VOLUME IX NO. 47
NOVEMBER 21, 1956

THE TROUBLED DREAM

WE have a letter from a friend whose thoughts have lately been much engrossed by the idea of immortality. No one has recorded this dream of an after-life with more indelible certainty than the poets. Our friend writes:

> It received statement from Wordsworth, for our age and in our speech the awakener of the sense of Nature's mystic glory: "I confess with me the opinion is absolute that, if the impression and sense of death were not counterbalanced [by a belief in immortality] such a hollowness would pervade the whole system of things, a disproportion so astounding between means and ends, that there could be no repose, no joy." And Goethe (than whom none, perhaps, has more richly lived, even to the end) said: "That man is dead even in this life who has no belief in another."

From Socrates to the present, the poets and the enthusiasts, the lovers of life, have articulated this conviction with all the invincibility of their art. For them it is no "mere" belief, but as essential as sunlight, the breath of the mind's respiration. And yet, it is necessary to question. Should a man allow himself to be carried away by this dream?

> Veritably, in the incalculable Nature Life, as we come to know it more and more, there is purpose, finality, and joy, measurelessly exceeding the pain, and all with no asking for everlastingness by the creature, or by the mundane sum-of-things, nor any need to postulate survival of death. Frederic W. H. Myers [eminent nineteenth-century psychologist and psychic researcher] asserts a cosmic view, but is it also a biological and planetary view? Is it the view of a divining naturalist?

This is the first question. Can the naturalist help us out of ourselves? Can he, with his impersonal dispassion, his objective eye, give us observation from a point which is above the egocentric predicament? Will he tell us that we human beings have no private box, no seat marked with our name upon it, in an eternity outside of life? Why should we have or want what no other living thing can claim? In the vast equality of life, hope of special privilege would be a frivolous longing, an ill of our conceits.

But what of the authority of our witness? Is he a naturalist before he is a man7 The naturalist may command our respect, not so much for his "objectivity" as for the devotion he feels to life, a devotion which overflows his self-imposed restraint upon the poetic imagination. There have been lovers of nature and knowers of nature before the earnest unbelievers of the nineteenth century and our time.

Why does a man become a naturalist? For many reasons, perhaps, but one reason must be that he chooses to be a scientist in his approach to the living world in order that he may not be betrayed by the chameleon changes of a supposed more intangible existence or reality. Always he can look at and see the natural world, and it will be there. He can always return and verify; and the living world is so extensive, so endlessly complex, that wonders without limit will always invite his questing spirit.

But this life-in-death and death-in-life that are all about us—that we call Nature: has it a voice, or is its voice man's? Has it awareness of self, or is this awareness man's? Why should Nature dream of immortality when it is—may be—the role of man to dream of immortality for all the world? Man is the prophet who stands on the margin of spaceless immensity and declares the destiny of all the rest. And why not admit the dissolution and absorption of homocentricity by those who, with minds to embrace the universe, give triumphant voice to the muted aspiration of the natural world?

But there are further questions:

> The other, distinct but perhaps not unrelated, flaw seems to be the assumption that in human life (leaving aside the rest of life), joy is not joy unless it be everlasting. The Platonic view is that love demands immortality, that virtue must have its reward—a view restated in many ways by the actual or mythical Jesus, as also by Buddha. There is not meant, here, only the proposition that human life has

> in it more, whelmingly more, of suffering than joy; but rather, that joy itself, little or much, is not joy except upon the assumption of its ultimate triumph over pain, and its everlastingness, personal, or at least racial. The question, then, is: Man, and the million other species, have joy; and is man's joy, alone on the Planet, an illusion, a vanity, a "mere fraud," unless it be assured of everlastingness?
>
> What answer does the child give, what answer the warrior, and the dancer, and the all of creative art? What answer the happiness of the discoverer?

These questions reproach those who would claim premature rewards, who feel competent to keep a balance sheet on the universe and make a shop-keeper's calculation out of natural law.

There seems indeed a presumption in the longing for a secure and eternal identity. But what if a man is not fitted for immortality unless he can abandon the fierce assertion of the anxious self? What if the true immortals are only those in whom all hunger and longing for eternity has died away—because they have found it in the ever-present Now?

In this question the fallibilities of human expression are called to stern account. No egotism can sire immortal life, nor can a psyche that tires of pain transform its longing for relief into the promise of transcendent bliss—not, that is, without amiable self-deception.

But how, after all, can joy ever triumph over pain? Who would *know* joy, without pain? And how can we ground the hope of immortality upon the expectation of the cessation of pain? What man, upon reflection, would seek this benumbing doom? A life immortal is a *life* immortal. Of either joy or pain we can ask and have only interludes, brief moments in the alternations of experience. Or would we have life without "experience"? The gods who are immortal, who know both time and eternity, reverence no impossibles and entertain no theological escapism. Theirs is always the Promethean decision. What is pain? A part of life. What is joy? The sweetness that goes with the sting. What is life? The endless continuum in both time and space from which there is no escape, since there is nothing "outside" of life. So the eternality of life is an absolute reality. Immortality, then, is perchance nothing more nor less than awareness of life in its true nature.

This, indeed, is partially the conclusion at which our correspondent arrives:

> But more essentially, it may be: This "life more great than we conceive" possesses within itself, in the here and now the experience of eternity; *it has* the Mystic Rose, "the eternity in the now, even if the now have no eternity." The "journey of the one to the One" of Plotinus is *within* corporeal, temporal, and death-destined life. Indeed, as W. Macneile Dixon avers, the poets and the mystics are those who give "the verdict"; and the verdict they give is that the Everlasing is within death-destined man; within him, and not, by any requirement of justice or of love, beyond him in spiritual sequence or cosmic time.

We should like to amend this judgment—to say that it cannot exist for him beyond him unless he first discovers it within him. For better, perhaps, than even immortality, is the instance of human devotion to the truth, from moment to moment. These searching thoughts, this unwillingness to embrace a beguiling belief, to accept sentiments in behalf of philosophy—what are they but the irrepressible love of abstract truth, the form which knowledge of eternity will surely take?

It is not that a man has to learn to distrust his heart, no more than he must distrust nature. Rather it is the partisan readings of the voice of the heart of which we become suspicious. The glory of the agnostic temper is its inner, gnostic faith. A man begins to learn the truth in a functional sense the living truth, that is, as distinguished from the pieties of doctrine—when he recognizes the infinite variety of appearances which truth may assume. Henry Miller has written on this point:

> The one thing about this universe which intrigues me, which makes me realize that it is divine and beyond all knowing, is that it lends itself so easily to any and all interpretations. Everything we formulate about it is correct and incorrect at the same time. And, whatever we think about the universe in no way alters it.

True, what we think about the universe in no way alters *it*—the abstract universe that is forever undiscovered, and may not even exist, except in an abstract way; but what we think about it surely alters

our universe. And what of immortality, as we think of it?

A man, perhaps, cannot think himself out of existence, but he can think himself out of vital awareness of existence. He can dull and stultify his perceptions, hide his head from the stars. He can become a clod, or he can tremble and vibrate with the rhythm of spheres. He can think back or forward, even *feel* back or forward. He can imprison himself in the past and confine his imagination in a black dungeon of remorse. He can even forget he is a man, return to the state of protoplasmic inertia. Where, for such a one, then, is the intricate magic of the cell, its mystic power of parthogenesis, its multiplication of the one into the many? The greatness of both man and nature becomes only a ghostly shadow when left without the divining awareness of a human being. Is the universe truly wondrous without our minds to contain it? What sort of worlds would they be without the animating presence of some kind of human—or self-conscious—intelligence?

Is it only *hubris* that we think the worlds become luminous from the light of mind? The majesty of even dead planets like the moon acquires its lonely dimensions only from the surrogate of our intelligence, lent to those distant, solitary bodies.

And so, when all is said, we long for "proof." We make demands upon ourselves, beyond our capacity to demonstrate. The caterpillar asks nothing about the butterfly, indeed, knows nothing of the butterfly, yet by an unknown direction of its inner life, a tropism beyond analysis, is eternally creating butterflies to bejewel the summer air. What if our proofs, when they come, are as effortless as this, and as unpredictable?

No one, we say, has returned from the dead. What if we are *all* returned from the dead?

What are we, that we know so well what of us is born or dies? To deny immortal life may be a greater vanity of the "knowledge" of the moment than the acceptance of a pleasant belief. We have had too many sententious affirmations and denials on every question. Is it a "facing of reality" to cry out against the illusion of immortality, or is it an existentialist pride in one's capacity to live bravely and with dignity, though the heavens fall? Which is the higher truth—the matter of living or dying or the matter of our cleaving to the dignity we hold to be the quality of man? And this, perhaps, has more of immortality in it than either our denials or our affirmations.

Not our beliefs, then, but the motives for our beliefs, are the true revelation of the nature of man.

Thus the questions raised by this correspondent involve matters which are indeed beyond immortality, which touch upon the very worthiness of human existence. He will not have immortality on any grounds that compromise the high dignity of the human spirit.

But we should recognize, also, that the ever-recurring dream of a life eternal is no casual wondering. It is a well-nigh uncontrollable yearning of the mind to outdo itself, to reach beyond the circle of finite experience. What would be our literature and our art without this dream? No doubt there are illusions about immortality, but since we are subject to illusions on every hand, there may also be illusions about death—that, for one, it is a cold and shrouding finality.

There is this, however, to remember. No man, in the height of his life, at the apex of his visioning, has been borne down by the threat of dark extinction. Rather, his vaulting imagination has rendered a very different verdict on what lies beyond the horizon. Least of all has he felt death to end significance, an unmeaning blight upon existence. The best of life, then, remains untouched by death, and this may be acceptable confirmation of our dream.

Letter from CENTRAL EUROPE

INNSBRUCK.—The problem of "German property in Austria" led, a few months ago, to differences within the Vienese Government and made new elections for Parliament necessary. The elections took place, but their issue was not a sensational one. The two major political parties, the Austrian Peoples' Party and the Social Democratic Party which have ruled in coalition for about ten years, emerge again as the most important ones, whereas the third part, a small, liberal group, lost the little influence which it had possessed until then.

The Austrian Peoples' Party gained a few seats, so that the list of ministers now includes ten members of this party and eight Social Democrats. Only a few names have changed. Of importance is the fact that a Ministry of Defence has been created. It is led by Mr. Graf who for many years acted as State Secretary for the Interior and is certainly a reasonable choice of a man to organize the building up of a new Austrian army.

But the question of whether this small, new, Austrian army makes any sense at all has caused heated debates for months. Many Austrians are of the opinion that, should the international problems find a peaceful agreement, an army could be regarded as useless. On the other hand, should war come, Austria would be overrun by its mighty neighbors in a day or two. These critics insist as well that a small country, such as Austria is today, cannot afford the expense of a modern army. Others believe that an army is necessary, not only to protect the neutrality of Austria, but to teach youth "discipline" at the same time. Actually, compulsory military service has been introduced in the meantime and the first contingents have already been mustered. Contrary to expectation, since youth and student organizations had warned that a high percentage of their members would not respond to conscription, the young recruits all arrived in the best of moods. Among thousands of draftees in the Tyrol, only one declared that his conviction and philosophy would not allow him to become a soldier and, in case of war, lift his weapon with the purpose of killing another human being.

The differences in connection with "German property" which stirred up controversy between the two leading political parties have little to do with restitution to the Germans. It is possible that private German possessions not in excess of $10,000 might be returned to the owners, but both political parties agree that the tremendous investments which Germany made in Austria during the National Socialist era are now to be regarded as Austrian property. They argue that the losses which the Austrian State suffered in consequence of the Second World War have been so high that it is only right to keep such property.

The differences between the two parties are really embedded in the fact that the Austrian Peoples' Party, represented by the Chancellor Raab, is a defender of private initiative, whereas the Social Democratic Party, represented by the Vice-Chancellor Scharf, insists that the formerly German-owned factories, oil refineries, etc., should be turned into state-owned institutions. However, since Raab's party retains a majority, there can be no doubt that the properties will be sold to private interests.

All those who, after the conclusion of the State Treaty, prophesied an economic debacle for Austria have been refuted, so far, by a relative prosperity. However, the Austrian Federal Bank recently noted with regret that investments of foreign capital in this country have recently practically ceased.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
WASHINGTON SCHOOL OF PSYCHIATRY

WHILE MANAS has often quoted and discussed articles appearing in *Psychiatry,* the quarterly journal issued by the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation, we have never said anything about the Foundation-sponsored Washington School of Psychiatry. A 32-page catalogue for 1956-57 provides introduction to the sort of program of instruction carried on by an institution of this character.

Founded in 1936, the Washington School has devoted itself to furthering a broad understanding of the field of psychotherapy. This includes cultural and ethical interests as well as the intention to contribute to research on specific mental ailments. A Foreword explains that this school "is not a training institute for psychotherapists—psychiatric or psychoanalytic, lay or medical. Those students interested in such training are urged to apply to the recognized training institutes. Being of graduate nature, the instruction of the School is intended to supplement the usual training program. Thus, candidates and graduates of the various training programs will find in the School's curriculum advanced courses and seminars of special character—not ordinarily to be found elsewhere." Further:

> The educational policy of the School has always been "an interdisciplinary one." Accordingly, it has been the School's wish to acquaint other disciples, concerned with human relations, with the specific knowledge coming from psychiatry. Equally important, however, has been the School's conviction that psychiatry would gain from instruction by the biological sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, philosophy, and religion. More than other provinces of medicine, psychiatry must look for assistance wherever man is the subject of study; and conversely, from its study of the pathology of human relations, psychiatry may offer its own form of enlightenment to those who deal with other aspects of human existence. Such mutual enrichment constitutes a difficult ideal, and the present program is but a step toward that ideal. However, in this pursuit, it is the School's hope that each discipline will represent itself at its best, without compromising its views for the sake of easy communication. The fate of too many interdisciplinary efforts has been that they finally had everything *common* in common. Finally, the School intends to consider whatever seems valid in psychiatry and the related fields. While doing careful justice to its subject matter, the School would still avoid the doctrinaire espousals which are hazard of any young science.

A brochure is hardly a basis for judging whether the Washington faculty succeeds in avoiding the old "watering-down" hazard, which often renders futile well-meaning efforts to integrate philosophy and religion with anthropology, sociology and psychology, but the clear and precise explanation of the School's purposes argues for success. During the past year the School collaborated with the Washington Seminar on Religion and Psychiatry, sponsoring a public symposium on the interrelationship between religion and psychiatry. This series, it is reported, was greeted enthusiastically, with its five lectures to be published by Harper.

MANAS readers will probably be interested in two courses offered by Dr. Maurice Friedman, for these are suggestive evidence that the Washington School finds religion, philosophically and symbolically considered, of direct relevance to psychiatric understanding. Dr. Friedman's first course, "Comparative Religion and the Problem of Man," is described as follows:

> An examination of the world's great religions to discover their contribution to the understanding of what man is and what he can and should become. Through these religions' understanding of the problem of man, in turn, it will be possible to discover their relevance for psychiatry. Particular attention will be given to the image of man which each religion sets forth and, related to this image, the varying attitudes of these religions toward the problem of evil, types of religious experience, and the relation between religion and moral action. The religions dealt with in this course will include Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and, if there is time, Mohammedanism. The course will study each

> of these religions in its own terms and in its unique and non-comparable aspects before comparing and contrasting it with the other religions studied.

The other Friedman course is called "The Problem of Evil and Psychiatry":

> The seminar will begin with a discussion of the problem of evil in its own terms, showing the correlations between this problem and the attitudes of religions toward the relation between God, man, and the world and the bearing of this problem on our understanding of what man is and our image of what man can and should become. The seminar will then examine some of the major psychoanalytic theories, e.g., those of Freud, Jung, Fromm, Horney, Sullivan, Rogers, to discover the attitude toward evil implicit in their conceptions of human nature, health and maturity. Next the seminar will discuss the relation of this attitude to the image of what man can and should become in a number of the great religions and in significant religious variants, such as Neo-Platonism and Gnosticism. Finally, it will turn back to psychiatry to discover the practical as well as theoretical applications to psychotherapy of the understanding of the problem of evil that has been acquired.

Also to be noted is a course on "Philosophical Problems in Psychiatry," presented by Dr. J. R. Reid, and a shorter course by Frieda Fromm-Reichmann—"A Philosophy of Psychotherapy."

The scope of the School's program is considerable, ranging from philosophy and religion to child guidance and semantics. The Board of Directors includes William O. Douglas as well as Dr. Fromm-Reichmann, and Dr. Leslie H. Farber, who serves as chairman of the faculty. Catalogue No. 21 also announces that the four William Alanson White Memorial Lectures will be given in January and February of 1957 by Martin Buber, nominee for the Nobel Prize. (Previous White Lectures have been given by Harry Sullivan, Brock Chisholm, and Julian Huxley.)

An article in *Psychiatry* for August indicates Buber's philosophical position, which is used by Leslie Farber to suggest that the psychiatrist must strive to avoid all rigidities of opinion—in and out of his profession, and including the fields of philosophy and religion. Buber writes:

> I have occasionally described my standpoint to my friends as the "narrow ridge." I wanted by this to express that I did not rest on the broad upland of a system that includes a series of sure statements about the absolute, but on a narrow rocky ridge between the gulfs where there is no sureness of expressible knowledge but the certainty of meeting what remains, undisclosed.

Perception of the need to stand on this "narrow ridge" distinguishes the philosophical from the authoritarian or doctrinaire temper. The comparative religion courses offered by the Washington School are clearly designed to encourage such breadth of perspective, and the necessary combination of self-reliance and humility which go with it.

COMMENTARY
REFORMING THE SYSTEM

WHEN the news came that the British and the French were attacking Egypt, the reaction of Americans—in this part of the United States, at least—seemed uniformly one of disgust. *Why* did *this* have to happen? was the question lurking behind the comments of most people. Discussion of the issues was superficial; the issues, such as they are, don't seem to matter much. What matters is the incredible stupidity of dropping bombs, not merely on Cairo, but anywhere, on anybody.

Television and radio commentators are doing a brisk business reporting the news. They grind out their staccato spiels with a great show of importance, as though listeners are anxiously waiting for the last word on what is happening in this "new" war. People *are* interested in what is happening, but few listeners, we think, are able to feel much reality in the surface aspects of the news. The reality is rather in the utter dreariness of more bombings, following a pattern that has become hideously monotonous during the past fifteen years. The only news of note is that the powers seem to have learned little or nothing from those years, and are ready, now, to have a war "as usual," even if it is, at the moment, only a very little war.

A particularly depressing side of this turn of events is the prospect it holds for youth—the young men and women who are thinking about the kind of work they would like to do for the rest of their lives. Politics used to be an area of usefulness, but how can any intelligent and conscientious young person seek a career in politics, these days? Regardless of party, politics seems committed to programs which carefully avoid any of the real issues of modern life. (Mr. Stevenson's opposition to atomic bomb tests was a dramatic exception, but we note that this was strictly his own idea, an idea not shared by his party advisers.) Politics, today, is completely innocent of serious political philosophy, and the waning responsiveness of the public to political solutions to common problems reflects this impoverishment.

There are still numerous ways to make an honest living—in supplying the basic necessities of food, shelter, and clothing—but the callings which command the use of the imagination seem to have dwindled in number. Technology, which attracts many of the young men with intellectual capacity, is now so highly organized and so closely connected with military enterprise that jobs which are unrelated to potentially destructive activities are sometimes hard to find.

Education will always offer a channel of expression to people with an instinct for teaching. The schools, if not seed-beds of freedom, are at least places where ideas about freedom are occasionally heard, even if the teachers who give them expression often lose their jobs. Writing is another field with relatively few confinements, but few people can write simply by deciding to do so. It is first necessary to have something to say.

We sometimes wonder, when pondering this problem, if it is really necessary for a man to earn his bread at work which represents the chosen purpose of his life. In a world as mixed up as ours, this may be quite impossible for all but a handful. It might be better for him to work at some simple task, and save his creative energies for other activities, for which he receives no pay at all. In fact, it is conceivably wrong for a man to be *paid* for doing what he believes in; he *might* be tempted to compromise in his beliefs, if his livelihood is connected with how he applies them in a practical way.

Labor leaders now tell us that the twenty-four-hour week is already on the horizon. That may be, but the forty-hour week leaves plenty of leisure for a man to do many things he believes in, and which he is not paid for. We are not talking about "hobbies" or a bit of "Sunday contracting," but about serious enterprises which may be undertaken for the enrichment of life.

There are, for example, the arts. And there is philosophy. And there is the wide field of psychology and mental health. These are areas to which persons of creative ability are being drawn, these days. Politics and industry have had their cycle of empire-building, and they have all but dehumanized our common life. Work that is attractive, today, is work that cannot be "organized"—in which the private intuition and individual inspiration are the chief thing.

It is time, we think, to consciously seek this emphasis, as part of the quest for rediscovery of natural man. We ought to see the futility of hoping for a better life from a newly designed "system." We are not oppressed by a bad system, but by the idea that a system can either damn us or save us.

If we see what we can do for ourselves and others without notice of the system, we may find that the system doesn't matter so much, after all. And that discovery, we suspect, will constitute the best reform that can be applied to the system—a discount of its importance!

CHILDREN
and Ourselves

IT is not a particular function of MANAS to repeat depressing crime statistics, since these are available on every hand, but the trends in juvenile delinquency must inevitably claim attention from time to time. The problem of the "delinquent," after all, like the problem of parents who suffer from neurosis, is in some degree the problem of everyone.

The *Juvenile Delinquency Bulletin*, issued by the "Big Brother Movement" in New York City, performs a useful service by assembling quotations on juvenile delinquency from authorities in this field. A general consensus takes the view that delinquency often follows when children are left without any serious responsibilities, and that a revision of some of the technical phases of laws concerning children would be an advantage. Judge William G. Long, of the Superior Court of Washington; asserts that child labor laws, as presently constituted, "tend to force all adolescents into idleness, particularly those who are not doing well in school and who are eager to get into the world and start making their way. . . . Our laws have now gone considerably past the point of common sense. . . . There must be a happy medium between no child labor laws and unreasonable restrictions of child labor. . . . I am not advocating or even suggesting the abolition of child labor laws. . . . But necessary protective measures do not need to be unreasonably restrictive—so restrictive that they drive youngsters into idleness, mischief and eventually crime. . . . I have come to the conclusion that most youngsters go wrong simply because they have nothing else to do. . . . Time and time again my frustrated and discouraged case workers have said to me: 'Judge, if we could only find a job for this kid, I believe he would straighten out.' I have yet to see a youthful serious offender whose trouble was not caused to a large extent by idleness. On the other hand, I have seen many whose lives have been salvaged through plain, old-fashioned work."

J. D. Hull, chief of secondary schools in the Health, Education and Welfare Department at Washington, substantiates Judge Long:

> It is becoming more and more apparent that, among older boys and girls, inability to secure jobs is a highly important factor in the growth of delinquency. Most of them are untrained. Employers seldom welcome boys who will soon be eligible for military service. The child-labor and compulsory-education laws in this country are a great achievement but there are times when their rigid application is unfortunate and may contribute to delinquency. Experience shows that certain boys and girls play truant and become delinquent, because of a definitely limited ability to benefit from traditional school programs. As pointed out to the Sub-Committee (of the United States Senate to Investigate Delinquency) by the National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers, many such youngsters would be better off and in less danger of getting into trouble if school authorities would be given the legal right—and exercised it—to permit them to spend part of the school day at work.

Another summary and estimate:

> Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, in an exclusive interview with the Hearst Newspapers (July 23, 1956) remarked: "My belief is that the principal deficiency, the principal factor leading to delinquency, is a lack of parental care, interest, affection and responsibility. That is also the principal factor in reducing delinquency. Percentagewise, I would rate it at 65 per cent in importance. The next factor in reducing delinquency is the work of (youth) organizations. . . . I would rate their value at 20 per cent. The third factor, in my opinion, is employment—interesting, useful, gainful employment. That I would rate at 15 per cent.

While Admiral Nimitz rates failure to find employment as only I5 per cent responsible for delinquency, this is an area where something can be done—by "youth organizations," and by parents and legislators. J. Edgar Hoover cautiously supports this view. The *Bulletin* quotes from *Federal Probation*, of March 1956: "In his answer to the question of whether the percentage of delinquency among youth who work after school is less than for youth in general, the director of the FBI believes that part-time employment, such as a newspaper route, definitely is a delinquency preventive. Idleness and lack of constructive or satisfying activity can lead to mischief and eventually delinquency. Mr. Hoover also believes that the employed boy gains experience in good citizenship and acceptance of responsibility.

U.S. News & World Report for Oct. 5 stresses delinquency in attempting to explain "America's Biggest Crime Wave":

> The big wave of crime that hit the U.S. at the end of World War II still is growing. An even bigger growth is foreseen by law-enforcement officials over the next several years.
>
> This year an all-time record of major crimes is being set. On the basis of figures compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the first six months of this year, major crimes will total nearly 2.6 million in 1956—a rise of more than 14 per cent.
>
> Over the next few years, this trend toward more crime is expected to continue. The number of criminal offenses committed in the future will make present figures look small, unless there is a large and unexpected downturn in the number of juvenile delinquents. That is the warning that J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the FBI, is issuing repeatedly to local police officials.
>
> Teen-age criminals commit half the burglaries, more than 40 per cent of the larcenies and a considerable number of the robberies that now clog police records. For the growth of crime in general, most blame is being attached to juvenile criminals.

From the foregoing, it might reasonably be concluded that one of the best things any parent can do for his child is to teach him how to work. Definite chores, whether paid or unpaid for, are obviously good preparation. In addition to work around the home, part-time outside employment may often be welcomed. We are reminded here of a question appearing in Richard M. Weaver's *Ideas Have Consequences.* "Are you prepared to see," Weaver asks the over-privileged of the twentieth century, "that comfort may be a seduction?" It is not simply that youths have "too many privileges," but that they are seriously threatened by parental ignorance of the fact that *practical responsibility* provides the only means by which "privilege" may be established or understood.

Various educators have attempted to formulate the logic of what might be called "organic education"—based upon a constructive, participatory relationship between parents and children. Gandhi, we think, achieved profundity with the fewest words on the subject of "Basic Education." For his idea of education turned on one of the most profound of Eastern conceptions, that of "Karma." "Karma" implies that for each human, young or old, there is a cosmic fitness in the relationship established between the individual and his immediate parental and community environment, affording precisely those duties and responsibilities which will demand the most of his creative potential. In Gandhi's school at Sevagram in central India, both teachers and pupils were taught to relate themselves to the economic and social problems of the district in which they lived—and the meeting of these problems, with teachers and pupils working together cooperatively, became the "base" in "Basic Education." It is true that neither Gandhi's teachers nor pupils worked directly for pecuniary gain—a happy state of affairs which placed the emphasis where it belonged—but once the theory is understood the presence or absence of money becomes almost irrelevant, educationally speaking. The social or economic position of the parent—or of the school—can neither be claimed as a "poor" or "good" opportunity for the young.

Applying Gandhi's psychology to contemporary America, one can begin to grasp the fact that the parent's income bracket has literally nothing to do with the functional importance of the home in the life of the child. Both the highly paid and the poorly paid fathers and mothers of our time are engaged in a vast network of activities, and in many of these their children can play an understanding and instructive role. While the family living on a farm can more easily assign tasks which enable the child to see the necessity and value of his participation, even the business executive can bring his managerial know-how home with him, assigning a portion of the budgeting problem, if nothing else, to teen-age sons and daughters. The buying of food, the regular payment of current bills—little matters such as these instruct in practical responsibility. The failure of parents to provide such opportunities may be due both to haste and to a mistaken notion of what is "practical," but, in the long run, if one allows a child to grow to maturity with no *detailed* sense of the disciplines of responsibility, this, too, as delinquency statistics show, is most impractical.

FRONTIERS

Education for What?

THREE months ago, when we printed here a discussion of Maxwell Griffith's *The Gadget Maker* (MANAS, Aug. 22), we spoke of a "devastating analysis" of Massachusetts Institute of Technology in this book. The plan was to quote some of this material, but lack of space prevented. Later, this seemed just as well, since the passage about MIT, on rereading, sounded pretty one-sided. But now we have something on the "other side" to go with it.

The "other side" material is from an address by Edward Kirkland, professor of history at Bowdoin College, delivered at the Dartmouth College Honors Convention in May. Prof. Kirkland's title and theme is "Learn American" (printed in the Phi Beta Kappa *Key Reporter* for October). His point is that education in the United States does not attempt to pour into the student "masses" of facts, but rather seeks to show him where he can find the facts if he needs them. Speaking of the formative period of American colleges, he says:

> For one thing so much of inherited learning seemed clearly useless to the tasks and needs of a country newly settled in a new world. In colleges where classes were held under trees and college presidents might have to shoot Indians, the mastery of Greek, the refinements of *may* and *can*, and the memorization of ten noble rivers in Siberia seemed somewhat of an irrelevance.

It would have been nice if we had left the shooting of Indians to college presidents, since they were probably not very good shots. We hope our Indian readers will forgive Prof. Kirkland this unhappy image. His contention is really that education in America was shaped by the necessities of self-reliant individualism. William T. Harris, the first U.S. Commissioner of Education, is quoted as stating the American ideal:

> A monarchy, aristocracy, or theocracy found it very necessary to introduce the scheme of external authority early. We who have discovered the constitution under which rational order may best prevail by and through the enlightenment and freedom of the individual, we desire in our system of education to make the citizen as independent as possible from mere external prescriptions. We wish to be spontaneous—self-active—self-governing. . . . We give the pupil the conveniences of perpetual self-education. With the tools to work with—and these are the art of reading and the knowledge of the technical tools employed, he can unfold indefinitely his latent powers. . . . The attempt to pour into him an immense mass of information by lectures and object lessons is ill-adapted to make the practical man, after all.

This, says Prof. Kirkland, was the mood of the higher education in America, even before the curriculum became laden with scientific subjects. But the teaching of science profited by the mood. Prof. Kirkland writes:

> Science, like everything else, had to be taught in a new way and in accordance with the new spirit. It is significant that the new schools like MIT were saluted because in them the students themselves found out about the facts of science; they were not told in lectures or in demonstrations staged before them by professors. The key note was the laboratory, not for the professor, but for the whole class. In other subjects, the emphasis shifted away from the recitation in which the student who has mastered exactly the wording of the textbook was the one who got the highest grade. As one bewildered Harvard alumnus informed William James: "I can't understand your philosophy. When I had philosophy we had to commit it to memory."

When all is said and done, however, Prof. Kirkland's tribute is to the production of "practical men." And Maxwell Griffith, in *The Gadget Maker*, takes it from there. The occasion for attention to MIT in this story is the stay of young Stanley Brack, Mr. Griffith's dubious "hero," at "Tech" while acquiring an engineering degree:

> This, then, was the steppingstone Stanley Brack chose for his climb toward fame and the good life, a place of such reputation that any young man could be impressed at the opportunity to study there, to become for a time a part of it. Stanley was impressed, deeply. As a student, he knew a persistent awe at being a student. As a graduate, he was awed at having

> graduated. Never would he suspect the place might be a mill designed for the mass production of a species of intelligent trolls willing and able to tend the flasks, to draw the diagrams, to spin the wheels of industry, for he had not learned—and no college professor had taught him—that wisdom and learning are not one and the same, that a search for fact is quite different from a quest for the might-be and should-be of life.

MIT is of course a terrific success in its chosen field of being "practical." Ask anybody over Hiroshima way about that. And there was undoubtedly a moment in the history of the technical schools of the United States, before we knew anything about "cultural lag," when their magnificent "do it yourself" program was all you could ask of them. The point is, when would a man like William T. Harris, a humane and civilized individual, stop being so proud of the capacity of the American schools to turn out self-reliant and "practical" men, and start wondering about what they were going to do with all this technical capacity? We're sure he wouldn't be so thrilled, today, at the unfolding of "latent powers" in modern engineering schools. Other things have become more important.

Maxwell Griffith leaves the Oh's and Ah's to others. Moodily, he calls MIT a "breeding ground of technicians and engineers," a glory road for the march of progress, commencing "somewhere inside this Babel's tower of modern science." The names of the scientific "greats" are chiseled on the cornices of the temple-like structure of MIT's main building. Mr. Griffith comments:

> Already this place has contributed much to our society. No ideas of a new Darwin or Newton or Aristotle have yet come out of it to shake the world, but practical inventions vital to national defense have been developed in its laboratories and peacetime's load of toil, privation and disease has been eased behind its doors. It is a progressive school, up-to-the-minute. If not the first college, it was very nearly the first to offer instruction in chemical, electrical and aeronautical engineering. It has pioneered the study of radar, mechanical brains, manmade lightning. Its men have been among the first to peer into wind tunnels, the flaming cylinders of internal combustion engines, the invisible structures of molecules. It will, without doubt, be a leader in nucleonics, astrophysics, space travel and sciences as yet unnamed and unborn.

The faculty of MIT is a roster of the illustrious in science. There is a Nobel prize winner around every corner and the keys of Phi and Tau Beta Kappa jingle in most of the classrooms. One senses, however, that Mr. Griffith is a little tired of it all:

> Nowhere in the world is there a greater assemblage of keen minds than here. Nowhere is there such dedication to the proposition that in science lies the way to salvation, world peace, and a world contentment which, because of its nebulous character, is variously termed "a satisfactory standard of living" and "the American way of life" but which, definitely, is present whenever there is widespread ownership of radios, automobiles, gadgets and sanitary fixtures. Excepting, perhaps, the few lost souls who teach history, philosophy, foreign languages, economics and the one-year requirement in English, the professors are big names in their special fields, and to prevent their ossifying in the classroom, the Institute wisely requires them to do original research between classes to serve as well-paid consultants to industry and to author treatises on electronics, geology, thermodynamics, physics, biology, metallurgy, food preservation, aeronautics, chemistry mathematics and architecture both civil and marine. . . .
>
> It is a place of study. The curriculums are awesome compilations of required knowledge, purposefully back-breaking in order that the laggard, the dilettante and the mediocrity may be quickly exposed and packed off to Princeton or Podunk U where he belongs and his place given to some brainy lad who can stand the gaff and appreciate his opportunities. . . . Sooner or later, a Tech man compares his life to that of a dog. The comparison is poor. A pup, unless it is rabid or hopelessly ridden with mange, usually wags and wheedles a certain amount of attention and affection, but a Tech student's life is one of vast indifference. Only sour grades, flagrantly outrageous conduct or tuition in arrears brings him to the attention of the proper official. By his officially accepted presence on the campus, he is assumed to be indifferent and immune to loneliness, restlessness, boredom, to all of life that lies beyond scientific endeavor.

Mr. Griffith admits that certain facilities are devoted to the Lighter Side of the student's life.

There is "a Christian Association to save him," and various intramural athletic opportunities to absorb his excess energy, but all these concessions to the humanity of the undergraduates are entirely secondary to "the classrooms and laboratories, to the engine test cells and wind tunnels which great corporations and industrial tycoons have endowed for the glorification of science, school, and self."

Well, someone may object, what do you *want* of an engineering school? There is no answer to that question. These young men are busy preparing themselves to do the sort of work the modern world respects and is ready to pay for highly. The teachers, like the students, doubtless take themselves and their work very seriously. They can read the paper in the morning and feel a deep sense of "participation" in any number of things that are going on. Why, indeed, should Mr. Griffith, and we with him, feel unsympathetic to all this greatness and achievement?

The trouble, we suppose, lies in the specious authority which attaches to the "greatness" of modern technology. To question the meaning and purpose of all those whirring wheels and electronic wizardry is to sneer at What America Stands For, and who will dare to do *that?* The skilled technologists, we fear, are well on the way to acquiring the egotism of petty satraps and dictators, since they seem so terribly important to the well-being of our society. We have had full measure of the "do-it-yourself" cycle of American history. When is the "think-for-yourself" cycle going to begin? If a patient and reasoned contempt for mechanical achievement can help it along, then this is a theme we should like to see become popular.