

## INDIA—THE FIRST YEAR

THE first year of Indian independence (completed August 15) has afforded opportunity to observe a social and political event which has few parallels in history: the assumption of the powers and responsibilities of self-government by a people naturally endowed with reflective and philosophical attitudes—qualities which are reflected in the maturity of articulate Indian leaders. The study of this event gains importance from the fact that the new Government of India, upon assuming the reins of power, was confronted by peculiarly formidable difficulties and practical embarrassments, these trials coinciding in time with the complex aftermath of the most terrible war of history, when nations great and small stir apprehensively in uneasy fear of another war.

Manifestly, a precise evaluation of the progress of Indian affairs during the past year is beyond the realm of expectation. We doubt if any observer is sufficiently versed in the facts and at the same time possessed of the long-term perspective necessary to form a judgment of this sort. It is possible, however, to take note of the major accomplishments of the Indian Government, and to review some of the critical comment on affairs in India.

On August 15, 1947, sovereignty over India was transferred from the British Parliament to the Indian Constituent Assembly. The Moslem State of Pakistan simultaneously came into being. The Government of India, then, was at once faced with all the difficulties involved in this division of India into two separate States. In an atmosphere heavy with artificially stimulated religious animosities, a vast reshuffling of populations took place. More than five million displaced persons and refugees from Pakistan had to be provided with housing and relief. The outbreaks of violence connected with the partition of India reached a tragic climax in the assassination of Gandhi by a Hindu fanatic

who objected to the religious tolerance spread by Gandhi's movement. During this period, the eleven provinces formerly constituting British India had to be joined in some functional unity with the 550 odd "princely states" governed in a more or less medieval fashion by hereditary rulers whose authority had been guaranteed by the British empire. In the course of the year, the princely states have been reduced to a total of 24 administrative units an achievement widely recognized as a triumph in cooperation both for Sardar Patel, Minister for States, and for the Princes. The difficulties encountered in Kashmir and Hyderabad have been exceptions rather than the rule.

An important task of the Constituent Assembly was the drafting of a Constitution for India. A Drafting Committee having an "untouchable" for its Chairman produced for India's self-government an instrument embodying the best of the democratic tradition. Contrary to popular impression, the new India is a secular state which provides absolute freedom of religion. Despite the mass migration to Pakistan, there are still 40,000,000 Moslems in India, as well as 10,000,000 Christians and 5,000,000 Sikhs. The followers of these religions along with smaller numbers of Jews and Parsees and others will enjoy equal rights with Hindus under the law. The new Constitution recognizes no distinctions of religion and bars religious instruction by the State or by any educational institution subsidized by the State.

The draft declares illegal child labor, forced labor and slavery; it makes the practice of untouchability a punishable offense, guarantees freedom of conscience, and prohibits any discrimination on the ground of religion, race, caste or sex. It proposes, under "Directive Principles of State Policy," that national affairs shall be conducted so that:

- (1) The citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of employment;
- (2) The ownership and control of the material resources of the community are equitably distributed;
- (3) The operation of the economic system does not result in the concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment;
- (4) There is equal pay for equal work for both men and women.

Among India's most crucial problems is the production of more food for her enormous and growing population. This means extensive land reclamation and additional production of foodgrains, fish, fruit and dairy products. Irrigation is also a field for great expansion. While India has nearly 80,000 miles of canals to water her agricultural lands, it is reckoned that only six per cent of this wealth in water is now being used. Several great projects for water utilization and distribution are planned by Indian engineers. A dam higher than the Hoover dam is proposed for the Chhatra Gorge in Nepal, which will afford as much electrical power as the Grand Coulee project in the United States.

The drive for the industrialization of India is under way. By 1950, three automobile factories are expected to be producing 20,000 cars a year. The first steamship (8,000 tons) constructed by Indian labor for an Indian navigation company was launched last March. The textile industry is the largest in India. There are 380 mills which employ nearly 600,000 workers, with annual cloth production valued at \$1,200,000,000. The handloom industry, using surplus yarn of the mills, supports 10,000,000 workers and their dependents. An additional 5,000,000 persons work part-time on the handlooms of India's cottage industries. Industrial research laboratories are being established in fields such as leather, glass, ceramics, metallurgy, fuels, chemistry and electrochemistry. Indian producers of steel have an annual capacity of 1,264,000 tons, with plans for increased production. A locomotive factory is to be finished in 1950. Other industries to be

developed include the manufacture of paper, synthetic petrol and commercial fertilizer. An institute of nuclear physics was founded at Calcutta in April of this year.

More food and more education for India's millions constitute the major problems of the present and immediate future. The resources of the new country were early drawn upon to establish 160 refugee camps to accommodate 1,250,000 refugees from Pakistan. The largest of these camps, called Kurukshetra, spreads over nine square miles in East Punjab. It sheltered a peak total of 300,000 persons in November, 1947. Today, India has need of 300,000 doctors, 778,000 nurses, 70,000 health visitors and 1,000 midwives. It is the aim of the government to end illiteracy, which is now 87 per cent, within five years. This goal creates an immediate demand for 2,000,000 teachers. The Indian program for education is under the supervision of the Moslem scholar, Maulana Azad, Minister of Education in the Government of India. (It is of interest that of the fourteen ministers in the Indian Cabinet, only six, including Prime Minister Nehru, are Hindus, the remaining members being two Moslems, two Christians, two Harijans or "Untouchables," one Sikh and one Parsi.)

On the basic question of private enterprise versus nationalization, the Indian Parliament has announced that the Government would be exclusively responsible for new undertakings in the following fields: coal, iron, steel, aircraft manufacture, shipbuilding, the manufacture of telephone, telegraph and wireless apparatus (except receiving sets), and mineral oils. Existing private enterprise in these fields will be allowed to continue for ten years. If at that time the State decides to acquire any productive unit, compensation will be awarded to the private ownership. State enterprises will be operated by public corporations under statutory control of the Central Government. Fields of industrial activity other than those listed are open to either private or cooperative enterprise.

In consideration of the proposed Constitution and the declared objectives of the present Government, it may be said that the leaders of India are endeavoring to establish a liberal democratic republic which takes account of the political development of the Western nations during the past several hundred years. The emphasis on Justice, Liberty, Equality and Fraternity in the Constitution recalls the ideals of the French and American revolutions. The industrial policy reflects the impact of socialist thinking since 1848. To the Western observer, it appears that India has strong and wise leaders, and that the national unity produced by the struggle for freedom has not yet been fractured by warring political parties. The bloodshed growing out of communal differences ceased almost entirely after the assassination of Gandhi, showing that the ideal and example of the man who had been their leader for forty years was deep in the hearts of the people, inspiring them to honor him in death even more than in life.

Here, this brief review of India's first year of self-government might naturally end, on what is apparently a note of high optimism and hope for the future. We could quote in conclusion a broadcast of last January by Prime Minister Nehru, in which he said—

"We want a stream of wealth pouring out of our fields, factories and workshops and reaching our country's millions, so that ultimately we might be able to see India fulfill our dreams."

But we are not going to end at this point, nor do we echo with enthusiasm these particular "dreams" of Pandit Nehru. For as we see it, there is little, so far to suggest that the Indian Government knows how to prevent the development of the contradictions inherent in Western industrialism or is even aware of them in anything more than a rhetorical sense. The principles that have been declared for India are admirable, but those principles have been declared before, by other countries. It is the policies adopted, ostensibly in support of those principles, which must be examined, to see whether they do

in fact support them, or will lead instead to a society constructed on their practical negation.

Unless some body of social thought considerably in advance conventional liberal-democratic ideology of the is evolved within the next fifty years, the twentieth century will pass without any significant contribution to human history. It should be the role of the twentieth century, we think, to elaborate social and economic processes which are consistent with the great principles of liberal democracy, and to prove those processes out in practice. Having this view, it is natural that we should regard with particular interest the comments of Gandhian thinkers on the internal affairs of India, for their criticisms seem to us to embody, at least in outline, the ideals and some of the structure of a new social philosophy.

The Gandhian objective of a warless world is naturally the key to much of this commentary. Gandhi had no sympathy with an economic system which tends to distort the lives of countless individuals and, periodically, to precipitate nations into incalculably destructive wars. For this reason, Gandhi opposed the centralization of industry, arguing that it concentrated wealth in the hands of the few.

A non-violent system of government [he wrote] is clearly an impossibility so long as the wide gulf between the rich and the hungry millions persists. The contrast between the palaces of New Delhi and the miserable hovels of the poor labouring class cannot last one day in a free India in which the poor will enjoy the same powers as the richest in the land. A violent and bloody revolution is a certainty one day unless there is a voluntary abdication of riches and the power that riches give and sharing them for the common good.

Industrialism seeks markets abroad, and extensive foreign trade leads to the need for armed protection of commercial enterprise. The military establishment is it self dependent on the products of industrialism for its armaments, and so the vicious circle develops with no apparent interruption except in the climax of unsuccessful

war. J. C. Kumarappa, a Gandhian decentralist leader, observes:

India itself is being dragged into this whirlpool of violence. Our military expenditure in a budget under a national government is soaring high. As far as we can see, the powers that are interested in enriching themselves are extremely busy fomenting the type of industrialisation that will plunge us headlong over the precipice.

The "Industrial Policy" outlined by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru recently gives us no hope that the government are aware of the dangers lurking beneath such a "Policy." Statements and actions of government indicate that there is no considered policy in regard to the economic development of the country. The government seems to be guided mainly by the exigencies of the case. Whichever interest happens to be vociferous at the time obtains a promise that will suit the party, irrespective of the effect on the country as a whole. . . .

What is wanted is a definite philosophy which will envisage the future of our country and indicate the means of attaining it, and all other considerations must be secondary to this main objective. Given such an objective our country can enunciate a policy which will not only bring peace and stability to our own land but will also usher hope into a world distorted with suspicion and fear.

Dr. Kumarappa points out that the manufacture of goods for export is being encouraged with the claim that this will balance the import of foodstuffs. Opposing this view, he contends that the Indian economy should not be constructed on the basis of dependence upon imported foods, adding—

While we welcome the government's effort to grow more food we would point out that even here we have to restrict our dependence on foreign imports such as petroleum, crude oil, etc., for tractors, and chemical fertilizers, because these again ultimately lead us in an economy where there is danger of international conflict.

He deplores the development of new lands for cultivation, not of food products, but of products for export. India needs, not vast hydroelectric plants, "but production of food, clothing and shelter for the masses." The masses give the government officials their powers, and for them

"to use these powers vested in them to help the industrialist is betrayal of trust."

So, the Gandhian program is clearly a revolutionary program, containing few elements of compromise with the conventional economics of either Capitalism or Socialism. The theory that industrialism creates wealth, which in turn brings national prosperity, and that eventually the benefits of industrial progress will filter down to the Indian masses is a theory wholly unacceptable to the Gandhian economist. Dr. Kumarappa writes:

Russia built enormous "dams, reservoirs and factories" after the first world war at a stupendous human cost. Where are they now? Once again they are building "dams, reservoirs and factories." How long are they going to last? Will history repeat itself in another twenty years? The people are now said to be again "going about in torn clothes and broken-down shoes." What has been the benefit to the common man of all the sacrifices that have been made? How has the world benefited? May India draw its lessons? . . . In India we have not even "clothes" to be "torn" nor "shoes" to be "broken down." Our fundamental thing is food for the very existence. . . .

He protests the general recommendation of the Indian Agricultural Department that more acreage be devoted to growing long staple cotton (suitable for mill use) and Virginia tobacco. It is the people who create and support the government, he says, and the people need food. If the tobacco interests and the textile interests want specialized advice, let them set up a private research agency and pay for it out of their own funds. The public Agricultural Department should serve the great need of the masses, not a few manufacturers. Methods of food-processing which diminish the nutritive value of farm produce also come in for criticism: people are urged to produce more food, but meanwhile the food-values of rice and sugar and oil are destroyed by processing techniques.

The Gandhian doctrines, interestingly enough, are gaining supporters outside of India. Pakistan has adopted the *Khadi* program of hand-spinning

and weaving—a movement sponsored by the late Moslem leader, Jinnah. *Harijan* for July 11 reports the agreement of Eamon De Valera, formerly Prime Minister of Eire, with the Gandhian theory of production for immediate use. "I am aware," he said, "that there is a school which holds that large-scale industries alone would lead to improvement of the standard of living. But I have come to the conclusion that Gandhiji's programme of cottage industries is the right one." Colin Clark, an Australian economist, told the Indians: "If I were an Indian Minister, I should say: "Have as much of your development in the form of cottage industries as possible; regard the factory as a necessary evil." And we find Albert Einstein advising the Indians to avoid modern methods of agriculture. Prof. Einstein told the Vice-chancellor of the Benares Hindu University that "though with the use of huge tractors, machinery and chemical fertilizers, the people could force up production for a time, the eventual result was likely to be complete loss of the fertility of the soil, causing incalculable and irreparable injury to the "country."

But these friendly voices, while straws in the wind, do not carry far. At the present time, we can offer no special reason for thinking that free India will give close attention to the counsels of the Gandhian economists. Gandhi himself anticipated this situation and had said that when India attained her political freedom, the struggle would not be over, but would then really begin. The virus of material progress has deeply infected India, and this, as Gandhi always maintained, constituted the real "conquest," the real imperial power of the West over the East. But the appeal of Gandhi's moral intelligence grows stronger in India, and the practice of actual reconstruction along Gandhian lines will continue to proceed. This movement has a kind of genius, a guiding inspiration, in its simple principles, and as those principles are continuously applied by the few, the few will gradually become the many, and so, increasingly, leaven the thought and the action of the entire world.

It is no small thing to challenge nearly all the preconceptions and assumptions of "progressive" economic theory—to question starkly and insistently the values on which those preconceptions are based. But a beginning has been made; in time, that beginning may grow into the great and peaceful revolution of the twentieth century—a revolution in ideals.

## *Letter from* **FRANCE**

A COLLEGE TOWN.—For a country where people enjoy a relative personal anarchy, France has a surprising amount of governmental regulation in daily life. In other words, while one does not feel restrained or controlled by a strong government, there are constant reminders of the existence of the central authority.

This experience directly affects the material affairs of a large portion of the population. More than a fifth of the people earn their daily bread through a government job or in a nationalized industry like the railroads. And every time one purchases a box of matches, a pack of cigarettes, or some salt for the table, a government monopoly is being patronized. Essential foodstuffs (such as bread, butter, milk, sugar, oil) have long been rationed and price-fixed by the government. A public system of social security provides all workers with dependency allotments, medical expenses and accident insurance—absolute necessities in view of the low salary level. (Of course, employers and employees must finance this system.) Government, as it concerns *material things*, thus assumes great importance to all citizens.

In contrast is the relatively minimal government of *persons*. Personal liberty is traditional (some anarchists have long felt less hampered by government in France than in Britain, the United States, or other countries.) What there is of French government-of-persons, however, seems extraordinary in extent. The traveler or temporary resident in France finds out early in his sojourn about the existence of the multifarious branches of the French government. In order to remain in France legally, a visitor must provide himself with identity papers similar to those required of all citizens. These are obtainable by filling out lengthy forms involving personal history and a certification by the local mayor (or his secretary) as to one's good conduct. A money order must be sent to a regional "*régisseur de recettes*," and six photographs must be included with the application, which is sent to the prefecture along with a letter to the prefect on special "*papier timbré*" (twenty francs a sheet) formally requesting a "*carte de séjour*." The whole process must be repeated every six

months. Most official papers must be made out in three, four or more copies. Expired applications, with their pictures, apparently pass into the archives—nothing of an official nature is ever destroyed.

A white-collar job has been a sort of goal for workers for over a century, and many such jobs have been created. Thousands of people are governmental functionaries, spending endless days over forms, copying, stamping, completing, classifying and filing. (A strong feeling of personal importance seems necessary to each member of such a bureaucracy, judging from the attitudes encountered among them. Could this be due to subconscious doubts as to their true importance?) However, it is well to bear in mind that top-heavy administrations are by no means confined to France; bureaucracies of various kinds seem characteristic of all modern governments.

But despite its elaborate structure for government-of-persons, the French government is far from being an object of awe, respect, or adoration for the population. Government is accepted as one of the necessary annoyances of life, and the existing régime always comes in for heavy criticism. It would appear that, having sacrificed a certain amount of personal freedom to a central authority, the people naturally expect it to afford them a measure of security. And they are most vociferous when they feel that this security is not being provided. Beyond this, all duties of citizens to government (including compulsory military service) are generally considered as additional necessary annoyances, to be postponed as long as possible, and, once begun, to be finished as rapidly as possible. When people think about the government, whoever the incumbent ministers, it is usually to hope that it will avert catastrophe—be it war, protracted strikes, inflation, or civil strife. Aside from this, they are quite content—and anxious—to be left alone by the government, and the less their independence is interfered with the better. One may regret that this independence has not always been used to fullest advantage, but as long as it continues to exist there is room for endless development and improvement in our lives and living conditions. Perhaps this liberty of individual thought and action is today France's greatest natural resource.

FRENCH CORRESPONDENT

## *REVIEW*

### PATIENT PESSIMISM

IT is probably too much to expect a modern historian to deal with the idea of world federation as we should like to see it treated. We say this, having just finished Crane Brinton's *From Many One*, recently published by the Harvard University Press, and being led to wonder why we find this book both "adequate" and dissatisfying.

To say that a Harvard professor's book is merely "adequate" requires some explanation. It is certainly more than this in some respects. Fundamentally, it is a sermon addressed to those whom Prof. Brinton calls the "bright young men" of the world federation movement. The book is adequate in that it speaks with great effect to their minds. These young men, however, are not listening with their minds, but with their hearts, and to their hearts Prof. Brinton has virtually nothing to say.

While dealing with history and its lessons for today, Prof. Brinton is urbane, sagacious and sometimes entertaining. He occasionally reminds us of the late Carl Becker's historical essays, in which scholarship is always present but never intrusive. One could wish that all books on history—even the ones supposed to be full of facts—were written by unpedantic teachers like Prof. Becker and Prof. Brinton. Had they been, history might be better understood, not as "history," perhaps, but as a part of life.

Prof. Brinton's intellectual analysis leaves few doubts. While he draws on the ancient, the medieval and modern worlds to illustrate the difficulties of world federation, the lay reader will probably find most interesting and persuasive the few pages which compare 1787 with 1948. Here, the author deals with the thesis, lately presented by Carl Van Doren in his *Great Rehearsal*, that the achievement of American federation—the United States—is the clinching argument for world federation. Prof. Brinton writes:

I am still unable to believe that the task facing world federationists today and the task facing Franklin, Hamilton, Madison, and others at Philadelphia in 1787 are really comparable. We Americans had in 1787 one language, one law, one cultural tradition, with no more than the sort of provincial differences that separated Boston, Philadelphia, and Charleston; we had worked together as a going concern, as a team, in spite of our quarrels, ever since the first Continental Congress. The nation-states of 1948 have no such common linguistic, legal, or cultural inheritance; they have just fought two major wars among themselves; and their brief and incomplete union in the League of Nations is hardly comparable to our Congress. The League was very little more than a form of the balance of power.

He points out, further, that the American Constitution ultimately obtained the active consent of the people of the thirteen states. *Peoples* must make the decision, under the method of federalism. For world federation, all the world will have to understand, to want and accept a constitution. Accordingly, there are obvious problems, such as the winning over of the Chinese, the Arabs, the Russians . . . and the Americans. Who, asks Prof. Brinton, will sign acceptance for Spain? for China? And what about the Africans and Polynesians? Federal union now, Prof. Brinton thinks, will be as difficult as growing oranges outdoors in New England.

We come now to the source of dissatisfaction in Prof. Brinton's book. So far, we have been able to quarrel with little he has said. He speaks as a benign "realist," patiently returning the attention of impulsive federalists to the facts of history. There is unquestionable value in this, but when, in his Conclusion, he presents a theory of human types, and through some blindness that we have no time to try to diagnose, proceeds to lump H. G. Wells, James Harvey Robinson, Plato, the Hebrew prophets, the "whole-hog reformers" and "the revolutionists of the spirit" in a single category of objectionable and often dangerous "perfectionists," it seems a simplification which a

learned historian of Harvard University ought not to permit himself to make.

It is true that both Wells and Robinson were reformers impatient of the slow processes of social change, and that both sprinkled their more evangelical writings with a generous supply of "musts" and "oughts." Like the bright young men of the world federation movement, they wanted to see things *get done*. Prof. Brinton, with great common sense and a knowledge of history, points out that, crisis or no crisis, with or without atomic bombs, human progress is not to be hastened by organizational fervor. But that is about all that he will point out. Not only history, but "traditional Christianity" as well, he says, suggests that "the New Heaven on earth" is pretty much of an idle dream. Traditional Christianity, or its neo-orthodox exponents of today, would say that Robinson, Wells, Plato and the other Perfectionists held too high an opinion of human potentialities—they ignored, the weakening imprint of the Original Sin as well as the facts of history.

But Plato, who may have been some sort of perfectionist, did not share the theory of progress held by Mr. Wells and Prof. Robinson, and he understood the problem of evil in human life better, we think, than either the theologians of "traditional Christianity" or Prof. Brinton. Plato was devoted to the proposition that men can make themselves better if they become philosophers. He maintained that the world will never become better except by this means. We, at least, can find no other clear meaning in the Platonic dialogues, and this is something quite different from the "hurry-up" social reformism of Mr. Wells and Prof. Robinson.

Prof. Brinton, in this book, had opportunity to say to the devoted young men of the world federalist movement, "Not that way, this way." But Prof. Brinton has no "way" at all. He tells us only that the world is young and humanity tough enough to survive atomic bombing. We had rather be world-federalists ourselves, than believe,

with him, that "Plato was all his life trying to grow oranges outdoors in a sub-freezing temperature." But the choice is not only between sin-confessing passivity and a Wellsian earthly utopia. That, we think, is what a historian with imagination and a sympathetic understanding of human eagerness for a better world might have explained.



## *COMMENTARY*

### A POINT OF VIEW

WHILE gathering material for the article on India, we went through a large number of Indian newspapers and periodicals, among them several issues of *Mysindia*, an illustrated weekly undoubtedly published in Mysore, although we couldn't find the editorial masthead to be certain about this. The articles in *Mysindia* seem generally good; we had hoped to quote one or two appearing in the Indian Independence Day issue (August 15), but space was lacking. *Mysindia* should interest the American reader for a number of reasons, one being the occasional indications of the penetration of Gandhi's ideas at a level where one would not ordinarily expect it.

*Mysindia* is by no means an organ of the Gandhi movement, but a publication with an obvious interest in advertising revenues. It is well filled with advertisements of proprietary medicines, tonics, toilet goods, food products, textiles and industrial and banking services. In flattering imitation of Western sales promotional techniques, a soap manufacturer heads an "institutional" type of ad with a quotation from Prime Minister Nehru—"More wealth can only come from more production of all kind of goods"—the rest of the ad suggesting that Godrej Soaps, Ltd., is doing its patriotic bit. *Mysindia* also makes a direct appeal to advertisers: "Build your campaign around *Mysindia*," which is a way of saying, "Let's all get rich, happy and patriotic, together."

But *Mysindia* in its editorial columns prints articles which would cause American advertising managers to lose sleep at night and to write off-the-record letters to the publisher in the daytime. We have in mind one called "The Price of Civilization," which appeared in the August 8 issue. The writer, reflecting the Gandhian idea of simplicity in daily life, argues that "civilization," with its multiplication of needs and transformation

of luxuries into "necessities," has practically ruined the life of ordinary people.

First, he says, you think you have to sleep on a bed. A bed needs a mattress. The mattress requires sheets; and pillows need covers. You must have blankets, and then a bedcover to keep them clean. He then starts on the automobile, going on and on, observing finally that there is no limit to the things that "we simply *must* have in our home." In contrast, there is this account:

I have been into many homes. Large homes, small homes, dirty homes, poor homes, but the one that struck me most forcibly was that of a certain Brahmin gentleman. In his bedrooms the maximum of furniture was one cupboard in which the clothes were kept; one clean mat rolled up and put away after sleeping; one small pillow. In the dining room there was no furniture at all. They ate their food sitting on a clean mat off well washed leaves. The leaves were thrown away after the meal. He and his family were healthy, happy and wealthy.

We are advocating nothing particular in this editorial, but simply exhibiting a point of view. It has, we think, some virtues.

## CHILDREN ... AND OURSELVES

THE contention that adults may often learn things of considerable value from the ideas and attitudes of youth will by this time be familiar to our readers. While it is difficult to determine what conditions of life may be accepted more unquestioningly by youth than by adults, and what conditions may be questioned much more radically and persistently by young people, it is plain that when a youthful mind *does* begin to question, the resulting line of thought will not be easy to sidetrack with suggestions of making a "necessary compromise" or choosing "the lesser of two evils."

We are familiar with one instance wherein both parents of a high school student and several of his teachers were led to do some serious thinking on an important subject, by what appeared at first to be just another case of youthful arrogance. The members of the class of a public high school were informed that they must attend a baccalaureate ceremony in order to complete the requirements of graduation. This student asked why he must go, and he also objected to the introduction of any forms of religion into the graduation program. His teachers patiently explained that there was nothing "sectarian" about this particular baccalaureate gathering, since ministers from many denominations were represented on the program. But the student remained recalcitrant. He felt that the legitimate requirements for graduation were exceeded if any type of attention to religious subjects was compelled.

Of course, the young man was right. Complete separation of Church from State and public school does not mean "a fair hearing for the ministers of different faiths," in the school context; it means no hearing at all. However harsh such a dictum might appear, it can be substantiated both by the recent Supreme Court decision (*McCollum vs. the Champaign, Ill., Board of Education*) and

by reference to the expressed intent of those who originally framed the Constitution of the United States. Upon this subject there seems to have been a high degree of mutual accord among Jefferson, Washington, Thomas Paine, James Madison and others. These men, if they acknowledged any sort of philosophical or religious classification, were Deists, and Deism rejected any and all forms of the sectarian attitude.

The American public school system which later came into being was devised to call attention to the fact that children *could* transcend the feelings of religious provincialism which often surrounded them at home, if given the opportunity, in school, to see that divergences of religious belief need not be considered as relevant to the problem of community living.

A further objection might also be raised, though it is entirely secondary; a true non-denominational baccalaureate would have to include a representative from every one of the many hundreds of religions extant in the world, and should in no instance be limited to representatives of the Christian faith. Buddhism, for instance, is the religion of a large proportion of the world's population: Hinduism and Mohammedanism have many millions of followers. *And there are Buddhists, there are Hindus, and there are Mohammedans in the United States, today.* A completely unbiased representation of religion would, on a democratic basis, be obliged, for this reason if for no other, to give equal time and concern to all of these religions—which is manifestly impractical. Yet even if this were done, the children would still have their attention unnecessarily drawn to the existence of sectarian division.

The framers of the Constitution of the United States and the members of the Supreme Court who recently rendered the decision against the Champaign "released-time program" were not interested in legislating *against* religion or religions. They were interested in preserving the school inviolate from the psychological effect

produced by observing representatives of rival faiths. Those of our young people who have affiliated themselves with one or another denomination, or who will do so in later years, will be stauncher representatives of the *constitutional* viewpoint if they have learned to obliterate all thought of the existence of "religious divisions," at least, while passing through four years of high school.

To get back to the story we started to tell: our recalcitrant youth was passed around from one faculty member to another. Each member of the faculty, upon failing to convince him that the baccalaureate was to everyone's best interests, thought that someone else might be more persuasive. The youth's argument had to be repeated many times, and many times the reply he received was something like, "I never heard of such a thing in all my experience in three high schools!" Finally, when the student was beginning to wonder whether, after all, he might not be woefully obtuse and illogical, the dean of men listened to his story and did a little reflecting. Finally he rendered an opinion similar in spirit to that of the Supreme Court in the McCollum case. For he stated that if any conscientious scruple against attending were claimed, that scruple must be recognized—and respected by both faculty and students.

The dean's decision, of course, was an important part of the "education" which other members of the faculty and administration received from the incident. But the whole episode began with one student—one not especially articulate—and his determination to carry out his conviction in the face of opposition.

Perhaps some day this high school will have a new kind of baccalaureate, in which only faculty members will participate, and with participation restricted to themes which bear upon the extension of the principle of democracy. Or perhaps nothing much will happen except that various members of the faculty will now feel a little uncertain of the eternal rightness of practices

followed for long years—and incidentally, in academic minds, "uncertainty" is often a very fine thing. Education, to deserve the implication of its derivation, should constantly tend away from fixed beliefs.

## FRONTIERS

### “SCIENTIFIC” PSYCHIC RESEARCH

SOME months ago (Frontiers, Aug. 4), we reported the interest of a group of psychiatrists in extra-sensory perception. It now appears that this interest is considerable. A letter in the current *Journal of Parapsychology* (September) makes it known that some New York physicians, many of whom are psychoanalysts interested in telepathy, have recently formed a Medical Section of the American Society for Psychical Research. Another letter, by Laurence J. Bendit, an English practicing psychiatrist, suggests that extra-sensory perception is a part of all normal life, although "hitherto largely unrecognized by science and, usually, by the percipient himself." (Before quoting from Dr. Bendit there is need to inform the uninitiated reader of the meaning of *psi*, a term including not only telepathy and clairvoyance, but also *psychokinesis*. Psychokinesis, in turn, means mind-over-matter in a very specific sense. When a man throwing dice urges the cubes to settle with seven facing up, he is exerting psychokinetic power.)

Dr. Bendit regards psi capacities as "intrinsic and present, though usually latent or unconscious, in every human being." While advocating more clinical study of psychic phenomena, he observes:

In any case, it is well to realize that the laboratory researches into psi are not discovering a new capacity, since psi phenomena have been accepted throughout human history. But the great value in the laboratory work lies in the fact that it has established psi on a scientific basis, a thing which has never been done before. . . . Then there are other things to be studied. One of these is, of course, the truth underlying the claims of prophets and witchdoctors, whether savage or civilized.

Passing by the question of what a *civilized* witch-doctor would be like (a psychiatrist, perhaps, who practices hypnosis?), some attention might be given to whether apparently supernormal powers have never before had a scientific basis. It is true, of course, that until recent years the

general set of modern scientific thought has denied even the possibility of such faculties being "natural" to human beings. But it is also true that there have been other cultures in which psychic powers were recognized and even carefully cultivated—producing the "prophets and witch-doctors" to whom Dr. Bendit refers. Why, it may be asked, were these cultures less scientific—in respect to psychical matters, of course—than our own?

Take for instance the medieval alchemists, whose researches into the processes of human regeneration are examined in a book by Dr. Carl Jung. It hardly needs pointing out that until the miracle of modern transmutation of the elements became an accomplished fact, the alchemists were universally regarded as charlatans and superstitious fools. We have made no thorough study of either alchemy or modern chemistry, but it seems evident from the statements of those who have that the alchemists are now regarded as genuine scientific pioneers. Fritz Paneth wrote in *Science* for Oct. 29, 1926:

Only a few decades ago Hermann Kopp, one of the best historians of chemistry, called the history of alchemy "the history of an error." . . . [Today] the trend of modern chemistry is toward rather than away from the theories which were condemned by the official science of the last century. . . . The ancient hypothesis that a uniform primordial matter might exist has been substantiated by modern knowledge, at first theoretically and later experimentally . . . modern and ancient alchemy are very close in agreement as to the existence of a primordial matter. . . . The greatest significance of modern alchemy is that it has enormously strengthened this early conception and has furnished convincing proof of the unity of the material universe.

In 1939, Dr. Jung published the results of an intensive study of the psychological symbolism of alchemy in his *Integration of Personality*. Explaining the reason for this strange excursion into the past, he said:

I have observed quite a number of actual patients' cases which show unmistakable similarities to alchemistic symbolism. . . . I must confess that it

cost me quite a struggle to overcome the prejudice, which I shared with many others, against the seeming absurdity of alchemy. . . . But my patience has been richly rewarded.

In brief, Dr. Jung concludes that "the true root of alchemy is less to be sought in transmitted philosophical views than in certain experience of . . . the individual researchers." The alchemical transmutation was an inner regeneration. "True Alchemy," says Dr. Jung, "was never a business or a career, but a real *opus* that a man carried on in silent, self-sacrificing labor."

Were, then, the alchemists "scientific"? Surely, they were at least as scientific as those who have ridiculed them during the past two or three hundred years.

It may be said, perhaps, that modern methods of experimentation have placed some kinds of psychical phenomena in a framework of description that is becoming more or less agreeable to the scientists of our time. But other approaches in other epochs are no less "scientific" for having used a different vocabulary and different "techniques." As a matter of fact, Dr. Bendit implies as much when he speaks of "right and wrong methods of development" of psi faculties, saying, "I should, in principle, eliminate drugs, hypnosis, or breathing exercises of the Hatha Yoga or Tantric schools," and when he points out that "genuine yoga writings put psi where it belongs: that is, as a part of the human equipment which develops as the individual develops, a means but not an end."

He speaks also of the inability of even skilled psychologists to distinguish between "what may be called psychic and spiritual values"—a point which needs to be made over and over again for the benefit of Western investigators. Finally, Dr. Bendit suggests what may one day be recognized as the most important fruit of intelligent psychical research—the idea that man, because of the reach and powers of his mind, is possibly more than a mere "creature" of earth. Man may rather be a spiritual being, in essence a force or power of

mind, in whom, through progressive development, far greater creative potencies may become manifest.