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PSYCHIC AND SPIRITUAL REALITIES

RECENT MANAS articles dealing with the meaning of psychic phenomena and with the possibility of "spiritual forces" have brought from two subscribers letters which ought to be shared, at least in part. The first of these correspondents is concerned with the danger of seeming to allow the case for spiritual reality to rest upon the evidence for psychic phenomena. The "psychic," he feels, is a slender reed, so far as "proof" of the spiritual is concerned. He writes:

> If you base your consideration of the existence and significance of spiritual reality upon the question of the reality of "psychic phenomena," then I am very much afraid that you may well lose the battle, not because you are in the wrong, but because you have unnecessarily gambled your case upon a most unwise and disadvantageously chosen crux point. . . . the reality and importance of spiritual factors in human existence need not at all hinge on the existence or non-existence of "psychic phenomena."

We can hardly quarrel with the suggestion of this reader. Actually, our most recent article on the subject (Psychic Possibilities, MANAS, Oct. 17), carefully pointed out some of the limitations of "psychic" evidence of unseen forces, while noting its implications.

The question, however, needs further discussion. How, for example, ought "psychic" to be defined, and what is the proper sphere of "psychic" happenings, as contrasted with the "spiritual"? According to a metaphysical scheme useful for the purpose of such definitions—the Leibnizian theory of the monads—*spirit* is consciousness, the substratum of all existence and the subjective identity behind all intelligence. Spiritual entities or beings, then, are centers of consciousness. Individual centres of consciousness, such as men, are moral beings because capable of conceiving relationships, reflecting upon them, instituting them, and changing them. Further, by definition or hypothesis, individual moral selves, being essentially of the stuff of consciousness or spirit, are not dependent for their reality upon "matter," although action or behavior in the material world naturally involves connection with material forms, such as bodies. The "spiritual," according to this view, is not a mere function or secretion of the "material," but an independent reality, and therefore demands some consideration for ideas of immortality, of transcendent destiny, and of faculties and powers which are more than expression of the so-called "natural forces" of the world of the senses. Conceivably, the highest spiritual power is the power to create—that is, to originate through conscious choice. Connected with this power would be the power to know, to imagine, to remember, and to come to conclusions concerning good and evil. We do not propose the independent activity of these powers without any relation to "substance" of any sort, but simply that the word "spiritual," to have any real significance, cannot be applied to qualities, capacities, or beings that are thought of as simple derivatives of what our scientists denominate "matter" and the "material forces of nature." In short, Spirit, as we have defined it, cannot be assimilated to the particular set of abstractions about the nature of things which supplies the conventional scientific vocabulary with its major symbols of "reality."

The term "psychic" covers the whole gamut of phenomenal experience extending from the spiritual to the physical. A spiritual intelligence, that is, may have psychic faculties or powers whose activity, so far as human beings are concerned, is usually expressed through physical channels. When these faculties act independently of the body, we term their action "psychic phenomena," including all the familiar "psychic" manifestations, such as telepathy, clairvoyance, clairaudience, prophecy, apportation, and the like.

These categories have been proposed rather definitely, as the basis for discussion of the question raised by our correspondent. This form of analysis is neither novel nor original, but may be found, either explicit or implied, in the works of the Neoplatonists, such as Plotinus or Proclus, in certain branches of Oriental philosophy, and in the writings of some theosophists. We have used it because it seems to provide a maximum of conceptual clarity in dealing with such abstract representations of the factors of existence as "spirit," the "psychic," and "soul" or "mind."

Moving, then, to the point of our correspondent's letter, we have the problem or question of the relation of the psychic to the spiritual. It is possible, we suppose, to consider psychic phenomena without any reference to spiritual possibilities. It is certainly possible for there to be a psychic kind of materialism. In Spiritualism, for example, there is the obvious materialism of resting the claim of immortality upon testimony and evidence which is so preponderantly trivial as to strip all essential dignity from the philosophical conception of an enduring soul. Why would a "spirit," supposing it to be immortal, seek out the gross, uninspiring, and often vulgar atmosphere of the seance for its habitat? Whatever else happens at the seance, the common moral and intellectual level of the "communications" is such as to convince intelligent inquirers that the "souls" to be found there are rather sub-human than superhuman, and certainly not worthy of an eternal life. As C. E. M. Joad laconically observed after a long course of psychic investigations, "Even if ghosts have souls, they certainly have no brains." This is not to suggest that such psychic investigations have produced nothing to marvel at, but only that the marvels are the exception rather than the rule, and that they are usually surrounded by special circumstances which themselves require explanation. William James has put of record the conclusions of a seasoned investigator of psychic phenomena, both as to the field of research and the findings which are available. In his essay, "Final Impressions of a Psychic Researcher," he wrote:

> "Psychics" form indeed a special branch of education, in which experts are only gradually becoming developed. The phenomena are as massive and widespread as is anything in Nature, and the study of them is as tedious, repellent and undignified. To reject it for its unromantic character is like rejecting bacteriology because *penicillium glaucum* grows on horse-dung and *bacterium termo* lives in putrefaction. Scientific men have long ago ceased to think of the dignity of the materials they work in. When imposture has been checked off as far as possible, when chance coincidence has been allowed for, when opportunities for normal knowledge on the part of the subject have been noted, and skill in "fishing" and following clues unwittingly furnished by the voice or face of the bystanders have been counted in, those who have the fullest acquaintance with the phenomena admit that in good mediums there is a *residuum of knowledge displayed* that can only be supernormal: the medium taps some source of information not open to ordinary people.

There are far better ways, we think, of finding out about psychic phenomena than by going to mediums, yet the record of such researches is public and might as well be noted. Also of record are such reports as J. W. Dunne's *Experiment with Time*, in which the author sets forth elaborate methods of verifying prophetic dreams. In any event, there is sufficient evidence already available to justify as a working postulate the idea of a psychic world of forces, laws and phenomena.

One other thing that may be said of this "psychic world," from the evidence at hand, is that it seems to be only a more subtle universe of matter—at any rate, psychic phenomena are quite as amoral in intrinsic character as physical phenomena. What, then, are their importance? Simply that psychic phenomena show that in this inner world of relative reality, the basic elements or factors of experience, such as time, space, matter, energy, and the perception of them, work differently from the way they work in the physical universe. What is final or impossible, physically speaking, is not final or impossible psychically speaking.

The psychic world is nevertheless a world of images, of morally neutral forces and phenomena. In contrast, the values or factors of spiritual life are essentially formless, being represented, in our vocabulary of ideas, by such abstractions as motives, aspirations, purposes, and ethical convictions. Weak indeed would be the faith of man in his spiritual nature which trusted to "psychic phenomena" for confirmation of hopes in this direction. It is simply, as we see it, that the psychic represents an important band of inner experience within the entire range or gamut of life's possibilities. Psychic realities are a part of the whole—without their recognition, it is possible, in fact, easy, to write off all aspects of the super-physical as speculative nonsense, and to claim that so-called "spiritual" ideas are mere poesy, hopeful illusions of the tender-minded. The psychic, then, is a foil for meeting and parrying the grosser sorts of materialism, effective simply because there is a measure of "objectivity" or "materiality" in psychic phenomena.

Obviously, the question of what the "spiritual" is will still remain, but some of the objections to taking this question seriously—the objections founded upon the formulas of vulgar materialism—will have been cleared away. With these amplifications, then, of previous discussions of "psychic possibilities," we can print with hearty agreement the final comment of our first correspondent:

> We must accept from human experience all that presents itself as phenomena of this strange thing called existence, and surely this must include non-material considerations as well as material. I should hope, however, that "psychic phenomena" would be viewed as only one possible avenue to an understanding of the non-material aspects of life, and that we should energetically seek out other expressions of spiritual reality, whether they evidence themselves in the temple, in the seance, in literature, in children, in human feeling—anywhere and everywhere in the grand laboratory of human experience.

Our second correspondent writes as follows:

> In an article on spiritual forces, you make the statement that acceptance of these forces would cause an alteration in the methods and tenets of science. Speaking as a practicing chemist, this is just not so. In any well-established science, such as physics and chemistry, the foundations rest not upon any theories or axioms but upon solid fact. The theories of which so much is made do not tell us anything about how nature operates but only how best we can classify those operations with respect to the peculiar mentality of the human being so as to make accurate predictions. If "supernatural forces" have been significant in our experiments, they are taken into account in the present theories or else the theories would not work. The great objection to assuming such forces is that no one seems to know how to manipulate or codify such forces and so their predictability is nil I wish you would make this distinction between the actual science, which is solid as a rock, and those who wish to deify the present scientific theories and say we do or can *know* everything, who are on very shaky ground indeed. A very superficial knowledge of quantum mechanics will demonstrate clearly that the latter is far from being a basic assumption of the physical sciences. The above does not apply to the new sciences (if they can be called such) such as psychology and sociology, where the spiritual forces may well, as near as I can see, have as much validity and manipulatability as the ones now assumed.

This letter is welcomed as insisting upon clarity in a field where clarity is both uncommon and difficult. Unquestionably, clear distinctions should be made between the sciences in relation to this question. Precisely, then, the play of "spiritual factors," which we prefer not to term "supernatural," in the field of psychology is rather substantially suggested, it seems to us, in the problems confronting those who would explain human character entirely on the basis of the twin causes of heredity and environment. The anomalies and contradictions attending such efforts, together with our proposal of a *third* factor of explanation—"a unitary soul-intelligence in every human being"—were discussed at some length in the leading article in MANAS for Oct. 3. As our correspondent concedes the possible activity of spiritual factors in the fields studied by psychologists and sociologists, our primary

interest, here, lies in other branches of science. In biology, for example, there are crucial considerations to be faced, for biology includes the problems of Evolution and the associated mysteries of morphogenesis and all manner of growth-processes.

What we said, actually, in the article, "Psychic Possibilities," was that "should psychic causes be a reality, . . . it seems reasonable to propose that the assumptions of some of the branches, at least, of scientific knowledge would undergo change or modification, . . ." "Psychic causes," it is true, are not "spiritual" factors, according to our definitions, but it is conceivable that primary spiritual causation may operate through psychic agencies, just as the self-conscious intelligence of man is able to use any available instrument which he can make responsive to his will. We do not, however, mean to suggest that "spiritual causes" so set into motion would originate in some anthropomorphic deity, but only that the patterns of action which could be called "spiritual" in a broad, teleological sense, might require some sort of psychic medium of transmission in order to be effective at the level of physical existence.

In biology, the problem of a form almost cries out for a "psychic factor" for its solution. As the well-known morphologist, Prof. Edmond W. Sinnott, has put it: "The fundamental paradox is that protoplasm, itself liquid, formless and flowing, inevitably builds those formed and coordinated structures of cell, organ and body in which it is housed." *Why?* And *how?* Every mechanistic hypothesis to explain the development of organic form has either broken down or was inapplicable in the first place. Prof. Edmond Wilson, long the dean of American cytologists, years ago sensed the need of "the assumption of a 'metastructure' in protoplasm that lies beyond the present limits of microscopical vision." He notes that both the chemist and the physicist have been obliged to make analogous assumptions. (*The Cell in Development and Heredity,* 1925, p. 78.) Chemical theories of the elaboration of form are plainly inadequate. Bertalanffy has pointed out that the chemically homogeneous mushroom "reaches an organization endlessly complicated in form," and observes: "There is no escaping from the fact that embryonic *Anlagen* are more than chemical compounds. . . . Development cannot be interpreted as though it were only a phenomenon of colloidal chemistry."

A study of the alga, *Valonia* (*Annual Review of Biochemistry,* VIII, 128), reveals further mysteries of form. The Valonia cell is built of celulose chains which fall into two distinct sets, one comprising meridians to the cell—a prolate spheroid—the other forming something like logarithmic spirals closing down on the poles. The angle between the two sets of lines is constant. The cell wall of the *Valonia* consists of thin laminae, and the chain direction alternates from one lamina to the next. The mystery, according to the observer, W. T. Astbury,

> is that the chain directions should be preserved so well, not in adjacent, but in alternate layers, all the way through the cell wall. We have no satisfying explanation as yet of this early, though striking enough, achievement in molecular architecture, but the mechanism can hardly involve orientation by deposition on celulose chains already laid down, as was once thought. Some factor internal to the celulose wall is indicated, some directional rhythm in the protoplasmic lining that synthesizes the celulose. Valonia is one of the lowliest of living creatures, and we have learnt much about its metabolism and wall structure—but we know nothing, really.

Such evidence of the need for additional factors of explanation in morphology are virtually inexhaustible. There is the work which has demonstrated the decisively influential character of electrical polarity in cells—the fact that the location of the contents of the cell, nucleus, golgi bodies, etc., are determined by the electrical field rather than by physical or chemical relationships; there are the studies of Dr. Harvey of Princeton, showing that an embryo will grow to the blastula stage without any nucleus or chromosomes at all; there are the remarkable findings of Spemann, Schotté, Pratt, and others, in relation to the

"organizers" or centers of organic memory, making Pratt remark, of a chick embryo: "Development of the forebrain and eyes seems to be the expression of an already existing but invisible structural organization." Finally, along these lines, there are the discoveries of Drs. Burr, Lane, and Nims of Yale, made with the vacuum-tube microvoltmeter, leading them to declare: "The simplest assumption with which to explain all the evidence so far gathered is that of the existence in the living organism of an electro-dynamic field." But this "electro-dynamic field" is apparently *intelligent.* As one writer has put it:

> This electric field, having its own pattern, fashions all the protoplasmic clay of life that comes within its sphere of influence after its image, thus personifying itself in the living flesh as the sculptor personifies his idea in stone. . . . The Yale scientists have succeeded in revealing the master architect at work, and even to catch the first outlines of his configuration in space, showing him to be in absolute control of the organism as a whole and of its parts, and at all times correlating the workings of the parts with the whole.

With regard to other sciences, we confess a paucity of material, unless the regulated movement of the planets—in fact, the entire theological argument from design—can be offered in evidence: Not in behalf of a personal creator, but to suggest, as Newton himself supposed, that the physical universe lives and moves within a vast sensorium of consciousness. "It is inconceivable," he wrote in the Scholium of his *Principia,* "that inanimate brute matter should, without the mediation of something else which is not material, operate upon and affect other matter, as it must do if gravitation, in the sense of Epicurus, be essential and inherent in it. . . . Gravity must be caused by an agent acting constantly according to certain laws; but whether this agent be material or immaterial I have left to the consideration of my readers." And primary causes, he elsewhere added, are certainly *not mechanical.*

It is entirely conceivable that physical nature behaves according to some underlying purposive principle—as though the universe were saying, "Let me bring about the unfolding of intelligence"—and that the physical laws with which the empirical sciences concern themselves represent the apparently mechanical modes of the operation of this cosmic intelligence on a universal scale. It is certain, too, that some such transition from science to philosophy is necessary for all those who wish to regard their lives as having a larger meaning as part of the incalculably vast, natural whole.

Letter from
ENGLAND

LONDON.—Even though scientists may be considered all too human, it is still largely true that the tremendous advance made by science in the last 500 years has frequently led to claims that nothing less than the whole of our common experience is their field of knowledge. The charge that scientists are indifferent to the moral results of their discoveries or their application is sometimes met by the assertion that science has traced the "natural history" of ethical propositions. As a consequence, the interests of the individual are held to depend on the nature of the society in which he lives: his moral judgments are said to vary accordingly. "Culture patterns," we are told, determine the essential nature of morality, and neither biology nor physiology has found any trace of an organ that secretes the knowledge of good and evil! Why, then, it is asked, should science have regard for philanthropic or humane considerations? Excellent logic, perhaps; but what if science no longer means *facts?* Sir Arthur Eddington wrote in *The Nature of the Physical World:*

> Nowadays, whenever enthusiasts meet together to discuss theoretical physics, the talk sooner or later turns in a certain direction. You leave them conversing on their special problems or the latest discoveries; but return after an hour and it is any odds that they will have reached an all-engrossing topic—the desperate state of their ignorance.

Two world wars have created a challenge to the moral isolationism and neutrality which underlie so many of the social assumptions of twentieth-century science. "The desperate state of their ignorance" does not furnish a proper foundation for the claim of infallibility, or qualify scientists to pronounce a species of excommunication against a public opinion which may assert its right to introduce causative factors of an ethical nature into scientific discussions. Hence it is that we may be allowed to question the right of science to extend vivisection to the living human organism (however logical it may be if we go on permitting animal vivisection) in the interests of war preparations. Yet, much of the training for modern warfare comes within this category. Last year the London *Times* carried an account of research into stress and strain on air pilots in connection with high speed flying. The dangers to fliers are clearly set forth, as well as the special suits, etc., devised to minimize these dangers. It is pointed out that at 30,000 feet, a seated man without an oxygen breathing apparatus will probably be unconscious in two and a half minutes, and dead in fifteen; at 40,000 feet, he will be unconscious in thirty seconds and dead in about five minutes. "The condition caused by lack of oxygen is called anoxia. It is insidious, and its effects are sometimes akin to those of alcoholism." Because a pressurized cabin may be punctured in combat, the pilot has to wear a pressure waistcoat to supply him with oxygen and as a counter-pressure to chest and abdomen to help him to breathe. There is no need to repeat here what is known of the danger of black-outs, caused by acceleration and deceleration, measured in terms of the force of 1g (the rotation of the earth round its axis at about 1,000 miles an hour), but mention may be made of an experiment carried out at Khartoum last year. On one occasion, with an external temperature of 110° F. on the ground, a man's skin temperature went up 7° F. as soon as he entered a Vampire aircraft. "Ten minutes of such hot-house conditions in the cockpit make a pilot restless to get into the air, and physically and psychologically dangerous to himself."

Medical science, indeed, both in its destructive and preventive aspects, has become an essential ingredient in the effort to make modern methods of mass destruction inimical to enemy and protective of attack.

Two other items of news are worth cogitating against the background of these new marvels. A 15-year old boy who was stated to have taken birds from the London Zoo because he thought it was unkind to keep animals caged, has been placed on probation for two years on the condition that he lived in a hostel. The boy had placed most of the birds in the lake in one of the London parks. In the 1950 annual report of the Prison Commissioners, the senior chaplain reported that increasing numbers of younger prisoners (under 35 years of age) presented a more serious challenge than the older men and the offender of past years. Many of these younger people, he said, are "without moral sense."

The conclusion seems to be obvious. An instinct of compassion is thought to be worthy of legal disapprobation. And, while mass murder is being made "safe" for the involuntary participants, our educational, theological, and social systems are proving their incompetence to furnish the necessary basis for the emergence of the self-disciplined free man.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
THE MAKING OF CULTURE

WHILE the compilers of vital statistics tell us that the Indians, those "vanishing Americans," are not vanishing at all, but that certain tribes, notably the Navahos, and perhaps some others, are increasing in number each year, there is nevertheless an aspect of Indian life which is inevitably passing—the moral aspect, which was once untouched and unaffected by the white man's civilization. We doubt, for example, if it would be possible for any Indian of the present day to write a book like *The Soul of the Indian* (Houghton, Mifflin, I911), by Charles Alexander Eastman (Ohiyesa, of the Dakota tribe), which is an attempt to describe "the religious life of the typical American Indian as it was before he knew the white man." Ohiyesa wrote the book, as he explains, from his personal experience of "childhood teaching and ancestral ideals." It seems appropriate to call attention to *The Soul of the Indian* at this time because of the rather impressive wave of books and motion pictures sympathetic to the Indians that have lately appeared. It bears internal evidence of authenticity and soon conveys to the reader the sense of dignity which is often attributed to the Indians without being very much understood.

The question of why the Indians were not better able to withstand the impact of white civilization is not gone into; perhaps it is ungracious even to raise the question, in view of the extraordinary struggle of the Indians to do just that, and the overwhelming odds which confronted them. Perhaps we can say, quite simply, that the individualism and acquisitiveness of the West were so alien to their nature that they felt unable to accommodate themselves to these tendencies without self-destruction. As Mr. Eastman puts it:

> It is simple truth that the Indian did not, so long as his native philosophy held sway over his mind, either envy or desire to imitate the splendid achievements of the white man. In his own thought, he rose superior to them! He scorned them, even as a lofty spirit absorbed in its stern task rejects the soft beds, the luxurious food, the pleasure-worshipping dalliance of a rich neighbor. It was clear to him that virtue and happiness are independent of these things, if not incompatible with them.

Oblivious do-gooders among the white men have maintained that the Indians should be "freed" of their connection with the land and enabled to take part in the competitive struggle, along with other citizens o£ the United States. Thus the Indian is invited to adopt the traditional European-American concept of "security" and "success." But, as Eastman says:

> It was our belief that the love of possessions is a weakness to be overcome. Its appeal is to the material part, and if allowed its way it will in time disturb the spiritual balance of the man. Therefore the child must early learn the beauty of generosity. He is taught to give what he prizes most, and that he may taste the happiness of giving, he is made at an early age the family almoner. If a child is inclined to be grasping, or to cling to any of his little possessions, legends are related to him, telling of the contempt and disgrace falling upon the unregenerate and mean man.
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> Public giving is a part of every important ceremony. It properly belongs to the celebration of birth, marriage, and death, and is observed whenever it is desired to do special honor to any person or event. Upon such occasions it is common to give to the point of utter impoverishment. The Indian in all his simplicity literally gives away all that he has, to relatives, to guests of another tribe or clan, but above all to the poor and the aged, from whom he can hope for no return. Finally, the gift to the "Great Mystery," the religious offering, may be of little value in itself, but to the giver's own thought it should carry the meaning and reward of true sacrifice.

The Indian legends of creation, their symbolic rites and ceremonies, their custom of adopting an animal "totem" to represent their feeling of kinship with the rest of nature—all these things suggest that the origin of the culture of the Indians, whatever it may have been, was attended by extraordinary wisdom. Unlike the Western religious tradition, the Indian traditions have helped the Indians to be self-reliant, disciplined,

and deeply appreciative of the incommensurables of human existence. Turning from the simple and heart-felt account of these qualities by an Indian writer, we find them rather precisely described by a modern sociologist in a recent issue of *Psychiatry*. The writer, Laura Thompson, is speaking of the Hopis, and while the Hopis are exceptional among the Indians, and are pueblo Indians rather than the plains Indians of whom Mr. Eastman speaks, the basic principles involved are not essentially different. Reporting the responses of Hopi children to the Rorschach tests, Miss Thompson says that they show

> . . . a tendency to approach problems in terms of complex, balanced wholes . . . distinguished by their subtlety of perception and their organization of perceptions into clearcut elaborate concepts. The children appear to be more concerned with the intellectual and imaginative aspects of impressions and events than with their emotional content. And there is a definite, finished quality about the children's reactions to the stimulus material. . . .
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> Spontaneous psychic forces are characteristically regulated and toned down by a well-developed, balanced control system which uses both outer and inner devices and internalizes the social code in the form of an individual conscience.

We see here the ingredients of stable moral maturity, in relation to both individual and social situations. Again, one wonders about the roots of this extraordinary culture. We have very little information, really, about the foundation of cultures, which is usually wrapped in supernatural mystery and tales of the descent of gods or the emergence of hero-kings. Plutarch, in his life of Numa Pompilius, describes the methods used by the Sabine leader to "civilize" the pugnacious and stubborn Romans. Briefly, he "began to operate upon them with the sanctions of religion," introducing a variety of ceremonies calculated to humanize their manner of living. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that Numa was a mere opportunist, seeking psychological control over the early Romans. Profound philosophy was obviously behind the devices he employed, and ethical restraints were a noticeable part of practically all the ceremonies.

But with all the wisdom of Numa—or of any of the Philosopher-Kings of antiquity—we should deem it an intolerable imposition if any human being or "board of socio-religious planners" were to attempt to create new institutions for us by such means. Here, perhaps, is illustrated one great difference between the modern West and the ancient world, whether East or West. We have the problem of evolving our own institutions on a rational basis, yet without forgetting the mystical essentials which have been the integrating and idealizing factor in all the truly great civilizations of the past. This is a task on which we have not even made a beginning.

COMMENTARY
THE MODERN MODE

THIS week's Review remarks that religious or symbolic forms such as Numa evolved for the Romans would not be appreciated by the people of our time—that they would be regarded as an imposition. This is doubtless true, yet it is also true that our feelings, our hopes, our interests and our ambitions are more or less deliberately manipulated, and with far less elevated purpose than seems to have been behind Numa's design for religion.

If anyone doubts the fact of manipulation, he should study the advertising pages in national magazines—and the editorial content as well, which is often little more than material intended to create an atmosphere which will make the advertising effective. Further studies of manipulation include such books as H. C. Peterson's *Propaganda* for War (University of Oklahoma, 1939), and Barnes' *Genesis of the World War* (Knopf, 1935). We may regard the early Romans as much more gullible than ourselves for entering into the spirit of Numa's program, but if we do, we ought to consider the judgment of the sociologists about ourselves, for the sociologists have given the kind of study to societies that Plutarch gave to individuals. Here, for example, is what John Collier told a seminar on applied Anthropology at Cornell University last December:

. . . we must face the facts. In our western Industrial-political world it is the manipulative, exploitative and imposed-purpose norm or mode which has been principally in the saddle both as concept and as practice for the two or three centuries past. At our own power pole and at the other power pole—I mean the Soviet—it is in the saddle now. The huge technological sweep, the organizations for the engineering of consent, the panic of speed of change, the looming Third World War, add up to a situation wherein the way of commanding, pressuring, manipulating, imposed-patterning, and managerial technic, appears to many to be the only practicable way. Yet as social scienfists, we know that it is not the practicable way but the fatal way. . . . True, we are a part of our culture and far, far the easier way would be to partake of the manipulative and exploitative vice, duplicated and, as yet, exceeded, at the opposing power pole, which threatens to become the final and planetary crime. But we are people to whom it has been given, through science, to know what is the hopeful way and what is the way foredoomed. Our moral obligation surely is heavy and critical and imperious—with the imperiousness which men do not lay on one another, but on that intellectual and moral conscience within, which as George Gaylord Simpson gravely lays down is the most essential endowment that we have that makes us and keeps us men.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

As the title of this column implies, we have a special interest in all attempts to bridge the gaps in understanding between the adult and child worlds. It seems quite reasonable to suppose that this world has "lost its way" in precisely those psychological areas which must be crossed during the transition between youth and adulthood. *Somewhere* in this transition, useful, idealistic enthusiasm characteristically gives way to cynicism. *Somewhere,* free thought gives way to those convenient prejudices which fit us for secure membership and status in one or another partisan group. *Somewhere* along the way, wonderment about the simplest and most profound of metaphysical or religious issues gives way to preoccupation with sin or sensualism. Somewhere, anxiety replaces ebullience, and somewhere personal dislikes and aversions grow into hatreds. Last, but not least, somewhere the inborn capacity for honesty, which most normal children exhibit except during "the age of fantasy," gives way to a tacit policy of expedient dishonesty.

When the sympathetic psychologist looks at the basically sane child in relation to an obviously insane society, he calls us to account for our own inexcusable perpetuation of emotional confusion. Such psychologists, too, usually occupy front-line positions in the war against war, and in the wars against racial and class prejudices.

There is another sort of contribution to understanding of the problem of "moral child and immoral society"—the contribution made occasionally by those youths who undertake to express themselves in writing. Our review of *Adults are People* gave an unusual example of the clarity that may sometimes come from the actual presentation of a child's-eye view of the adult world. Yet, obviously, we cannot judge the native perceptiveness of children from a few youngsters who have precocious writing abilities. Fortunately, there are adult writers who have retained sympathy and respect for the simple profundity of insight they shared with their fellows in their own teens. J. D. Salinger is one such adult, and we wish to call attention to his Book-of-the-Month selection, *The Catcher in the Rye.* Mr. Salinger worked for ten years on this tragi-comic portrayal of a sixteen-year-old's attitudes and problems. During this time he wrote about children in various stories for *The New Yorker.*

"Holden Caulfield" is a boy who cannot come to terms with the sort of life lived at an exclusive Pennsylvania prep school. He cannot come to terms with its corrupt semi-adult values, primarily because he does not want to—because he is too honest and independent. As inveterate heretic and rebel, he contracts his own special phobia, a deep repugnance for all "phoniness." The school's pretense to "build manhood" by initiation into the cruel stupidities of custom that inhere in the world of well-to-do adults arouses bitter disgust in him.

In one of his phantasies, Holden seeks a way to live which will leave him free from all that he cannot stomach in society. His imaginative proposal to himself is to claim that he is a deaf-mute, and then seek employment in some distant locality. Holden has no ambition in the worldly sense. Though nominally belonging to the "upper class," a service station job is all he asks:

> They'd let me put gas and oil in their stupid cars, and they'd pay me a salary and all for it, and I'd build me a little cabin somewhere with the dough I made and live there for the rest of my life. I'd build it right near the woods, but not right in them, because I'd want it to be sunny as hell all the time. I'd cook all my own food, and later on, if I wanted to get married or something, I'd meet this beautiful girl that was also a deaf-mute and we'd get married. She'd come and live in my cabin with me, and if she wanted to say anything to me, she'd have to write it on a goddam piece of paper, like everybody else. If we had any children, we'd hide them somewhere. We could buy them a lot of books and teach them how to read and write by ourselves.
>
> What I'd do, I'd let old Phoebe come out and visit me in the summertime and on Christmas

> vacation and Easter vacation. And I'd let D.B. come out and visit me for a while if he wanted a nice, quiet place for his writing, but he couldn't write any movies in my cabin, only stories and books. I'd have this rule that nobody could do anything phony when they visited me. If anybody tried to do anything phony, they couldn't stay.

One of the finest examples of Mr. Salinger's insight comes to us when Holden discusses criteria for the evaluation of literature. Apart from possible differences of opinion in respect to particular authors, can we not agree that the following reflections penetrate more deeply into the *worthwhileness* of books than many of the erudite discussions of books by literary experts?

> I read a lot of classical books, like *The Return of the Native* and all, and I like them, and I read a lot of war books and mysteries and all, but they don't knock me out too much. What really knocks me out is a book that, when you're all done reading it, you wish the author that wrote it was a terrific friend of yours and you could call him up on the phone whenever you felt like it. That doesn't happen much, though. I wouldn't mind calling this Isak Dinesen up. And Ring Lardner, except that D.B. told me he's dead. You take that book *Of Human Bondage,* by Somerset Maugham, though. I read it last summer. It's a pretty good book and all, but I wouldn't want to call Somerset Maugham up. I don't know. He just isn't the kind of a guy I'd want to call up, that's all. I'd rather call old Thomas Hardy up.

We have learned from experience that considerable indignation may result from commendation of ideas presented in a work of fiction, especially if the novel is full of crude language and if readers consider themselves insufficiently warned about it. So it will be expedient to give notice that *The Catcher in the Rye is* a sort of junior version of *From Here to Eternity,* scaled down appropriately to the much more innocuous profanity of teenagers like Holden. We feel that it is not our province to judge whether or not a book with similar intent could have been written at a different language level. Rather, let us simply note in passing that there is sincerity in this effort towards psychological enlightenment, that it is one of the few of its kind, and that if we are going to read any Book-of-the-Month selections, we could do much worse than pick this one. "Holden Caulfield" is one of those comparatively rare fictional characters who consistently encourage the faith that youths, and men, can be more than their cynicisms.

FRONTIERS

The Philosophic Temper

FROM time to time it seems necessary to brave the danger of being suspected, along with many thousands of others who also shouldn't be, of being "friendly" to communism. This charge against MANAS has been made more than once, and would be completely incredible except for the fact that it *has* put in an occasional appearance.

We suppose that tinder for this unwelcome fire is supplied by our efforts to reduce, if by only a fraction, the tendency towards hate and war-hysteria, by pointing out that Russians are also human beings, that their crimes may not occupy all of their time, and that communism as a world-movement of belligerent anti-capitalism is a quite understandable phenomenon. But the incredible part of MANAS being called "communist" is that we have, again and again, rejected, generally and in *each one of our departments*, the whole materialist interpretation of history, upon which not only communism but also most socialist thinking is based. We have definitely been "against" Communism as a doctrine; we have also explained why we are against it—we conceive its fundamental assumptions to be fundamentally untrue.

But the Russians are human beings, and as human beings, they have virtues, just as we, also being humans, have vices. A man who seeks to possess a philosophic temper will often find it advisable to look for the *best* he can see in those who do not presently share his own convictions. To this extent the Quakers are philosophers, and now, as in every crisis of war possibility, we may be glad that the Quakers are among us. Not long ago the *Manchester Guardian* reported the experiences of a Quaker Mission to Moscow. Readers of the *Guardian* are thereby afforded an objective account of the findings of men who profess no special political thesis.

This report by Frank Edmead, a participant in the mission, brings to light the fact that there are actually many similarities of approach to community problems between Russian and English methods. The collective farms visited by the mission were neither unbearable tyrannies nor complete successes. The Russian intellectual biases were similar in nature, if opposite in content, to the biases of anti-collective societies. A few sentences give the spirit of the *Guardian* series, indicating why we may hope they are widely read:

> It must early have been clear to our hosts, the Soviet Peace Committee, that our differences of approach to the creation of a more peaceful world were so important that they were not likely to be bridged in the fortnight of our stay. Yet in all our discussions with them and others we were listened to not merely with tolerance but with expressions of positive goodwill. There were times when we seemed to be making no contact with each other—when they seemed to us (as no doubt we seemed to them) impregnably barricaded in a wall of rigid belief. How were we to break down their insistence that there was no hostile propaganda in the Soviet press when *Crocodile* was there for all—even those who could not read *Pravda* or Izvestia—to see? How were they to explain our apparent (it was by no means real) indifference to the publication in Western newspapers and magazines of speeches advocating the bombing of Moscow and the strategic maps, all covered with broad black arrows, showing how it could be done?
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> It is too early yet to assess the value of these discussions; the delegation will be reporting to the Meeting for Sufferings (the executive committee of the Society of Friends) in September. But all the seven Friends who went will agree that one of their main aims—to increase their own understanding of the Soviet Union, its people, and its policies—was fulfilled far beyond their expectation. We think too that those Russians whom we met may have a truer picture of British opinion than their press gives them.
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> Like other delegations we had a very full programme of visits to Soviet institutions of various kinds. Everything we asked to see—including a prison—we did see.

A further illustration of the unique perspectives on Russia which the "philosophic temper" may afford is provided by a report in the August *Progressive* of an interview with India's Ambassador to Russia, Dr. Sarvepalli

Radhakrishnan. Dr. Radhakrishnan is a philosopher, holding one of the world's highest reputations as an author and lecturer in that field. For many years he served as head of the Department of Eastern Religion and Philosophy in Oxford University. Dr. Radhakrishnan is certainly no communist, but neither is he looking at Communists as inevitable and eternal enemies. Lionel Durand, foreign editor of *Paris Presse*, put many questions to the Ambassador, one of which follows, accompanied by an answer typical of Dr. Radhakrishnan's attitude and opinions:

> Q. What would you say the general feeling of the Russian people is toward the world at large?
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> A. At the present moment the Russians are conscious of some kind of danger they feel is threatening them from the outside. They had a civil war in the beginning and outside intervention. After that they had Hitler's attempt to destroy them. Now they feel suspicious toward the Western world. That fear may be imaginary, but it is real in the hearts of the Russian people. Until you remove that fear it will not be possible for us to come to terms with their way of life. There is today the police side of the Russian State, there is also the welfare side. We condemn one and appreciate the other. But if you want to suppress the police side, they must get rid of the fear of external intervention. They must be satisfied in their desire for security.

The last question and answer we now reproduce sounds so good we shall certainly hope there is much of truth in it:

> Q. If the conditions for better understanding could be achieved, would you say there could be a coexistence of the two systems?
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> A. I am convinced that there will be adaptations in both systems. Life is something ever growing. Each form of government will change and the Russian form also will change. It has never been very steady. In the first outburst of enthusiasm, during the revolution, the Russians introduced many ideals which they have gradually thrown away. Through the mutual adaptation process, they now must be able to throw away what are regarded as bad features of the Soviet regime just as there are, in the Western world, the injustice and iniquities of what we call unfettered free enterprise. After all, we must recognize that if there is oppression and political domination in Russia, they exist too in South Africa—which is considered a democracy—where two million people are governing seven million people, segregating them, and depriving them of their rights. You see, the attraction of Communism is due not to the good points of Communism, but to the deficiencies of democracy.

The truth of this observation is obvious enough, if only from the perspective we have suggested by way of introduction. A world more widely populated with men who prove their claim to being philosophers by their impartial attitude will be a saner and a happier world.