

## SCIENTIFIC INVITATION

INSECURITIES OF THE SPIRIT (MANAS for December 14, 1955) is a wrestling with a logical demon that arises out of the seeming inadequacies of "mechanistic science" on the one hand, and out of the dangers of unrealistic extravaganzas of "unrestrained religious imagination," its apparent alternative. Neither way seems to offer a satisfactory approach to the whole reality or the truth of life. And the two cannot be taken together, for the one denies the other. While MANAS is always wrestling with some pretty important problems, this one seems to lie very close to the root of the present crisis of civilization.

For many of us, as for Einstein, the greatest miracle is that the universe exhibits an orderliness and yields to comprehension by the human mind. Is this not deep religious experience—to discover the sanity, the reasonableness, of nature? We do not want to believe that God throws dice. The hope and faith expressed by this great scientist is that creation is orderly. And is not this lawfulness of Nature—the source of all things—identical with the convictions of those early voices of our tradition, in the promise of the rainbow after the great flood: "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease"?

Perhaps the most significant element of our civilization is this discovery that the gods are not many and fickle, but that there is only one God or Law, orderly, wholly reliable and dependable, the same forever. By means of knowledge of this Law, men can know what to do to have life more abundant. When applied to problems of human conduct, the promised rewards for righteousness and the promised destruction of all that is wicked are promises valid forever, not subject to the changing whims of chance or fickle will.

Are not the "mechanical" laws discovered by science in the last few centuries in this same tradition? Are they not discoveries of the invariance

that rests beneath the transiencies of experience? It is true, of course, that there has not yet arisen a recognized school of modern prophets to show how these laws relate man's moral and personal behavior to his fate. But is it the fault of the laws of invariance that this has not been done? Perhaps we should look again at the idea of scientific law before throwing it out as contrary to religion, morality, and human progress.

But it will be at once objected, first, that the mechanistic picture of the world leaves no room for God; and, second, that the mechanistic picture has itself been undermined by recent developments and is therefore no guide to truth and reality.

Let us take the first objection first. Is it true that the mechanistic picture leaves no room for God? This depends on what is meant by God. If God means the origin of all, then there is no conflict with the mechanistic view. In that case, God is the totality of the mechanism. If one wishes to insist that God is not a machine, but is arbitrary, fickle, and unpredictable, as some human wills seem to be, then, of course, such a God cannot exist in the mechanistic view. But one can ask here: what do you want the word God to mean? Do you want God to be a word that means some imaginary quality of the universe or its real character, that which in fact does bring about what is? If you prefer the latter, and if you believe the phenomena of the world do operate according to invariant laws, then there need be no conflict between God and the mechanistic world view.

If it is still objected that this is not the God that we were told about of old, the answer must be that indeed it is not. Was it not the major effort of great religious reformers to show that God indeed was not, as had previously been supposed, like some human potentate who could be propitiated and persuaded to change his mind by sacrifices, but was an eternal principle of truth which man must seek and obey? Our religious history is one of a continually renewed search for God as Truth. The former gods must be

thrown out insofar as they are not pictures of reality. By this we do not mean to insist that God is a machine; but merely to say that if a machine is the best description of how things come to pass, then God, as the name for the source of what does come to pass, is best conceived of as a machine.

Now let us turn to the second objection: that the mechanistic picture is itself undermined, and therefore no good as a picture of reality. For instance, it is said that modern science has discovered that the basic reality is not matter, after all, but is energy or some non-material field. Therefore the universe is not a material machine or mechanism. This argument has no significance, however, since the relationships among all these entities, seen and unseen, are still relationships of causality. The invisible molecules of the atmosphere are weighed. The relation between the matter that disappears in the sun and is radiated as light is an exact relation that can be expressed in mathematical formulae like those for mechanical phenomena. The new law,  $E = m c^2$ , is just as exact as the older law,  $F = m a$ . While science and mechanism now deal with invisible and physically intangible things, suggesting the content of philosophy and theology, the data of science are still measurable.

A more difficult point to clarify relates to the inherent indeterminacy of physical phenomena when you examine the behavior of the very small. The famous Heisenberg principle of indeterminacy is often cited by people who don't like the mechanistic picture. But what does this principle mean? Does it not simply state that in a certain order of magnitude, all we can do is to make statistical predictions? In terms of the usual concepts of space, time, and mass, we can find no way of exactly predicting phenomena in the realm of the very small. But who is to say that some radically new model or way of picturing these events may not yield more exact solutions? Using some rough parameters, like the number and character of automobiles on the roads and the average character of the drivers thereof, one can predict that a certain number of people will be killed by automobiles in the United States each year, but this approach cannot possibly tell whether your friend, Mr. Jones, will be one of them or not. On the

other hand, we can develop knowledge about Mr. Jones. If we see him at the wheel of a car speeding out of control for the edge of a cliff, we can predict his death with a good deal of certainty. Death can thus be predicted both under statistical laws and under laws that specify an individual event.

Whether we shall ever find a way of describing the nature and behavior of electrons—rather, I should say, of minute phenomena, for electrons are perhaps no more than a statistical resultant of such phenomena—is only for the future to know. In any case, it is the faith of the modern physicist with all his probabilities, as well as of the classical physicist with his apparent certainties, that he can somehow formulate relationships in some mathematical fashion that will allow him to predict. This is of the essence of science, for, as Chapman Cohen says, explanation does involve "the establishment of an equation, in such a way that given  $a$ ,  $b$  and  $c$ ,  $d$  follows."

A third point that must be considered is Ortega's claim that science has "explained" only a limited portion of our experience in terms of this view. One can agree that science's admirable qualities of exactness and certainty of prediction "are contrived by science at the cost of remaining on a plane of secondary problems," but what alternative will Ortega or anyone else offer for the pursuit of knowledge about the real world? What is this "trans-scientific picture of the world," "ruling our lives more effectively than scientific truth?"

Let us note, moreover, that scientific ways of getting knowledge do not deny or eliminate other ways of getting knowledge. It is the scientist who par excellence utilizes the kind of imagination that Ortega refers to as carrying "any eye beholding an arch in ruins" to "complete the missing airy curve," from the archaeologist who reconstructs primitive temples to the zoologist who reconstructs from a few bones an animal whose kind ceased to live on earth a million years ago. Science does not eliminate imagination, but has added a method for verifying the products of imagination, a way of testing the objectivity of a guess. Nor does science do away with the information yielded by the senses; instead, it has extended the senses and has shown us ways to test the validity of seeing, and shown, also, why

seeing is not necessarily a good reason for believing. It has given us criteria for belief even more reliable than our senses. Moreover, such sciences as cultural anthropology and the new linguistics are showing some of the unconscious mechanisms of selection which mold and modify the very language we think in as well as the more specific structures of our beliefs. In short, science has transcended the unconscious mechanisms of culture and individual belief.

Can we truly say with Ortega that science has "turned a deaf ear on the last dramatic questions? Where does the world come from, and whither is it going? Which is the supreme power of the cosmos, what the essential meaning of life?" In the last century particularly, all the creation stories of the various peoples of the world have been fantastically transcended in the time and the space scales. We now have an international and intercultural authority for a tale of incredible detail and fascination that extends creation a millionfold back of 400 B.C. of the Christian tradition or the other recent dates of different traditions. The powers of the cosmos are much more credibly and thoroughly described.

However, what Ortega probably means is that there has not been given in terms of the new science or knowledge any effective account of the meaning of evolution in terms of man's own hopes, in terms of the significance and duties and destiny of man. As a matter of fact, up to the twentieth century the net effect of science has been to undermine the validity of the existing religious traditions; and the sense of values that went with these traditions has consequently been threatened. It is natural that many should conclude that science is dangerously destructive of human values.

What needs to be kept in mind is that the concept of "mechanism" or of relationships among events is not a static one to be understood in terms of an eighteenth-century machine. The point is that the newer concepts are logically of the same nature as the previous ones—concepts that seek to express the at first seemingly disordered events of human experience as orderly functions of laws which are invariant or eternal. So, in this larger sense, we do not find any abandonment of mechanism today in

science.

Because of its effect in undermining the ideological supports of our mores and our religion, science and its rationalism is today often condemned. As the writer of "Insecurities of the Spirit" says: "Orthodoxy suffered as a result, but theology merely retreated to a safer sphere of influence." This safer sphere is one where science is not admitted, or at least not admitted to have relevance for moral or religious matters. The great liberal movements in theology from the Reformation to the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries tried to reconcile religion to science, hoping to mend the fences of orthodoxy which the new science had broken down. But at the present time the rationalistic liberal movement has nearly vanished. Even one of the greatest proponents and elder philosophers of that movement, Henry Nelson Wieman, said at the 1955 Conference on Religion in the Age of Science, that theology has retreated ignominiously before the onslaught of science too long; it must create a ground of its own to stand on that is not assailable by science.

The new orthodoxies go further; some claim science completely irrelevant, and assert ancient doctrines regardless of their logical incompatibility. However, sticking one's head in the sands of ancient doctrines and pretending to stand invisible in the current condition does not seem very sensible. It is like a regression in imagination to an infantile and protected state that one finds in psychoses. On the other hand, one cannot sympathize at all with the apparent alternative, the cynical and narrow hedonism of the vast numbers who have lost the faith of their fathers, and who seek by every shallow opportunism a program of eat, drink and be merry. This is a regression to an even more primitive and untenable position.

Are we then left without recourse? If we reject the relapse to animalism, if we must desert religious traditions which are no longer rationally tenable, and if the scientific world view destroys our spiritual faith by its materialism, what is there left? And if the new physics of intangible stuff is only a pattern of mechanism in new form, and if the scientific study of paranormal psychological phenomena is likewise, insofar as it may be scientific or successful, only an

enlargement of the "mechanistic" process to explain these hitherto little understood processes, is all hope lost?

An obvious way out is that men should open their eyes to the fact that the revelations of science constitute the most reliable body of truth man has ever known, and that his salvation lies not by avoiding but through this very knowledge. What is needed is prophets and theologians to interpret the meaning of the true God, as seen through science, for human destiny. This is what is lacking.

Will the scientists write the spiritual texts for the future? Certainly they have shunned this task in the past. They seem to be as unaware as the humanists of the human values in the scientific picture of the world, although for different reasons. They have tended to accept that common doctrine that science can say nothing about values, a doctrine propounded as vigorously by a scientifically sophisticated Bertrand Russell as by our modern theologians.

But what if this doctrine of the separation of science and values is the great error of our age? Why could not a new and more effective religion grow out of the revelation according to science—a religion that will transform man to a level of civilization that surpasses our present Graeco-Roman-Christian culture even more than the latter has transcended what we now call primitive cultures? We shall have a much better notion of the nature of the source and end of our being, and the laws of its creative process. We shall have a new vision of the nature of man, his destiny, and what it is that is required of him that he shall have life more abundant.

The Conference on Religion in the Age of Science, held for two summers now on Star Island a few miles out in the Atlantic off the boundary of Maine and New Hampshire, is a token of what is already going on. Here scientists of recognized stature in several fields are contributing with theologians to the new development. It is even possible to hazard a few predictions about the new religion, based in part on what has been said in these conferences.

For one thing, it is conceivable that the

lawfulness, the "mechanism," of the universe revealed by science will serve to raise to new heights the concept of the oneness and eternity or invariance of the source and end of our being, establishing in much greater clarity and detail the faith of the great religious seers of the past three thousand years in monotheism. The concept of the eternal being or process may become even less human and more "divine." The importance of seeking and obeying its laws rather than acting on our own first inclinations could achieve a new prominence in the hearts of men. And just as our use of our new knowledge of the laws of genetics and biochemistry has prospered our agriculture far more than did the sacrifices and prayers of our fathers, so may a flowering of our knowledge of the true source of our own being prosper man in all his aspects.

We may predict a clearing up of the confusion that has beset our philosophers and theologians for over two millennia concerning the freedom and responsibility of man in the face of the concept of the complete dominance or control of our maker over us. The process of making choices when examined will be seen to be a part of the "mechanism" of making adaptations within the greater frame of our "predetermined" destiny. We need not fear scientific "mechanism" as in logical opposition and hence a threat to freedom and responsibility.

We predict that the "materialism" of science will be found in no way to conflict with those aspects of our nature which in the past we have called "spiritual." The feeling that we must escape beyond the bounds of scientific materialism and mechanism to find the spiritual will disappear when it is seen what the word spiritual really refers to. It is becoming clear that the common-sense world of the things we touch and see is continuous with all else in our experience, whether we can see it or touch it or not.

Finally, we predict that science is making and will continue to make much clearer the basic oneness of each man with all other men, and, in fact, with the cosmos as a whole, so that the tendency to favor local and temporary interests at the expense of the welfare of the whole will be diminished in favor of those values which favor the lasting realities that

survive the life-span of the individual organism. Just as the paradox of selfishness and unselfishness found release in the ancient concept of the eternal soul that was rewarded, whatever the fate of the individual body, so should this paradox find even surer release in the scientific concepts of what is eternal and essential about man—a scientific concept of the soul, if you will.

In short, the main streams of the sciences—physical, biological, and social—are loaded with materials of rich significance for those who would tell man about his significance, his values, his destiny. It is high time intelligent men quit trying to defend an outmoded and inadequate picture of the relation of man's values to the cosmic realities. These are equally foolish, whether they seek to re-establish faith in the old world-views by such pseudo-scientific distortions as those which would have us believe in an ancient miracle story about the sun standing still by a fantastic story of worlds in collision, or whether they try to fortify obsolete dichotomies of matter and spirit or freedom and determinism by tortuous misinterpretations of such scientific terms as "probability" or "indeterminism," or whether they try to establish a world of spirit and religion in a never-never region safely out of reach of any possible logical links with the real world of our experience. Such cultural schizophrenia can lead only to the eventual incapacity and death of the institutions and societies so afflicted, just as we would look for self-destruction in an analogous case of distortion or schizophrenia in an individual.

We point to that world of reality so honestly and reliably established through the sciences as the world to come to terms with, if we would gain values and motivational patterns that will yield a more abundant life. While scientific modifications of our doctrines of human salvation are admittedly incomplete and even in their infancy, we stand on the threshold of the greatest upward step in human history—from semi-conscious animal motivation to motivation by ideals and newly perceived realities unknown to those whose vision is limited to what they can see with their eyes. Let those who want to participate in the *joie de vivre* of man's most exhilarating entry into a new world come take a peek at it through the

windows of science, which is thousands of times vaster than any world we can experience through our animal eyes or touch, and which contains hitherto unknown realities that reveal a picture of our own true nature and destiny that is really out of this world, if by *this world* we mean that which we touch and see without the aid of the elaborate but verified dreams of science.

RALPH W. BURHOE

Boston, Mass.

## *REVIEW*

### "ROCKALL" FOREVER!

IN the current fare of periodical literature, two articles are likely to prove interesting and enjoyable to MANAS readers. Though we can hardly claim a connection between these very dissimilar articles, it remains a fact that good writing—whether lampooning irony, inspirational material, or some form of intellectual analysis—almost inevitably has kinship with other good writing.

In the present case, we might argue that the humor of Milton Mayer's February *Progressive* piece is at least cousin-kin to inspiration—since in laughing at the world that is, we also dream of the world that might be. In this particular fantasy, "The Sun Never Sets," Mr. Mayer, who apparently passed through Sweden on a family trip designed to provide material for future articles—surely Mayer needs no "research"!—is concerned with a tiny island known as "Rockall." As he conversed with a Swedish captain, Mayer began to think about the age-old possessive attitudes displayed by countries competing in land-hunger, and he must have laughed to himself about the possibilities of a full-scale war over eighty-three square feet of wave-lashed, wind-swept rock.

The conversation proceeds with Mayer telling the Captain of his desire to stake a claim to Rockall:

"I'll log your claim," said the Captain, "but you'll have to do more than sit in an overstuffed chair, drinking the Company's aquavit, to establish it. You'll have to enforce it against all comers. That, when you stop to think of it, is how the rest of the world was divided up."

"But," I said, "I have no army and navy."

"Then," said the Captain, "you may encounter difficulties."

"But," I said, "there wouldn't be room for them anyway. You yourself said that there's only room for one man on that ledge."

"One or two," said the Captain, "and two would

be enough to present difficulties. Besides, it might be fought for on the sea or in the air."

"But," I said, "you told me nobody wanted it."

"No," said the Captain, "I told you nobody wanted it *up to now*. As soon as you want it, somebody else will want it."

"But," I said, "it's worthless."

"True," said the Captain, "but who will believe it? People will say, 'If it were worthless Mayer wouldn't want it, we know Mayer. Therefore it must be valuable. Let's go and get it'. . . Rockall is, if I may say so, in a tactically exposed position. One false step, and you are lost, your rule replaced by a puppet (always to be found among the natives or, if, as on Rockall, there are no natives, to be imported), your people enslaved and exploited, your farms and industries expropriated, and the Voice of America and the Voice of Moscow jamming each other in your ears. Think it over."

"I'm thinking it over," I said. "There are no people or farms or industries on Rockall."

"That doesn't matter," said the Captain. "After it has been liberated, by either the Russians or the Americans, or by both in turn, they will immediately resettle it. The fact that it wasn't settled in the first place will not occur to anybody. It must be protected by reliable, peace-loving people."

"Against whom?"

"Potential aggressors."

"Well," I said, "I'll protect it myself."

"They won't let you," said the Captain. "They won't believe you are strong enough. After all, the Russians have 169 fully armed divisions and the Americans 168.2 and the French .8. What could you do to protect yourself against either one of them? They will insist upon giving you aid. Have another *Schluckchen* of the Company's aquavit."

"What about the Spirit of Geneva?" I said. The Swedish for "spirit"—we were speaking Swedish, naturally—is *spoke*. It also means "ghost."

"*Spoke* is right," said the Captain, in Swedish.

Our second "feature" is from a one-page essay by John Steinbeck appearing in the *Saturday Review* for Jan. 14. In "The Joan in All of Us," Mr. Steinbeck unabashedly voices a simple expression of faith in the potential of humanity.

This, to our way of thinking, is what makes Mr. Steinbeck—at least in his better or best moments—a writer whose passages one is apt to long remember.

Stories, plays and poems are forever being written about Joan of Arc. From a "scientific" point of view, there have been numerous attempts to explain away her "voices," as merely "abnormal" mental phenomena. Mr. Steinbeck's point is that no debunker of Joan of Arc will ever succeed in cutting away the true reason for the unflagging interest in her life. And this is why, as Mr. Steinbeck puts it:

The story of Joan could not possibly have happened—and did. This is the miracle, the worrisome nagging fact. Joan is a fairytale so improbable that, without the most complete historical record and evidence, it could not be believed. If a writer were to make it up the story would be howled down as an insult to credulity. No reasonable man would waste time on such an outrageous, sentimental romance, every moment of which is contrived, unnatural, and untrue.

A peasant girl of Joan's time was considered little more than an animal. She could not have got a hearing from the most obscure of local gentry. Politics was not a field open to people of her class, indeed only the highest in the social scale had access to political ideas. And the ideas she advanced were simple. How could they be valid to men who had spent their lives in the subtleties of the power drives of Europe?

This girl, illiterate and of a class which politically did not exist, went up through a kind of chain of command to a Dauphin torn with subtleties and indecisions and convinced him in spite of all the knowledge and experience of his professional advisers. This is ridiculous, but it happened.

But this is only the first miracle. Military science as practised in her day was the most jealously select of activities. . . . A girl leading an army, directing its movements, putting forward revolutionary tactics, is not the least improbable part of the story—a girl whose experience was limited to commanding a small herd of sheep. But having taken the command, and having set the tactics—she won. . .

The end of Joan is perhaps the most incredible part of all. It was not enough that without training

she should be soldier and politician—she must also become theologian with her own life as the wager and sainthood as the hidden prize.

Here I think is the reason writers are drawn to Joan, although their sense of reality is outraged by her story. We know what can and must happen, given the ingredients of life. But there is not one among us who does not dream that the rules may sometime be set aside—and the dream come true. We have the traditions of many miracles—but usually the witnesses were few, the records sparse and uncertain, and the truth obscured by time and the wishful recording of "after the fact." But to the miracle of Joan the witnesses were legion, the records exact, and the fact established. This is a miracle that *did* happen, and rules that were set aside. There is in our minds, because of Joan, the conviction that if it could happen then—it can happen again.

This is perhaps the greatest miracle of all—the little bit of Joan living in all of us.

## *COMMENTARY*

### **"RELIGION IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE"**

TOWARD the end of the nineteenth century, thoughtful men began giving attention to the possibility of a "synthesis" of science and religion. Probably the most notable attempt of that period was Andrew D. White's *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology*, although this volume may also be classed with the great histories of Western intellectual development—the works of Lecky and Draper—in which science has the role of instructor rather than colleague of the religious consciousness.

The Scopes Trial, in 1925, doubtless caused some anthropologists to realize that anti-scientific religious attitudes were a serious block to education in an understanding of evolution, and at least one scientist, Henry Fairfield Osborn, made an honest attempt to consider the impact of scientific theories of the origin of man on traditional religious views of human origins. Dr. Osborn tried to deal sympathetically with the issue, without abandoning scientific discipline.

Then, in the thirties, the inability of physicists to predict the motions of sub-atomic particles led to a flurry of theological argument that, since atoms apparently have "free will," man may be similarly endowed, thus making a rift in the armor of scientific mechanism, and renewing the legitimacy of religious ideas about "morality."

Whatever the merits of this claim, by 1940 the interest in the idea of synthesis between science and religion had grown to a point where it was possible to hold in New York a Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion, attended by many notables in these fields. Except for the first of these conferences—which was the scene of some disturbance caused by Dr. Einstein's repudiation of the idea of a personal God—nothing of any lasting importance seems to have come out of this program, which in the second year lapsed into a kind of superficial harmony that acknowledged no real difficulties in the synthesis that was sought.

Now another movement toward synthesis has been launched, in the form of an Institute on Religion

in an Age of Science, which has already completed two annual conferences.

According to Ralph W. Burhoe, secretary of the Institute, among the contributors to its thinking "are what William James designated 'tough-minded' or hardboiled scientists, including leaders of such seemingly unlikely sources for religious sympathy as the logical positivists, evolutionists, and behaviorists." The general assumptions of the conference, which the conferees, presumably, more or less share, are set forth in a brief statement:

The program of the Institute proceeds in the faith that there is no wall isolating any department of human understanding, and that, therefore, any doctrine of human salvation cannot successfully be separated from the realities pictured by science. We believe that science provides rich new insights into the problems of human welfare and offers the possibility of a reformulation of the doctrines about the nature of man and about the nature of that in which he lives and moves and has his being. . . .

We suspect that, in this search for a clear and modern statement of human values, much of what has been revealed by the great religious teachers of the past will stand forth in new brightness and detail, although we welcome any clearing away of misunderstandings or inadequate doctrines about the nature of reality and values.

There will be, we understand, a book published incorporating the papers presented at the second conference (held the first week of last August), which MANAS looks forward to reviewing. Meanwhile, this week's lead article, "Scientific Invitation," presents the reaction of Mr. Burhoe, one of the organizers of the Institute on Religion in an Age of Science, to a recent MANAS article. Persons interested in the work of this Institute may address inquiries to Mr. Burhoe at 355 Boylston St., Boston 16, Mass.

## CHILDREN and Ourselves

A RECENT international survey—conducted by a reliable if imaginary agency of MANAS—has revealed to us that less than one-tenth of one per cent of the world's parents would prefer "good, well-behaved" children to geniuses. We ask: Is this because a parent's chief indulgence is pride, and, while you can be proud of "goodness" for a while, both the pride and the goodness become awfully monotonous? On the other hand, the genius, by definition, always gives you something new to be proud about, because he creates instead of merely conforming. You may have to suffer criticism on his behalf, due to his probable eccentricities or "immoralities," but since everyone knows posterity will forgive and forget his lapses, even present paragons of virtue seem willing to ignore a good deal in the presence of creative brilliance.

Yes, it seems to be historical fact that geniuses tend toward "immorality" of some kind or another. For one thing, they usually have a great deal more energy than their more prosaic contemporaries, and for another, they see, in most human situations, a host of possibilities to which the majority are blind. But one thing is even surer than the historical fact, and that is that parents tend, in lieu of being assured the possession of genius by their child, to insist on Morality. Perhaps this is all right, for it may be that most of us are better "societal units" when our behavior is kept in line by the small fears and small ambitions of religious conscience. But there is something here of theoretical confusion: If nearly every parent would like a genius for a child, and if there is a high degree of correlation between genius and immorality, the parent whose sprout has not yet revealed genius should, perhaps, be taught immorality instead of morality! Is it possible that only by this unusual sort of test, will parents be able to determine scientifically whether or not immorality helps genius to flower?

But another perplexity lurks. True geniuses, it seems, can never be held down, anyway. Train them, condition them, punish them in an effort to

secure conformity, and the "deviant action" of immorality or creativity—maybe some of both—will break out. Worst of all, the harsher our insistence on "adjustment," the stronger their deviations, too. So, if genius—irrepressible creativity, expressed in a manner recognized as having permanent value—cannot be damped, it also cannot be created. Little men, trying to deviate, are only little men trying to deviate. If the creativity is missing, if the life-experiences are not woven into a vision—be it in literature, music or painting—the deviation then has no more meaning than conformity.

There is little doubt that conventional conceptions of good and evil, though containing reflections of genuine ethical insight, have a stultifying effect upon creativity—and even upon "love." These excellent passages from Carol Murphy's *The Examined Life* will illustrate:

I frequently consult a friend, whom I call the Critic on the Hearth, for stimulation when I feel dull. He does not live far off: as near, perhaps, as my *alter ego*. Today I found him bursting with a new idea.

"I'm going to invent a religion without conscience," he announced to me with enthusiasm.

"If you think that's a new invention, you're mistaken," I told him, trying to provoke him to argument. "Your religion would be turning back the clock to a time before the Hebrews' ethical monotheism."

"Good," he retorted. "I'm mad at the Hebrews, or rather all moralists."

"What brought this on?" I asked.

"Mingling with moralists, I think, and seeing what they have done to religion. I'm willing to agree with Christianity that love—the *agape* kind of love—is the supreme value. But corruption enters in as soon as we call it a 'morality.' We then feel we *must* love, so we disguise our lack of love, since we can't manufacture the real thing at command."

"Love has been called the impossible commandment, hasn't it?" I threw in.

"Exactly The great mistake of Christianity has been to try to force us to feel what we cannot be ordered to feel. And so by commanding us to love, it has replaced love with fear and created Pharisees in the very act of condemning them. That is what

psychiatrists tell us, and they are the ones who are proving to us the necessity of love in human relations. In the end, religion reverts to conscience instead of love."

"I see what you mean," I replied. "Religion without love tends to fall off into fear. But the Christian conscience *needn't* be a fear-filled thing, surely?"

"Well, then, let's put my charge in broader terms. Negativism—that is the fault of a conscience-ridden religion. I believe it was Emerson who criticised the Quakers because it seemed to him that their Inward Light forbade them from doing things rather than leading them to do more. A tender conscience is always saying 'No, no.' And it hedges the moralist ever more closely, till he can no longer share in normal human activities."

"You seem to consider it just a minor nuisance," the Critic said. "But I see negativism as the direct opposite of what a religion full of life and power should be. The saints should be people who can do *more* things with inner purity than the rest of us can do—unlike the 'unco guid' who are hedged in by rules on every side." (Pendle Hill Pamphlet.)

When we talk of morality and genius in the same breath with education, an opportunity develops for that so-important distinction between morality and ethics. The genius, for instance, will seldom be entirely moral according to conventional standards, but he may be a highly ethical man. The difference between a moral man and an ethical man is that the moral man either shows, or pretends to show, respect for the standards of the majority, while the ethical man accepts full responsibility for his *own* standards and their consequences. The ethical man, so defined, has a much greater sphere of responsibility, for he may sense his own presence in every effect of his thoughts and deeds: responsibility thus conceived is not discharged easily.

Carol Murphy is a Quaker pamphleteer, author of three other works of similar size and scope. Since *The Examined Life* touches on so many aspects of "the moral equation," we are interested to note that Miss Murphy poses a curious question concerning John Woolman, a Quaker whose struggle against slavery is particularly well known. Would Woolman have still been a saintly man, she asks, if he had possessed slaves? The answer given is that any

slaves "owned" by John Woolman would have been very fortunate human beings—that when a man is essentially and integrally good enough, it really doesn't matter what he does, for, whatever he does, and whatever the limitations of his outlook, the people he meets benefit immeasurably.

So there are many criticisms of "morality" as usually conceived; the moral concept fails to emphasize individual conscience and responsibility, whereas the ethical concept does precisely this. Einstein, we may say, was an ethical man, yet, in the eyes of the representatives of orthodox Christianity, he was an influence toward immorality—he denied a personal Deity, and suggested that the concept, since it leads to ethical irresponsibility, should be discarded. Now, those "geniuses" whose lives are truly unsavory are not simply immoral, but are also unethical. The former we can and should forgive, but the latter we cannot—in the sense that we cannot enjoy the proximity of a man without honor.

In our opinion, one of a parent's most significant tasks lies in helping the young to define "morality" and "ethics" and to distinguish between them—see how these can, in some instances, reinforce each other, but also that they can be: in sharp opposition. Unless parents and teachers work at this sort of education—which is, after all, the same sort of "basic education" that was undertaken by Socrates—the chances are that they will breed a good deal of unnecessary confusion, and be causative agents of "immoralities" which otherwise would not occur.

## *FRONTIERS* Imperialism at Home

THE honor of the United States—or perhaps we should say, less abstractly, the honor of the American people—is again at stake in relation to what is done in the next few years about the situation of the American Indians. The honor of the country has been at stake, and has largely been lost, in relation to the Indians for more than a hundred years, so that this is no new or unfamiliar crisis for those who have watched the course of American treatment of American Indians throughout the "century [and more] of dishonor." What is perhaps new, however, is the simplicity of the issue, today—with no border wars, "foreign influences," or ferocious "scalping parties" to confuse public opinion on the matter. We, the people, have absolutely no excuse for what our Government is doing to the Indians—and doing in the name of progress and democracy. Further, accurate accounts of the current attack on Indian welfare are being widely printed, so that ignorance is no excuse.

The Feb. 22 issue of the *Christian Century* has an article by its editor, Harold E. Fey, which gives comprehensive summary of the moral questions involved. His title is "Why Care about Indians?" and his answers to this question should be known to every citizen.

Fundamentally, the issue is one of land. We have stolen the lands of the Indians, and today contemplate stealing more of it. At present, the lands of the Indians, says Mr. Fey, "are slipping from their control at the rate of 500,000 acres a year." In a few sentences, he tells the story of one of the greatest land-grabs in history:

After the Indians had sold, ceded or otherwise disposed of 500 million acres of land for a few cents an acre, they were placed on reservations. When the Indian Allotment Act was passed in 1887, these reservations totaled 140 million acres. By the time the Indian Reorganization act was passed in 1934, this land base had shrunk to around 50 million acres. For two decades this land base was conserved and

even slightly increased. But recently the Bureau of Indian Affairs has relaxed its restrictions on sales and the old process of separating the Indian from the land has been resumed.

What do the white men want with the Indians' land? This is answered in Mr. Fey's next paragraph:

Why should the Indian retain control of his land? For precisely the same reasons that white men are so eager to gain command of it. Oil, uranium and other minerals will do the Indian as much good as anybody else. The power, the timber resources and the grazing lands which are found on many reservations can benefit the original Americans also. If the climate of the southwest is suddenly discovered to have marvelous healing qualities for the bodies and spirits of the whites, the Indian will be well advised not to overlook its benefits for himself. His fathers paid a very high price in concessions of vast areas for the lands included in these reservations. His children will thank him if he preserves for himself and for them their rightful heritage. Today the Indian population is at least 100,000 greater than it was when the Indians were granted three times as much land as they have today. Their standard of living is higher than the Indian standard of living was three generations ago. Indians need more land rather than less.

Mr. Fey has frequently written about the Indians for the *Christian Century*. A recent series of his on the subject is available from the *Century*, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill., in pamphlet form. The present article is a general one, appealing to Americans to do their duty as Christians by the Indians. More useful, perhaps, as an introduction to the entire question is Dorothy Van de Mark's article, "The Raid on the Reservations," in *Harper's* for March. Mrs. Van de Mark brings the authority of some twenty years of study of the Indians to her challenge of the present policies of the Indian Bureau. The Bureau's program, as readers may recall from a recent MANAS review (Dec. 28, 1955), is to liquidate the reservations and "integrate" the Indians as members of "normal" American society. Most of the Indians are resisting, for reasons which Mrs. Van de Mark makes plain. Nor is this program a solution:

Contrary to the Indian Bureau's propaganda, assimilation of Indians into white culture is not the real issue. The real Indian problems are poverty, ill health, poor education, and economic stagnation. Relocation can serve none of these: Indians can be separated from their tribal ties and dumped into urban centers, but these deficits go with them. Yet when the Oglala Sioux or the Papagos or the Brule request rehabilitation programs for their tribes at home, the Bureau assures Congress that such programs are not necessary, because relocation is the answer. The same answer serves when Indians ask approval of leases or tribal enterprises—even when the leases would bring needed tribal income or when money for the enterprises has already been provided by Congress for this purpose.

The land Allotment Act of 1887, of unholy memory, reduced the Indian land base by 90,000,000 acres, until John Collier ended its rule in 1933. "Land Allotment" is now a nasty expression, so the same policies are being called "relocation." Mrs. Van de Mark writes:

The Termination Bills—six were passed by the 83rd Congress in 1954, and many more are scheduled—cut off credit funds and abolish federal protection for the uneducated groups who still need it. They throw onto the states responsibility for such heretofore federal services as education, welfare, law enforcement, and—far from least—protection and development of Indian resources. Such termination means liquidation of Indian trust property, dispersal of tribal assets, and the end of tribal organization. Significantly, two of the first tribes scheduled for termination are the Menominees of Wisconsin and the Klamaths of Oregon, owners of two of the richest remaining timber stands in the country. The Yakimas declared themselves in favor of the move—an apparent victory for the Indian Bureau. Later it turned out that the Department of the Interior had held up tribal fund payments until the Yakimas agreed to termination.

Two proposed bills—the Competency Bill and the Butler-Malone Bill—threaten further disasters if passed. The Competency Bill would empower the Secretary of the Interior to declare any Indian applicant entitled to his share of the tribal wealth and property, to dispose of as he wishes. The Butler-Malone Bill would abolish the Reorganization Act of 1933 and wipe out tribal

ownership of land and Indian corporations, forcing distribution of these resources to individual Indians who are inexperienced in business procedure, and clearing the way to easy sale of their property. Under this Bill—

"the Indians cannot bid as tribal units for their old homelands in competition with the gas, oil, and uranium interests, the great cattle and sheep companies and timber interests which undoubtedly want possession of these rich tribal assets." These are the same pressure groups that have been working through the Department of the Interior to grab all publicly owned grazing land in our national forests, national parks, and national monuments. They are abetted by other interests, chiefly the power companies, whose aim is to reduce federal regulations. They have some members of Congress on their side. And meanwhile Interior and its Bureau of Indian Affairs are accomplishing by administrative means what Congress has so far refused to accomplish by legislation.

The Secretary of the Interior already has the power to declare Indians "competent," to remove restrictions on their right to sell or lease. Indians sell their land because of poverty; because of poverty other Indians cannot buy it. So the land continues to pass from Indian ownership—exactly as the promoters of the Allotment Act planned seventy years ago.

The facts set forth in this article are almost unbelievable. Americans suppose, because of the recent desegregation decision of the Supreme Court, and other indications in relation to color problems, that definite progress is being made in respect to racial minorities. But in respect to the American Indians, the record of recent years shows a rapid succession of failures and betrayals. Harold Fey takes note of the fact that the United States cannot blame any outside force for its failure to do justice to the Indians. The problem is entirely our own, and simply to look at the situation of the Indians in, say, Arizona and New Mexico is to "discover anew the tragedy of neglect and injustice which goes on right under our noses."