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THE CONDITIONS OF GROWTH

THE thing that frustrates so many would-be reformers and planners of social improvement is the unresponsiveness of the people they want to help. These people, we are told, won't even do anything *for their own good,* and the result is often a considerable amount of resentment on the part of those who set out upon works of welfare with high intentions. Every town and city has its quota of disillusioned altruists who suffer from lack of an audience and lieutenants to carry out their program. On a larger scale, the history of past revolutionary movements reveals a surprising number of talented enthusiasts who were unable to make much of an impression on their times. The failure of the radical movement to make any significant progress in the United States is one of the themes of Macdonald's *Root Is Man,* while the plaint of students of cooperatives is that the central ideal of this movement is widely neglected by the members themselves.

It is of course true that some sort of basic lethargy afflicts the great majority of mankind, even in respect to matters of immediate and practical importance to themselves. There is the further fact that time is always a factor when large groups of people are called upon to assimilate new ideas and put them into practice. But after these considerations are allowed for, it is still apparent that great waves of progress have taken place in the past, and it is logical to think that there are underlying dynamics involved in these forward steps which need to be understood.

Some dynamics which have accomplished revolutionary changes may not be desirable. The dynamics of the communist movement, for example, were consciously applied by its earliest leaders, with devastating historical effect. Trotsky, as Max Eastman points out, "was a man with an extreme social ideal and enough mechanical instinct to know that the only force capable of achieving such an ideal is the organized self-interest of the oppressed classes." We have more knowledge, now, of the sort of "social ideal" to which "organized self-interest" may lead. Whether or not Trotsky's brutal assassination was an unanticipated result of the logic of organizing the self-interest of millions of people may be left to future historians to decide; the point, here, is that regimentation of mass self-interest by a tightly organized and ruthlessly determined minority such as the Bolshevist Party has consequences no intelligent man would wish to repeat for any reason this side of sanity.

But what, then, is to be appealed to? This is the question that as yet has no distinct answer among the various groups of "men of good will" who are found in every country where thought remains free. For example, writing on "The Sociology of Cooperation" in the Fall 1953 issue of *Cooperative Living,* the editor, Henrik Infield, observes:

> Although the cooperative movement has spread virtually to all parts of the civilized world and has succeeded in attracting a membership of some 145,000,000 people in 57 different countries by the beginning of the Second World War, its influence in general still is felt very little in world affairs. The discrepancy between numerical strength and lack of persuasive vigor suggests some basic weakness in the nature or structure of the movement. Pertinent studies show that in the overwhelming majority of cooperatives membership is motivated by purely economic considerations. The social aspects of cooperation are almost totally neglected, as demonstrated by the extremely poor attendance at general meetings which rarely exceeds two per cent of the membership. Being incapable of activating its own membership beyond anything but purely economic interest, there should be no wonder that the cooperative movement fails to exert any influence on those who, for one reason or another, are uninterested in the material advantages it has to offer.
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> The weakness of the cooperative movement, it would seem, can be traced to its inertia in all matters related to active participation on the part of the members. The question which becomes crucial for those who want to make cooperative practice if not

> general then at least as extensive as possible must be that of how to induce people to cooperate. . . .

Apparently, the goad of *want* has been primarily responsible for the success achieved by the cooperative movement. This is not, however, even an indirect criticism, for what better response to economic want could be devised? By implication, however, Mr. Infield suggests that the world's problems are much greater than those covered by the economic sphere. He is interested in "the question of *how* to make people cooperate," and has undertaken to find an answer. While awaiting his findings, we hazard the guess that the higher the aims of cooperation, the less tangible will be the "goad."

But there are regions of the world where want is almost omnipresent, yet cooperation difficult to obtain. The *Economic Weekly,* published in Bombay, India, in its November 5 issue has an article concerned with the plight of the Indian peasants, who constitute by far the great majority of India's population. The author, S. K. Dey, writes at length to show that no ordinary program of rural rehabilitation will solve the problems of hunger and want in the villages of India. Indian agriculture, he proposes, is not backward merely because it is "primitive," but because it represents a sort of dead-end of economic decline under which there has been a tragic loss of faith and self-confidence on the part of the masses who work with the soil. Mr. Dey continues the analysis:

> How is the crisis of confidence to be overcome in the village community? How is that community to be induced to take up a program for its own improvement? The demoralization is so great that there is little consciousness of common objectives or collective well-being. Each one gropes his own separate way to death. The needs which press most are few in number and elementary in character. They are also identical for all the people in this state of primitive relapse. What course can be more obvious than to come together to join each one's small force with that of every other and strive for common satisfactions? It is this way of looking at the problem which prompts the prophets of cooperation. Yet, to one who has insight, nothing is more obvious than that this way is not in the least obvious to the affected people themselves. This way, it must be noted, is vastly different from instinctive gregariousness. It comes of reasoned thinking. Its steady pursuit calls for a rational ordering of one's own conduct. Such thought and conduct are easy and effortless only to those for whom the exercise of reason is a habitual practice. Reason is at low ebb in the mind of the villager at the moment. Detached observation, objective thinking and critical judgment, which are the manifestations of the rational process, are now held in suspense in his dazed and morbid condition. The pedlar of the cooperative formula, coming from a superior level of existence, sees the villager in his own image. This is insidious conceit, parading as virtue and leading to folly.

In the light of these observations, one sees the practical wisdom of Gandhi and his program of spinning for the villagers. While Western critics who quoted production statistics of textile mills to show how hand-spun and handwoven fabrics could not possibly "compete" with manufactured cloth may have been technically correct, their claims were practically irrelevant. Spinning was something that the villager could start in to do *at once.* And it was a means of his *becoming productive,* of forging a new self-respect. But to return to Mr. Dey:

> The cooperator is one jump ahead of our problem. Hence, he misses it altogether, and either lands himself in frustration, with undeserved discredit to his ideal, or slips into worse mischief by desperate resort to coercion, at first surreptitious and shame-faced, but gradually growing more callous, until his men are turned into a herd of sheep.

Here, Silone's *Bread and Wine* supplies a pertinent comparison with conditions among the Italian peasantry, after the Italian socialists led by Mussolini had turned fascist, by some such process, perhaps, as Dey describes. But this is not human welfare; it is human betrayal:

> It is only the men who matter. Promotion of their good is the end of every social endeavor. It is also the justification and excuse for every restraint imposed upon human conduct. That good can be defined in only one way. It is the continuous unfoldment of the creative potentiality of the human being. In this man is singular, set apart not only from the rest of the organic world, but also from the rest of his own kind. The pursuit of the similarities between man and man can have only one object in view, which is the utmost development of the essential dissimilarity inherent in each. It is this singularity

> which gives distinction and meaning to personality and character and makes every human being irreplaceable in life. To cherish this quality is the true purpose and inspiration of the democratic faith.

Mr. Dey continues, insisting that whatever *is* done for the villagers—and it would be better for us to say *with* the villagers, rather than for or *to* them—must involve the essence of this end in the means which are chosen to help them. Now comes a point which may have some novelty for Western readers:

> The primitive quality of our villager is not authentic. He is not primitive by original right. He has only relapsed to a primitive state. He is not overflowing with animal energy, the barbarian's zest, the pagan's avidity for life. The urge to grow throbs faintly. It is still there, else there would be no question of development any more, but it has to be recovered from under an accumulating crust of degradation and despair The first task in rural rehabilitation is to persuade the villager that it lies within his power to rise above his present condition through his own exertion. The target for this purpose must be the individual villager. There can be a program of recovery even under current limitations. But it can be effective only if the villagers will work it themselves, and they will do so only if they will glimpse in it a promise of release from immediate pressures. This recognition and the response of energy that follows this recognition are acts of the individual mind. It may come to a number of individuals at once. It may spread from one to another in a chain. But the challenge must hold the attention and rouse the will separately in the case of each of these persons. It is only thereafter that they will find a reason to join together for a common effort. There is no scope for mass approach in this situation. The mass can only be driven. . . . Self-impelled progress is possible only through self-realizing individuals, each of them endowed with a separate identity. The regeneration of human values must begin with a revival of consciousness of distinction. The resurrection of the individual must therefore be our first concern. Group action is a subsequent discovery as a useful device for the assurance of increasing freedom for individual creativeness. The group is of value only because the individual can attain fuller stature in association with other individuals. . . .
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> We must visualize the villager in his own true image as an independent being and not as a pale and distorted reflection of ourselves. There must be reverence for his singular person, realization of his capacity for infinite achievement. He must cease to be regarded as a specimen of a generalized type, one of a collection of uniformities, a standard measure for an indistinguishable aggregate, but come to be cherished as the dynamic embodiment of a wholly unique quality, the continuous unfolding of which is the abiding goal of all human effort . . . The cultivation of this attitude is the starting point of all effective social action.

There is a kind of intellectual passion in these words, which we are bound to respect. And here, it may be, is the key not only to the problem of the Indian villager, but to the problems of human beings the world over: recovery of self-respect, self-reverence, self-reliance. It is easy to suppose, since, relatively speaking, the United States is a land overflowing with material plenty, that the American people have no problems comparable to those of India. But it is no falsification to say that Americans are finding their material possessions tasteless and insipid, that the restlessness and neuroticism of the typical American community may be rooted in a similar loss of individuality. It is even possible to say that the problems of Americans are more difficult because they do not come to dramatic and self-evident focus in poverty and hunger. It is a starvation of the spirit, gnawing conscience, perhaps, and resulting fears and suspicions which exhibit human nature in its most unlovely aspects.

How different the American of today from the American of the frontier! How different the American, even, of fifty years ago from his children in their prime. Apart from subtle psychic considerations which have no clear explanation, there is the tremendous growth of public and private institutions which tower over the individual of today and control his behavior and even his thought, whether directly or indirectly. Both his pleasures and his ideals are manufactured for him by appropriate authorities. The frontier is gone, the conditions of primitive freedom exist nowhere on earth—not, at least, as they did at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the terms of the expanding economy of eighteenth-century dreams, the world has been "used up." We have inherited the

conventional slogans of those dreams, but the stage for playing them out has disappeared.

It is a question, as in India, of rediscovery of the self, but for Americans this must be a largely subjective discovery; we have the misfortune of having eliminated the authentic economic problems from our lives, and are confronted only with the dark harvest of economic abuses and incalculable economic waste from wars and riotous living, which assume the specious garb of "economic problems."

How foolish, then, are those who set the problem in terms of familiar slogans which have no vital application to the present state of mind in America. It is a question of dealing in terms of things that people *care* about, and if we cannot find things both worthy of pursuit and cared about, why, then, we have exactly nothing to say—nothing, that is, that has hope of moving the hearts of large numbers. In India, before the formation of the Indian Republic, men like Gandhi and Nehru found in the ideal of national freedom a key to the hearts of Indians. The key was turned, the freedom was won, and now there are hosts of new problems. But as Dey implies, the new problems—which in this case are not really new, but emerge as primary since freedom was obtained—are not capable of solution by the "group action" of a nationalist movement. Another level of human resources must be tapped to meet these new problems, and observers like Dey are pointing out that before such resources can be tapped, they must be *built up*.

This, quite evidently, is a long, slow process, for India, for America, for the world.

India has the advantage of the rest of the world in one respect. She had her man of the hour in Gandhi. Gandhi labored for the dignity of the individual and his love of the Indian masses was felt by them. Through this touch of the heart, great things became possible for India. India *cannot*, even though she try, forget or erase the work of Gandhi. His inspiration has seeped into countless cracks and crannies of the Indian mind and its leaven is at work, as it works elsewhere in the world. Even in neglect of Gandhian philosophy, Indians will be aware of his presence, if only in quiet moments of reflection. His greatness will haunt even the confirmed "rationalists" who suppose they know far better. And, through the centuries, his labors will have altered Indian history beyond calculation. But Gandhi's prime example, let us note, was that of a fearless, self-reliant individual. Unlike some other heroes of history, his was a *moral* power, his message that moral power can become a mighty force.

The thing to be remembered is that the moral authority of a single, determined individual can sway the course of empire. It is this secret of individuality that is more important even than the world peace for which Gandhi labored, for it is indeed the condition of genuine peace.

Whether, in the course of decades, there will be "men of the hour" for other lands is not a question worth discussing. America had such men in Thomas Paine and one or two others. What is important is the question of whether there exists a sense of values to which such men may appeal, for without a reservoir of values to draw upon, even the greatest of leaders must remain impotent. This is the insight of Dostoevsky's chapter on the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov*.

There is one thing about the present scene which is encouraging, and that is the children of our time. While our acquaintance among children is not abnormally extensive, there seems to be, at least among the children we do know, a temper of independence and questioning that is likely to be needed a generation hence. Parents may wonder and worry, and teachers may be troubled and stumped, but with all their experience and worldly wisdom, they do not know how to prepare the young for the world they will soon enter. The best we can do, perhaps, is to help them to arrive at maturity with as little as possible of prejudice and assumption of knowledge that is not theirs—nor ours.

THE ARTS OF PEACE

A CENTURY ago, the heads of States, when they talked about going to war, began to stress the high principles that would be served—a view of war that has been uppermost in the West until quite recently. Now, however, a new note is appearing in the pronouncements of high officials. In a recent memorable address, President Eisenhower declared:

> Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies—in the final sense—a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed.

There is no reason to think that this did not come from the heart of the former general, representing convictions growing out of a lifetime of military service. The point, here, is that while the President of the United States may not be ready to "renounce war as an instrument of national policy," he harbors few of the century-old illusions about the gains that war may bring to civilization.

Even more impressive were the utterances of Rajendra Prasad, President of the Republic of India, before a world seminar on non-violence held last year at New Delhi. Dr. Prasad began by referring to the incongruity of his presence at the conference, for, he explained, "I am supposed to be the head of a state which has not renounced war, which has not abjured violence, which still maintains her army; not only that, a state also which has not accepted and implemented Gandhiji's economic program." Yet the final words of India's President to the Conference were these:

> Unless some nation today takes its courage in its own hands and comes out with a clear-cut program of no war under any circumstances, defensive or offensive, no armament of any kind, the battle for nonviolence will continue and will not end in victory.
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> Some nation has to take that courage; I do not know who will. Evidently we today are unable to do it, although we claim to be the inheritors of Gandhiji's teaching. But somebody has to do it. . . . I am sure this seminar would have done a good deal if it could lay before the world this aspect of Gandhiji's teaching, which is, I consider, a practical proposition, a proposition which can be implemented only if we have the courage to do it. (Quoted from *Fellowship* for March.)

REVIEW

ACCOMPANIMENTS OF NATIONALISM

A FEW weeks ago someone mailed us a copy of the *American Nationalist*—a fortnightly we find instructive because its almost psychotic content demonstrates so effectively that anti-Communism, anti-Semitism, Jim Crowism, McCarthyism, and Tenneyism may all have psychological common denominators. A perusal of this paper (write to Box 301, Inglewood, Calif., for a sample issue) may shock readers who have never seen blatant examples of anti-Semitic propaganda of the sort one usually thinks of only in connection with the late and unlamented Nazis. But there are not only "late" Nazis; there are early Nazis and Nazis who have been the same for a long time, and who are always with us, whatever their political pseudonyms.

The lead article of the *American Nationalist* is headlined, "Soviet Jews Emigrate to Israel," and gives an idea of the propaganda techniques employed. Alleged to emanate from Budapest, the story asserts that "Jews are actually receiving preferential treatment—Gentiles are never allowed to emigrate"—a statement which is accepted as "prima facie evidence that Jews continue to enjoy a very special status in the Communist world." This incredible logic is accompanied by the following explanation:

> Very few Gentiles, however, will recognize the true significance of these Jewish migrations from Soviet territory. The typical American is simply not equipped to understand the situation because he has been propagandized into believing that Jews are fleeing Soviet domination to escape "persecution." And it is not likely to occur to him that victims of Soviet persecution are NEVER accorded the privilege of emigrating to another country. . . .

Other "news items" occur under titles such as "Jews Organize for Nation-Wide Fight on McCarran Act" and "Army Wives Imperiled by Negro Rape Attacks." In the latter story, our President shows up very poorly in the opinion of Editor Frank Britton. Current progress towards ending Jim Crowism in the army received the following comment:

> Eisenhower's complicity in this Jewish scheme to mongrelize our Armed Forces can no longer be regarded as merely a fatuous impulse; he has in fact become an accessory to a criminal conspiracy. Congress should see to it that this filthy "integration" program is halted at once, and in the meantime provision should be made to protect the wives and families of our men in uniform. . . .

We also received in the same promotional envelope a coupon which entitles the possessor to a free copy of a book issued by the same Mr. Britton, bearing the title *Behind Communism*, and think it safe to assume that this book will be another rendition of the claim that Communism is "a Jewish conspiracy." (Having read on page two of the *American Nationalist* that nearly everything that comes out of Hollywood is a "Jewish conspiracy," this deduction does not require any special insight.) A boxed editorial also cries out for a strong "unified leadership" for the "American Nationalist Movement," and proposes General Douglas MacArthur, Senator Joseph McCarthy or Senator Jack B. Tenney of California for the role, expressing the hope that the latter might be "induced" to head a nationalist confederation. "It will take a big man to unify this movement," writes Britton, "and we believe Tenney fits this description perfectly."

It strikes us that America is extremely fortunate to possess a few amazing men like Mr. Britton, since they supply us with an opportunity to examine the philosophical, psychological and ethical implications of the hate-filled, factually distorted arguments forming their stock-in-trade. In countries where political tensions are greater and where the tradition of democracy is even less revered, variations of the same themes can precipitate crusades of a dangerous nature. There is no use, of course, in hating Mr. Britton in turn, for he and those who lap up this sort of stuff are subjects for psychiatric commiseration. They are suffering from paranoid tendencies. Their presence among us should rather lead to an effort

to ferret out less obvious forms of the same complex. Many "one hundred per cent Americans," for instance, who would be horrified at Mr. Britton's fascist sheet, may nevertheless support McCarthy and feel he is "doing a good job." But the means and methods employed by McCarthy are precisely the same as those reflected by the *American Nationalist.* Whether or not Sen. McCarthy is an accredited paranoid, no honest psychologist can fail to see that he has utilized the paranoid proclivities of our population, and has reached eminence principally by this means.

Paranoia and partisan, reactionary nationalism are indeed one and the same thing. The common denominator, though, defies labels, for it is the same complex which promoted the burning of witches in Salem, the tortures of Torquemada during the days of the Spanish Inquisition, and the mass extermination of Albigenses during medieval times. What the paranoid is trying to do is to localize the evil of the world, personify it, and give himself the illusion of nobility by proposing to destroy it. The paranoid might be identified as the polar opposite of the philosopher. The philosopher searches for truth, while the paranoid searches for a means of blinding himself to the truth of his own portion of responsibility for conditions not to his liking.

All paranoids, and all partisan nationalists, are believers in the devil, whether or not they admit to theological inclinations. The devil may be a gross doctrinal invention, or the devil may be "Communism," or "Jewishness," or the doctrine of racial equality. In any case, when this "devil" seizes the heart of a man—that is, when he becomes a Communist, a Negro-lover or an opponent of McCarthy—he is regarded by the paranoids as fatally obsessed. The devil must be exorcized and destroyed, no matter what the Cost to the victim. As a sidenote on the *American Nationalist,* we observe that Mr. Britton takes Quentin Reynolds to task for circulation of a false "German atrocity tale." Mr. Britton, of course, likes the Nazis because they were boldly anti-Semitic, but if Mr. Britton's statement of a British Intelligence Service Officer's repudiation of the Reynolds story is accurate, we have here a reminder that most of us presumed non-paranoids are often prone to believe tales of heinous acts. This, again, is not the way of the philosopher, who realizes that belief in *anyone's* perpetration of evil, as long as it remains a "belief," has nothing to do with truth nor with philosophy. Mr. Britton is delighted to find that Canadian newspaper men, noting discrepancies in the tale of George Dupré, whom Reynolds has described as being horribly tortured by the Nazis, discovered that Dupré had never been in France and had never been captured by the Germans. So, in a small way, the *American Nationalist* thus provides a correction to the paranoid tendencies of the "other side." While trying to cure one brand of paranoia with another has never proved successful, the Dupré story at least enables us to argue that *reflection* upon Mr. Britton's words and attitudes is not without value, despite his condemnations of others.

Incidentally, the use of the word "nationalist" in the title of this publication naturally leads to questions about other meanings of "nationalism" in the course of history. Perhaps we don't hear enough of the word today, either in the constructive sense of Edward Bellamy's humanitarian "Nationalist Movement" of the last century, or in respect to the kind of nationalism we don't like. If not much is heard about the dangerously partisan sort, this may even be because we have absorbed some of its elements without knowing it, and hence do not recognize them—when they appear. The early twentieth-century liberals used to talk about "nationalism" a good deal. They were worried about it, and they were against it. They saw partisan patriotism as an inevitable seed of war. Not so much is said about nationalism today, and this neglect may quite properly be regarded as ominous. For surely the world has not seen the end of military rivalries.

This introduces an important minor theme occurring in *The Root Is Man.* Having noted the change in political mood of most labor organizations—a change toward reactionism and away from internationalism—Macdonald refuses to allow certain modern "liberals" a right to the name. He explains:

> The old liberals *were* liberal—they believed in free trade and free speech for everybody and they detested the State as a collective restraint on the individual—but the modern "liberals" limit freedom to those who are "progressive," i.e., on the side of "the people" and "the workers"; as for the State, they love it, if it's on *their* side.

Few labor parties of today are "liberal" and international in the old sense. Evidence that labor has gone nationalist in Britain is suggested by a London news dispatch (printed during Atlee's ministry and quoted by Macdonald) noting that "Britain's secret service will cost about $10,000,000 during the coming year, according to government civil estimates published today. This is five times more than was spent in 1939." Macdonald continues:

> Australia has had a 100% Labor government since 1943. All but 3 of the 19 cabinet ministers are former trade union officials. This government carries out a "White Australia" policy, i.e., complete exclusion of all immigrants with brown, black or yellow skins. It also complains that the reactionary General MacArthur is "too soft" on the defeated Japanese people.
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> The New Zealand government is also completely Labor, has been in office since 1935, and has put through a great deal of very "advanced" social legislation. It also bans all Asiatic immigrants.

Many of today's "liberals" are espousing a form of nationalism. Macdonald summarizes: "They want Full Production, Nationalization, Planning, and above all Security, of both the Social and the National varieties. There is nothing in these demands incompatible with the interest of the ruling class in organizing a strong nation to compete militarily with other nations."

There are still other varieties and shades of nationalism, such as that which represented India's efforts to free itself from British domination, and which also characterizes other nationalist movements in Asia and Indonesia. These movements are attempts to become self-respecting and self-sufficient, not to be identified with the sort of nationalism which becomes militarily aggressive, or the sort which shows a determination to retain a *states quo* regardless of a neighboring nation's circumstances.

COMMENTARY
PROJECT IN BROTHERHOOD

INTERESTING evidence of how the idea of world citizenship is filtering into the popular mind is supplied by a recent report that Lew Ayres, the film star who startled Hollywood during the war by declaring that he was a conscientious objector, is planning a tour of the world to make a factual motion picture on comparative religions. He plans to visit some fifteen countries and to photograph local religious practices. "I believe," he says, "that a comparison of beliefs makes for understanding and understanding makes for peace. . . . I hope to show that ethical and moral precepts are enough alike all over the world to make brothers of all men."

Ayres plans to exhibit the film before university and general audiences on a lecture tour of the Western Hemisphere. He also expects to accumulate material for a book and some articles.

While we have no doubt that the camera can be of use in bringing about mutual understanding, we suspect that Lew Ayres will do more good with his lectures than with his film. The photogenic side of religion almost always involves ritual and ceremony, and these, more often than not, are a divisive rather than a uniting influence. But perhaps Ayres expects to show how similar religious conceptions lie behind widely differing rites. One wishes, however, that Lew Ayres could get together with Grace Clements, who has an extraordinary collection of photographs covering the religious symbolism of the Orient. A note of this sort might add considerably to educational value of the project.

But we won't complain, whatever Lew Ayres does. He says that the film represents "a life-long dream" and that he originated and is financing it himself. A man who dreams such dreams and then carries them out is bound to exert a beneficent influence, wherever he goes, and the peoples in other lands who receive and help him with the project are bound to regain something of the friendly feeling toward the United States which was once natural to the many millions who regarded the statue of liberty in New York harbor as a symbol of America's promise and opportunity. Lew Ayres' purpose is in that tradition:

> "The central theme of my lectures will be world peace," he has announced. "My objective in them will be to increase tolerance and understanding between the distant peoples of our rapidly shrinking earth."

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

ONCE having started writing on "what nature can teach us," it's a little hard to know when to stop. But before consenting to spare readers who may consider the subject already overdone, we must manage something on "the sea," along with "the mountains" previously discussed. Our opening text is from Macneile Dixon, who, though revealing no penchant for "nature-appreciation" of the usual sort, finds man's relation to the oceans aptly symbolic of psychological existence:

> Life is like the sea, never at rest, untamed, moody, capricious, perilous. Many a man who knows the sea has sworn, and sworn again, that once on land he would never more embark upon so inclement, so treacherous, so hateful an element. And few who have so sworn have not heard with aching hearts her call, and longed for her bitter and incomparable society. Like life she lays a spell upon them, a spell not resident in her smiles, though smile she can, nor in her calm, though, like life, she, too, has her seasons of calm, her sheltered lagoons and quiet havens. Men are said to love flattery. The sea never flatters. They are said to love ease. She offers toil. Like life she deals in every form of danger, and many modes of death—famine, thirst, fire, cold, shipwreck. Like life she strips men of their pretensions and vanities, exposes the weakness of the weak and the folly of the fool. Wherein then lies the fascination, against which the soft Lydian airs cannot with men that are men prevail? It flings a challenge and human nature rises to a challenge. Men are by nature striving creatures, heroically stubborn, as is the mind itself. They love best when they do for themselves, for what they themselves make they have a great affection; what is given them out of charity they value less. The world seems somehow so made as to suit best the adventurous and courageous.

From the voyages of Ulysses to the present, then, the sea has meant adventure. And, as Dixon says, none who are intrigued by its promise care only for calm weather. What their hearts desire is the knowledge that they can achieve fearlessness in the face of the worst storms. Even in our time, the mere exploiters of the ocean—those whose palatial yachts merely transpose a section of Fifth Avenue to a buoyant platform—are not the ones who spend the most time upon the waters. The Merchant Marine, the Coast Guard and the commercial fishermen, who inherit part of the tradition of ocean-inspired hardihood, number many whose call is not fundamentally different from that of Ulysses. And these men, we may think, know a certain brand of happiness when weathering gales, a kind of happiness they may never know again if this mode of livelihood is subsequently changed.

The sport of sailing, in its smaller way, also teaches much which is rare. One does not sail in a momentary burst of excitement; patient time must be spent in mastering knowledge of currents and winds. No form of sailing allows a man, moreover, to *demand* excitement whenever and wherever he feels the urge for psychic stimulation. He can prepare for the times of test, but he cannot hasten them. He must learn to endure, to come to terms with the ocean's habits in order to be master of excitement when it does arrive. The contrasts which he encounters are interesting in other ways. If the sea seems vast and impersonal on certain days, at other times a personal battle seems to rage between its force and one's own. This effect is, of course, illusory, but so are many other things we "take personally."

Bringing the ocean to a child, or rather to a child's consciousness, is a relatively simple matter, and need not require a boat and canvas. Above everything else in importance is learning to feel at home *in* the water, to make of it part of one's total natural habitat. Nearly every child is nowadays taught to swim in approved racing style, but since not speed but endurance in the water is of the most value, this streamlined approach makes few good watermen. How to relax, how to ride out rip currents, how to shift from stroke to stroke according to the activity of the surface these are the lessons most worth learning, and the most important in preparation for the experiences running psychologically parallel in daily living.

Particularly revealing is one's first glimpse below the surface of the sea. Provided with nothing more than an inexpensive face-plate, we are ready to discover that the underneath dimensions can be fascinating, even friendly. The vague forms which usually terrify the mere surface swimmer—waving kelps, sub-surface rocks and darting fish—become familiar objects, known and admired for their own kinds of beauty. Every child should see something of this world beneath, know that it is a world complete of itself, replete with sights and wonders. The lashing of windblown waves hardly disturbs the lower depths, just as the man who knows *his* own depths can restrict reactions to no more than a controlled swaying when emotional waves break over the surfaces of human personality.

Then there are the tides, and these, obviously, can be observed without the assistance of even a face-plate. Their regularity, the inevitability with which their ebbs reveal hidden rocks and shell creatures, only to cover them again, may later make one think of the fact that we are *what we* are, regardless of changes in the condition of our environment. The tides remind us more strongly than any other natural phenomena, perhaps, that rhythms and recurrences constitute a fundamental law of nature. Those to whom the tides are familiar may thus display more equanimity when observing inevitable tides of strength and weakness within themselves. The mind, for instance, inevitably fluctuates in its operation, making great advance in the acquirement of understanding at some times and very little at others. But this fact, in proper perspective, is seen as no cause for despair.

All learning, actually, seems to be cyclical. What we fail to comprehend in one brush with experience may be learned the next time the experience comes around. Often we pass through nearly identical circumstances scores of times before the import of what is experienced becomes clear. So there is no cause for alarm. All men are obtuse at some times, and in respect to certain things. Moreover, we may ultimately set up the rhythms of our own tides, giving the initial impulses which finally form habits worthy to own. This is, perhaps, the root of the Indian doctrine of karma, the belief that each man fashions the web of his own destiny, since every thought as well as every deed sends forth ripples carrying its own patterns to the far ends of a pool and back again to the center. Even the ocean itself can be affected in this way. Here size does not wipe out the effect of a wave; it remains the same, actually travelling a greater total distance when there are no immediate confines to reverse the thrust. So man, with a single thought or inspiration, can send an impulse half or all the way around the world.

Moving from this tenuous abstraction, we may even learn much in respect to the requirements of physical nourishment from the ocean. Here, it is now said, have been harvested the richest mineral deposits from the rivers and streams. Our diets are not satisfactory when food comes mostly from depleted soil, and some experts have indicated we should be wise to use that old-new place of harvesting—the often-thought-useless sea. If we have not already stretched such points too far, we may here find analogy to the plight of the man whose God is physical science, and who now, to regain a sense of belonging to living nature that he may somewhere have lost, has to look beneath a surface upon which he has most often merely played. The religions of our day seem to be on their last legs, and what is more natural than to surmise that in the future, the "old-new" places must be searched again for the sustenance we need?

FRONTIERS

More Important than Politics

NOT long ago, an American writer pointed out that the present generation of youth is the first in history to come to maturity in the consciousness of world affairs. These young people are, in effect, citizens of the world, and, voluntarily or involuntarily, will find themselves involved and affected by the circumstances and decisions of populations living many thousands of miles distant from the United States.

An obvious comment is that this consciousness has been hastened by the war. What is not so obvious is the probability that this "growing up" into world community came by reason of other causes—progress in transportation and communications—and that these developments created the necessity for close relationships with other peoples. Those relationships might have been established peacefully, but they were not, with the result that the natural difficulties in any sort of growth have been made much greater by the psychological confusion spread by war.

Meanwhile, however, the constructive energies which were forced into the background by war have resumed their flow. Literally dozens of books are appearing to press home the need for cooperation by the wealthy, industrialized nations with countries but lately freed or not yet freed from imperialist control. It is encouraging to note, in these days of the sterility of political thought, that men of imagination are finding the great challenge of the age in *world* economics—in the practical problems created by the spread of freedom to many new lands in the East. As P. M. S. Blackett, British atomic physicist and winner of the 1948 Nobel Prize for physics, points out in the *Nation* for Feb. 13, for generations such countries as India, Ceylon, and what is now Indonesia were regarded by their Western rulers as markets for manufactured goods and sources of raw materials. Mr. Blackett continues:

> When, after the Second World War, many of these countries threw off white rule, the ills of Southeast Asia—poverty, underfeeding, disease, and illiteracy—became important factors in international relations. For the new countries of Asia were now able to make their own internal and foreign policy, based on their own view of their own interests. They could choose for themselves with what countries they would trade or have close diplomatic and military relations. Moreover, no political party in these new Asian countries could hope to maintain itself long in power if it did not succeed in improving the lot of its people.

There has been help, of course, from the West. But Blackett notes that the aid has been a weapon in the cold war. He asks: "Since it is motivated less by charity than by fear, what if the fear recedes?" It is here that the challenge of the Soviet economy presents itself to the democratic nations. Even without another war, the political effect in Asia of the economic progress of Soviet countries will make this challenge of incalculable importance. A passage from Chester Bowles' article in *Harper's* for January illustrates the sort of decision that awaits intelligent Asians.

> One night in Nagpur [Mr. Bowles writes] a young American-educated Indian engineer said to me earnestly, "You know I hate communism, and desperately want to see India not only remain a democracy but become stronger and more effective as a free nation.
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> "But," he continued soberly, "I am only twenty-seven years old. I have a wife and two young children. I have thirty or more active years ahead of me, and I don't want to be a martyr and spend those years in a Communist salt mine. So I suppose that I will watch and see whether the Communists grow stronger. If someday it seems clear that they are going to win, I will join them, not because I like dictatorships and dislike democracy, but because there will be nothing else for me to do."
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> His eyes lit up as he added, "Perhaps if communism comes to India it will be a different kind of communism, more tolerant, less bitter, borrowing something from Gandhi. And who knows, perhaps a new kind of communism generated here might eventually soften and modify even the brutal ways of the Russians and Chinese?"

Mr. Blackett details the many sources from which information about world conditions are available, such as reports on the Colombo Plan, the Gray and Rockefeller Report to the President, and President Truman's subsequent Point Four speech, Stringfellow Barr's *Citizens of the World*, and Harold Wilson's *War on World Poverty*. In the same issue of the *Nation*, no less than five new books on world poverty are discussed by Keith Hutchison in the review section. Lord Boyd Orr, whose latest volume is *The White Man's Dilemma*, writes of what he calls the great *"material* issue" facing mankind—"Whether the earth can be made to supply sufficient food for its rapidly increasing human population." This scientist thinks it can, *if* the full resources of modern technology are applied to food production. "The great need," he says, is for "fewer soldiers thinking of armaments and more statesmen thinking of food for the next generation." Fairfield Osborn, another author reviewed, speaks of the attitude of the proprietors of some underdeveloped countries as being against the application of science, so that the problem is not merely one of technology. In South Africa, for example, food production could easily be increased, he says, if Africans were allowed to share in the benefits, but this, however, is a condition "stubbornly ignored by the present rulers of South Africa." He continues:

> Another apparently underpopulated area with large production potentials is the Amazon Valley. Here again are institutional impediments, particularly a land-tenure system that discourages close settlement. It is not lack of knowledge, Mr. Osborn emphasizes, that hinders fulfillment of the world's material needs; it is the barrier "imposed by conditions, cultural and economic, that governs men's actions."

Here are fields of enterprise with vast potentiality for good. If those who now are filled with anxieties about the "communist menace" would pour their energies into constructive projects to increase the food supply of the world, they might be astonished by the rapidity with which political threats and problems would diminish in importance. Everyone with any knowledge at all of the communist movement points out that it thrives on hunger and human tragedy. It would be easy to take the initiative away from the communists by direct, non-political attacks on the problem of world hunger. But, ironically enough, those who are most aroused about the threat of communism seem least interested in the actual causes of the world unrest which supplies communism with its energy and its followers.

Political or ideological conflict has already reached what amounts to the proportion of an obsession. The solution, for those not yet paralyzed by suspicion, is to stop nourishing the obsession with their own fears and to turn their efforts toward nourishing human beings with wholesome food. Since this course, quite plainly, is the only one which will lead to the peace of the world—with or without another war—there is really no reason why men of good will should not endeavor to by-pass the political issues and concentrate on the problem of food. Efforts in this direction would have the effect of providing a new focus of attention, and, in time, would cut the ideological aspect of human differences down to a size that men can cope with without losing control over their emotions. Fortunately, genuine leadership for such efforts has already emerged and may be the means of giving scope to the inventive capacities of the coming generation.