the month of January to bring home to those colleges not yet planning acceleration that the manpower programs of the Armed Forces will require such a step. About Feb. 1, therefore, planning for acceleration will become general.

How far and how easily most university presidents have been moved by the psychology of imminent war is amply demonstrated by recalling the bitter criticisms directed for years at Robert Hutchins of Chicago, by his colleagues in college education, for granting degrees in less than four full years. Hutchins, of course, was not at that time interested in military preparedness, but was very sure that most university courses had been stretched out interminably for some rather poor reasons, among them the demand for "leisure" for young people, the wealth of parents—and the complementary fact that running an educational institution is a fairly congenial and lucrative activity for its professionals. Hutchins wanted to get the usual college routine out of the way, in two years, if possible, and then provide a genuine "higher learning" for those qualified and desirous of continuing in study, research, and teacher training. But now we are getting "acceleration"

without any argument, for the government is requiring and paying for it.

Among the specific results of the gear-everything-to-war approach to education are further alterations to be made in the entrance requirements of some of our universities. For instance, we understand that the University of California now requires a major in either mathematics, science, or languages, from high school students, thus leaving many pupils who had undertaken to prepare themselves for the "higher learning," of which Dr. Hutchins speaks, not only out-of-date but out of the school. English and history majors, a recent applicant was told, are no longer acceptable and special extension work must be undertaken to enter the University. Reports are also current to the effect that mathematics and science teachers are conscientiously trying to "sell" their courses to pupils on the basis of the prompt advance in the armed forces which mathematical proficiency will insure. This seems to be as far as one can get from that great philosopher-mathematician, Pythagoras, whose reason for emphasizing mathematics involved the belief that its study instilled a respect for the laws of proportion and harmony, leading the way to rational metaphysics.

Many of our state universities are literal mazes of interconnecting passages between offices charged with dispensing special grants for atomic and weapons research and the regular colleges of science and engineering. One university is making it possible for young engineers who have been siphoned off into atomic research projects to work for higher college degrees while serving as apprentice bomb-engineers and physicists. It doesn't require much stretch of the imagination to surmise that many of these degrees will be awarded by the university on virtually a rubber-stamp basis, once an endorsement of officials in Oak Ridge, etc., has been given to "special work" undertaken. It will not be necessary for such advanced students even to see their Alma Mater in

the process of obtaining a higher degree, unless, possibly, on the day of formal award.

While the Commissioner of Education and the Defense Department are apparently indistinguishable as to basic policy, there are some interesting evidences of opposition to the concept of War-Mindedness as the key to good schooling. John Eklund, President of the American Federation of Teachers, recently mailed to the *Nation* (February 10) a copy of a substitute Loyalty Oath formulated by the AF of T. His introductory remarks are worth repeating, as is his "substitute oath":

We reject them [loyalty oaths] because they violate the basic freedoms of expression and thought. Arbitrary restrictions build pressures that may destroy the good with the bad. We would choose to keep democracy strong by the exercise of its "rightness," not weaken it by over-protection.

We reject them because they beget fear and-hysteria. The school and the individual teacher must recognize prejudice and suspicion as such and replace them with objectivity and confidence. To do this one does not retreat from the thresholds of our social and economic problems—as such oath-taking is wont to make us do.

We reject them because they set us apart from other citizens in the community. It is unthinkable that merely because teachers are subject to public controls in relation to their salaries and working conditions, they should be isolated members of the community, upon whom the full weight of fear and hysteria can rest.

It is high time that we act positively—that we frankly and fearlessly propose something to which we may voluntarily offer our allegiance, define our values, and thus, perhaps, prevent the special seeds of suspicion from being sown. To that end the members of the American Federation of Teachers have proposed the following oath:

I pledge myself to the unceasing search for truth, to the increasing of the general human welfare, and to the full emancipation of the individual child. I can constantly seek to serve the basic tenets of democracy, knowing that democracy is a way of life, not a static credo, and that the democratic way of life is served best through the challenge of social and economic problems yet unmet or unconquered. The hysteria of fear and of prejudice shall not enter my

classroom. In my day-to-day duties I shall strive to keep alive the optimism of youth, positively directed and tempered by the experiences of humankind as I have found them.

My classroom shall be the shrine of dignity and worth of each child, their confidence shall be inviolate, their growth, and development the motive of my job. This to the end that voluntary disposition and interest may supersede external control and our individual and collective search for the good life.

FRONTIERS Ancient Esperanto?

BY courtesy of a reader, we have come into possession of Vol. XX of the *Annals* of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, of Poona, India, and in this scholarly journal find interesting verification of the rumor, current for years, that the Easter Island "script" and the written characters of the Indus Valley civilization of Mohenjo-Daro are so similar as to be called identical. This conclusion, frowned upon by Western experts for its fantastic implications, is one to stretch the anthropological imagination.

The stories of Easter Island and Mohenjo-Daro, as archeological sites, both make fascinating reading. The grimly foreboding and still unexplained giant statues of Easter Island have scowled down upon no one knows how many generations of Pascuans (native islanders). Some of the images are as large as forty feet tall, cut from soft tufa rock. The "wrinkled lip and sneer of cold command" of the faces seem to spread an air of malignant gloom over the island—at least, the photographs convey this impression. According to N. M. Billimoria, who writes the *Annals* article, the Easter Island script, which is inscribed on tablets of hard mimosa wood, was not discovered until 1864, although the island itself and the statues have been known ever since a Dutch admiral landed there in 1721 on Easter Day. The native name for the island, incidentally, is Te Pito Te Henua, meaning "Navel of the Earth."

Today, there are only fifteen tablets in a state of preservation, although an account of the visit of Eugene Eyraud, in 1864, reports that "there were tablets in almost every house." The astonishing thing about the Easter Island script is this:

Although the Polynesians were able to represent human, animal and natural forms, remarkably conventionalized, nowhere except in the Easter Island, the extreme outpost of the race, do we find anything approaching a regular system of writing.

Apparently, there are two schools of interpretation of the Easter Island script. The tough-minded, hard-headed school says that there is no reason to assume that the present Pascuans are not the descendants of the authors of the script and the sculptors of the statues. Others speculate about a widespread Pacific culture of the remote past, and even about a lost Pacific continent. Island tradition has it that an ancient King, Hotumatua, brought sixty-seven tablets with him from another island. For the Pascuans themselves, they seem to have had ceremonial significance, only chiefs and priests being able to read them. At certain seasons, the tablets were gathered together and their contents publicly recited. Following is a portion of the translation of one of the tablets made by William J. Thompson, U. S. Navy, and published in the *Smithsonian Institution Report* for 1889:

When the island was first created and became known to our forefathers, the land was crossed with roads beautifully paved with flat stones. The stones were laid close together so artistically that no rough edges were exposed. Coffee-trees were growing close together along the border of the road, that met overhead, and the branches were laced together like muscles. Heke was the builder of these roads, and it was he who sat in the place of honor in the middle where the roads branched away in every direction. These roads were cunningly contrived to represent the plan of the web of the gray and black-pointed spider and no man could discover the beginning or end thereof.

Mr. Billimoria's article is illustrated with plates of both the Easter Island tablets and the Mohenjo-Daro seals, and provides, also, a comparison of selected Indus Valley signs with those of the tablets, showing their extraordinary similarity. As Prof. S. Langdon of Oxford University has said:

There can be no doubt concerning the identity of the Indus and Easter Island scripts. Whether we are thus confronted by an astonishing historical accident or whether this ancient Indian script has mysteriously travelled in the remote islands of the Pacific none can say. The age of the Easter Island tablets made of wood is totally unknown, and all knowledge of their

writing has been lost. This same script has been found on seals precisely similar to the Indian seals in various parts of ancient Sumer, at Susa and the border land east of the Tigris. (Introduction to G. R. Hunter's *The Script of Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro and its Connection with Other Scripts*.)

In 1923, an Indian archeologist, R. D. Banerji, sent to the Larkana District of Sind to examine the ruins of a supposed Buddhist *stupa*, discovered that this great mound, some seventy-two feet high, was in reality a part of the remains of a pre-Buddhist civilization. Researches pursued under Sir John Marshall, then Director-General of the Indian Archeological Survey, disclosed a great center of Indus Valley culture of about three millenniums B.C. The city of Mohenjo-Daro (the name given to the site, meaning, "Place of the Dead"), was gradually uncovered, revealing its extent over two hundred and forty acres. There are actually five or six cities, superimposed one upon the other. Here, for some two thousand years, lived a great and peaceful people, schooled in the arts and in handicrafts and trade. One striking fact about Mohenjo-Daro is that no fortifications and very few weapons have been unearthed. The findings of the archeologists caused Julian Huxley to remark:

The evidence from some ancient civilizations, such as Mohenjo-Daro, indicates that they were wholly pacific. In any case, the basic quality of man's nature is its plasticity, its absence of unalterable instincts. . . . War is a phenomenon on a par with duelling and religious persecution. These latter have dropped out of civilized societies without any alteration in the genetic basis of human nature: and the same could be accomplished for war. (*Science*, Feb. 16, 1940.)

It was the seals of the Indus Valley people which enabled the archeologists to trace their connections in many parts of the world. "In the various cities of Sumer, notably at Kish and Ur and Lagash, seals lost by merchants from the Indus Valley have been found by the excavator well-nigh fifty centuries later." (Dorothy Mackay, in *Asia*, March, 1932.) So plain are the evidences

uniting the Mohenjo-Daro culture with ancient Sumeria that the new-found civilization was tentatively named the "Indo-Sumerian civilization" of the Indus Valley.

And now, to the scope of the influence of these ancient cosmopolitans of India is added far-off Easter Island, strangely isolated in the southeastern Pacific, 2,300 miles from Chile (which owns the island), and 2750 miles from Tahiti. The writing of the Easter Island tablets has also been likened by some to Mayan designs of Central America. One student notes the presence in the script of "dog faces and negrito heads." A Batavian Bishop has declared that the Easter Island signs are almost identical to figures carved on rocks in Celebes. Billimoria himself remarks:

As regards the meaning of the iconographic signs and pictures, they represent forms of life as well as weapons and incidents (some apparently religious) which belong to islands thousands of miles to the west. On Easter Island it is well ascertained that the only quadruped is a rat, and the only land bird a domestic fowl; and the natives have certainly neither dog-faces nor negrito-like heads.

So, the plot thickens and the mystery spreads. But the evidence of this written *lingua franca* of the ancient world—even prehistoric world, in some respects—remains to spur our researches and speculations. From the land of the peaceful and prosperous Indus Valley people eastward to the lonely, wind-swept and wave-lashed Easter Island there stretched this line of symbolic communication—tenuous, perhaps, yet how do we know?—while westward to ancient Sumeria went a much-travelled highway for goods and ideas. What else, one wonders, had they in common? Will we ever know?

Has it Occurred to Us?

"WHERE seldom is heard a discouraging word." There, in the words of the old refrain, is the heart's proper home. We imagine that a place of rest and refreshment to the spirit must harbor no belittlements, no carping complaints, no nagging impatience, and certainly not the involuntary cruelty of meagre faith. In a measure, we imagine truly. Each man needs a comrade—at least one—for whom his hopes and dreams are realities, else the pressure of mediocre facts would be overwhelming. Our dreams, though private, are never wholly for ourselves: if we are alone in the universe, how many hopes would we trouble ourselves to keep alive?

But has it occurred to us that if our lives were to be played out "where seldom is heard a discouraging word," they might be a discouraging sight? We cannot subsist upon a diet of compliments; an atmosphere of uncritical adulation is more benumbing to initiative than the harshest and most virulent condemnation. In Heaven, we suppose, there is nothing left to do, no differing opinion to stir the placid surface of *finished* minds, no temperamental clashes to coax us out of the notion that "we" are perfect and know all. (In Heaven, according to specifications, the "dole" dispenses perfection automatically, together with something very close to omniscience.) But Heaven has long been a distasteful prospect for all but "bone-weary" minds. Fortunately for the popularity of this super-resort, very few reasonable facsimiles of "heavenly existence" are vouchsafed to the unangelic human beings this side of its technicolor splendors. Life on earth may have disadvantages, but insipidity is not among them. Earth—being, as some authorities say, midway between Heaven and Hell—we might expect to operate neither in a paradise of praise, nor in a Hades of hate and distrust. But what is the middle ground?

What influences combine to urge us to free expansion of our capacities and powers? Whence come the flying sparks that kindle the fires laid

and waiting in the cold chambers of our house of thoughts? What makes warm, rich currents course through our being, where before the inner pulse was weak and slow? The comrades of the heart, with loving wisdom, can hold a mirror to our high and secret hopes, the better for us to see and study them. From them we take the truth about ourselves, as if it came from ourselves.

From our comrade, praise is almost blame, for he, like ourselves, is driven to say, upon each fresh achievement, "Well done. Now you can really get a move on!" And is not blame a species of praise, when it points to failure as *unworthy* of us? Our comrade recommends neither Heaven nor Hell. An achievement, small or great, is duly acknowledged; a failure, known or unknown to others, is calmly considered. The question, in each case, is "What has it meant, and what's next?" In the human workshop it is not so much the "pause" that refreshes, as the prospect of a new task just a trifle beyond the powers we have so far called into play. Success and failure alike point on ahead, when we travel forward from one as from the other.

Can we not take encouragement from disappointments, if they are keen enough to remind us of intentions we have not yet put to the test of action? Would not every goal attained be a disappointment, if we could not leave it behind in our pursuit of the next one? This conversion of failure into success is a psychological phenomenon more honestly heartening than a squad of back-patters. Thoreau, reading a page from Nature, offers an intriguing illustration: "If I wished to see a mountain or other scenery under the most favorable auspices, I would go to it in foul weather, so as to be there when it cleared up; we are then in the most suitable mood, and nature is most fresh and inspiring. There is no serenity so fair as that which is just established in a tearful eye." We may often have the sense—while temporarily immobilized by a misfortune—that a curiously unaffected self has come out to watch the storm clear away certain "clouds of

unknowing" and leave us with a fairer aspect, stronger outlines, and a surer grace.

Occasionally—and perhaps oftener—we catch a glimpse of a fellow "mountain" undergoing a dark deluge. Are we naturalist enough to expect a new serenity, afterward, or do we look on with morbid fascination, as absorbed as he himself may be with the present darkness? Does the tearful eye evoke our pity, and nothing else? Do we pity the weeping, and not the waste of the weeping? Have we forgotten that the rain which runs off the surface of the ground has fallen in vain at that spot, and will not serve the coming harvest? We should know from firsthand experience that tears falling outside are the *lost* portions of a universal solvent—the solvent that comes to soften the hard crust on the ground of the heart, and waken the seeds there lying dormant.

The heart knows that bitterness is washed away not by tears but by mercy, the "gentle rain." To taste bitterness is to renounce, by ever so little, the things that bring bitterness *to others*. To face sorrow is to resolve that we shall let in the sunlight upon other lives. Only so will our own blinds be rolled up. We allow both joy and sadness to "run off" in tears that blur our vision. If we would have harvest from both, we must receive each as the due fruition of crops we ourselves planted—and then set out new fields with more intelligent husbandry.

Has it occurred to us that serenity is to be established not during the lull in the storm, but as soon as possible after the storm has broken, so that we may not miss the play of forces? For the naturalist, a display of the power of the elements is marvelous, though he be drenched to the skin. Are we to be less interested in the other kind of tempest human beings must weather?