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LAND IS INDIVISIBLE

[While the pages of MANAS are not ordinarily open to economic discussion, or the expounding of economic theories, the editors are obliged to note the appearance, in recent weeks, of several articles at least tangent to economics~such as, for example, the review of Niall Brennan's *The Making of a Moron* (April 28), and the notes (June 2) on a new edition of Henry George's *Progress and Poverty*. The editors are inclined to feel, moreover, that George's great declaration about *land*—no human being "produces" land, and cannot, therefore "own" it—is considerably more than an economic doctrine. It is rather a moral verity so obviously founded in justice that one wonders why it should ever have been denied or ignored. For this reason, then, we are glad to publish the following analysis of rudimentary economic concepts, by Wendal Bull, as the means of provoking readers to further reflections of their own.]

ONE of the least understood aspects of commercial civilizations is the system for distributing wealth. That mercenary and predatory principles dominate here is conceded in many quarters. Obvious inefficiency and shamefully inequitable results in distribution are commonly charged to the account of human nature. But it seems to me that we can find here certain inhumane customs which are ripe for discarding, and which must be discarded lest America be overtaken by the forces of regression.

Before one can begin to understand the essential elements either of equitable or inequitable distribution, one's mind needs to be consciously liberated from certain habitual attitudes. In other words, I would propose a psychological revolution as a prerequisite to adequate understanding of the economic aspect of our social organization. To this revolution in thinking, the following propositions seem pertinent. (Criticism invited; propositions numbered for easy reference.)

(1) Let us lay aside, at least tentatively, the classical definition of economics. If we aspire to a social organization of the people, by the people and for the people, then people and the quality of human relations must become our central concern in a new understanding of economics. Tradition says wealth is the chief object of concern in economics. To accept this tradition is to relegate men and their relations to the status of inconsequential phenomena. I cannot conscientiously accept it.

(2) Economics may be defined as pertaining to the relations of men in their efforts to make a living. Thus conceived, economics does not begin with the production of commodities. It begins when two or more men want the same thing at the same time, and it pertains to their arrangements for sharing the thing and/or for compensating the party who yields his claim.

(3) The primary things to which all men have indispensable and equally valid claims are Natural Resources. There are two distinct ways in which men use the Earth, *(a)* by occupying sites on or near its surface for dwelling, for manufacturing, for commerce; and (*b*) by consuming parts of the mineral, vegetable and animal fruits of the Earth.

(4) When conflicting claims to Natural Resources are settled by the exercise of physical force or threat of force by some men against others, there is a basis for a political economy. Primitive men have a tribal or communal economy which may be designated as pre-political. Psychologically mature men will build a humanitarian economy which may be named post-political. It is "fallen" or "lost" man, egocentric man, man divided against himself, who has built political economies. Thus I define a political economy as one wherein some men rule and exploit others.

(5) When conflicting claims to Natural Resources are settled by agreement between

mutually respectful men, there will be a basis for a post-political, a non-coercive and a non-exploitative economy. In such an economy, order cannot be secured by compulsive or punitive means, but must depend upon a consensus of agreement by all persons concerned.

(6) Because access to land and the consumption of parts of it are *a priori* conditions of human existence, land is infinitely precious and literally invaluable. Since land is invaluable, it cannot be equitably shared as valuables are among men. Therefore those men who yield their claims to any part of the land cannot be adequately compensated. They and their heirs forever retain, as if endowed by their Creator, a certain inchoate right of access to all of the fullness of the Earth.

(7) The "certain unalienable rights . . . among [which] are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" . . . in respect to which "all men are created equal," according to the Declaration of Independence, have been gravely compromised from the outset of United States constitutional government. Equal rights to life cannot indeed be secured among men some of whom hold exclusive titles to the elemental means of livelihood, the land, while others have access only upon payment of tribute in the form of rent or taxes.

(8) Social freedom and its concomitant responsibility cannot come into their full estate until the principle of equal rights is extended to amend our property system. In an equitable economy, the right to own things will not originate in fiat of law or in governmental edict enforceable by the courts and the military. The rights and responsibilities of ownership must originate solely in the human acts of producing human satisfactions. This implies that things which men can not produce, men can not rightfully assert ownership of.

(9) In the business of making a living, all the goods and services produced and consumed are composed of two prime factors, namely, Natural Resources and human exertion. "Capital" is not, as commonly taught, a third prime factor in the production of wealth. "Capital" is itself composed of the two factors named and no other. The fact that some goods are consumed in the satisfaction of man's desire to facilitate production of more goods, rather than in the satisfaction of immediate sensuous wants, is no justification for classifying these goods as prime factors in production.

(10) Since one of the two prime factors in economic production is the invaluable heritage of all men—the land—the problem of distributing goods is actually the problem of distributing the single remaining factor—the human work of producing. The land cannot be equitably divided among men; and there is no more need to think of such a division than there is to think of dividing the air or the sunshine. When human work is impressed upon land, the result is a product. The product is either improved land or a commodity. When the products of work become in any part the property of non-workers, there is mal-distribution. When the products of human work become the property solely of the respective producers there is the first result of equitable distribution.

(11) When two or more persons co-operate in the production and/or delivery of an economic good a problem arises as to how they should share the produce of their combined efforts. This is the essence of the problem of distribution. Distribution necessarily involves evaluation. Traditionally, human work has been evaluated as if it were a commodity. This is a reflection of the assumption that wealth rather than man is the dominant concern in economics. I propose that work be evaluated in terms of a universally precious human value, a value which is involved as a human element of cost in every good and service produced, and a value which is involved as a human element of reward or benefit in every good and service consumed.

(12) There is no materialistic measuring device which is applicable to all types of work. But there is an element of human cost which is common to all types of work. All productive

work involves the expenditure of parts of the lifetime of the producer. In so far as the living-time of workers is spent at work, their free time is thereby limited. Thus a worker's freedom in the economy is directly contingent upon the measure of time he spends in working for others, as compared with the measure of time others spend in working for him.

(13) When merging claims to economic goods—as between management and labor—are adjusted by means of an evaluative process in which the measure of value fails to distinguish between human costs and benefits on one hand and appropriative power on the other hand, there is the efficient technique of mal-distribution. Given this means of evaluation, and no other is known to commercial civilizations, equitable distribution of work is quite impossible.

(14) I propose that wages and prices be determined by means of an evaluative process in which the measure of value shall be a unit of the relative freedom which appears as cost to the producers and as benefit to the consumers of goods and services. The standard of value and the monetary medium should be expressions of the one most precious element of human cost which is involved in making a living. Throughout history, men have repeatedly lost the freedom gained by heroic efforts of their predecessors because material possessions and security seemed more precious than either the freedom won or the greater freedom attainable. Must the American people also lose their freedom before they can properly cherish it?

(15) Let us look further into the traditional means of evaluating goods and services. An examination of the word "value" itself is an aid to understanding. In the language of political economists, this word has four distinguishable meanings, namely, utility-value, exchange-value, exploitive-value and market-value. The use of the word without the descriptive tags is a prolific source of misunderstanding and confusion.

(16) Nothing has value of any kind except as it serves to empower human will. Coal ash normally has no value. But it may have considerable utility-value in empowering a man's will to walk across glare ice without slipping.

(17) Exchange-value is the empowerment of man's will to make a better living and have more freedom by way of division of work and exchange of products than he could have by individually meeting all of his needs by his own efforts. One earns this kind of empowerment by exerting himself to the satisfaction of another's economic wants. One realizes the benefits of exchange-value when he renders to another the products of his special abilities and receives in return an equal measure of work done to his satisfaction in a different line. What is said here of individuals is equally true of families or communal groups.

(18) Contrary to exchange-value, yet indiscriminately mingled with it in the usual concept of economic value, there is what Henry George called appropriative value. This, noted above as exploitive-value, is the empowerment of man's will to command the work-products of other men without himself working. Otherwise expressed, this is the empowerment of man's will to take more work from others than he renders to them in return. It is the power lawfully to rob. It is the empowerment of man's will to freedom via depriving others of their freedom.

(19) Market-value is tricky. It can be the name under which pure exploitive-power passes in respectable trade; it can be the name under which pure exchange-value passes; and it is more often the name under which a combination of these two powers, in any proportions, passes. Market-value is the power to command the work-products of others by either one of two means or by a combination of both means. Thus we may say that market-value is the empowerment of a mixed will. Man's egotistical will to acquire the appearance of superiority without due regard for the freedom of others has, in the concept of market-value, equal status with his ethical will to

improve his condition via fair play, *i.e.*, with a decent regard for equal freedom for others.

(20) Political-economic market-value, being a dual or mixed concept, finds expression in a dual or mixed medium of exchange, or, more accurately speaking, medium of transfer. The monetary medium we use is much more efficient as an instrument of deception and robbery than as an instrument of exchange. For it is impossible to empower and implement man's selfishness in economic intercourse without denying the essential implication of exchange, namely, equivalence in the things traded.

(21) In the economic practice of all commercial civilizations, man's good will (his socio-centric will) suffers a defeat every time his egocentric will is gratified. The evil consequences of this widespread practice would be hard to tally. Moreover, in the practice of predatory trade, of trade which, though called exchange is not exchange, man's good will suffers a defeat every time his egotistical will is thwarted. Thus the evil consequences of trade as we know it, the psychological, moral and sociological consequences are quite beyond human ability to calculate.

(22) One of the philosophical consequences of the general use of a mercenary and equivocal standard of value in economics is the well-established idea that freedom and order are opposites. These desirables of social organization lose their appearance of antipathy when freedom is understood to be relative in nature, with equal freedom for all its highest degree, and when order is understood to be the non-compulsory achievement of responsible men bent upon enhancing their mutual enjoyment of life, instead of upon maintaining a semblance of order to facilitate their exploitive ambitions.

WENDAL BULL

Nazareth, Penn.

REVIEW
ONE MAN REVOLUTION

AMMON HENNACY, militant pacifist, one-time Tolstoyan, and now, as he says, a "Catholic" anarchist, is a man who likes to make things simple. He is also a vegetarian, which contributes to simplicity of diet. Here is his budget for May, 1945 (with his comments):

Whole wheat flour, 25 lbs.	$1.25
(could grow own wheat)	
Vegetable shortening, 3 lbs.	.68
Cornmeal, 5 lbs.	.46
(could grow own corn)	
Oleomargerine, 2 lbs.	.38
Rice, 4 lbs.	.58
(price is too high)	
Raisins, 2 lbs.`	.23
Syrup, 5 lbs.	.47
Yeast, salt, sugar, etc.	.50
Total	$4.55
Electric light bill	1.00
Bundle of CO and CW's	2.40
Postage stamps, haircut, etc.	2.05
Total	$10.00

At this time, Hennacy was making about seventy-five cents an hour as a farm laborer in Arizona. His theory, then, and ever since, was that if he worked by the day, no withholding tax would be taken from his pay by his employer. In this way Hennacy frustrates the government's plan to use some of his earnings for preparation for war, for the design and manufacture of H-bombs and similar devices. Hennacy is bound and determined that none of his labor will contribute to the military program of the United States, and he is probably the most successful man in the country in carrying out this resolve. He calls himself a "one-man revolution," and if someone asks him if he thinks he can change the world, he admits to some uncertainty, but replies that he is making sure that the world won't change him!

The story of his life was published recently by Catholic Worker Books, under the title, *The Autobiography of a Catholic Anarchist.* (Readers who feel, with this Department, that the expression, "Catholic Anarchist," is a contradiction in terms, may find some comfort in the fact that all through European history there have been lay groups of Catholics who have been at odds with the policies of the Church, and who have attempted to put into practice the Sermon on the Mount, and if Hennacy feels that he can continue to call himself an anarchist while acknowledging the supreme authority of the Pope in matters of faith and morals, he at least has some illustrious antecedents in inconsistency of this sort.) The "Catholic" part of the book, however, is chiefly in the last chapter, where Hennacy tries to make some sense out of his new alliance with what success may be left to readers to judge.

The rest of the book is a rambling, colorful account of a lifetime devoted to a few, unmistakably clear ideals. It is a lifetime, moreover, which parallels the precipitous rise of the United States to the chief military power in the world, and the transformation of American culture from a happy-go-lucky, brash, and optimistic outlook to the anxiety-ridden, guilt-laden tensions of the present. Born in 1893, Hennacy was ripe for the draft in 1917. By that time he was a Socialist and active in Party work. He had been attending Ohio State University, selling cornflakes in the summertime to support himself, and had arranged for socialist activities on the campus. When the war came, Hennacy wrote leaflets and stickers urging young men not to register for the draft. He plastered the stickers on store windows and spread the leaflets throughout Columbus. He was finally caught and arrested. When Hennacy was told that he would be shot as a "traitor," his mother said to a reporter that the only thing she was afraid of was that they might scare him enough to "give in." He pleaded guilty to obstructing the enforcement of the draft act, in order to protect the printer who had printed the leaflets, and was sentenced to two years in Atlanta for this offense, and nine months more for refusing to register.

At Atlanta, Hennacy met Alexander Berkman, author of *Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist,* and received from him some good advice on prison life. Berkman had then been in prison for nearly eighteen years, for his attack on Henry Clay Frick, after Carnegie Steel's brutal treatment of its workers at Homestead, Penna. Tolstoy, the Bible, and prison

injustice and cruelty made a pacifist of Hennacy. After he organized a sit-down strike against the poor food, he was punished with three months of solitary confinement, and during this time he read the Bible over and over, memorizing chapters he liked. As he tells it:

> Gradually I came to gain a glimpse of what Jesus meant when He said, "The Kingdom of God is within you." In my heart now after six months I could love everybody but the warden, but if I did not love him then the Sermon on the Mount meant nothing at all. I really saw this and felt it in my heart but I was too stubborn to admit it in my mind. One day I was walking back and forth in my cell when, in turning, my head hit the wall. Then the thought came to me: "Here I am locked up in a cell. The warden was never locked up in any cell and he never had a chance to know what Jesus meant. Neither did I until yesterday. So I must not blame him. I must love him." Now the whole thing was clear. This Kingdom of God must be in everyone: in the deputy, the warden, in the rat and the pervert—and now I came to know it—in myself. I read and reread the Sermon on the Mount: the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew thus became a living thing to me. I tried to take every sentence and apply it to my present problems. The warden had said that he did not understand political prisoners. He and the deputy, in plain words, did not know any better, they had put on the false face of sternness and tyranny because this was the only method which they knew. It was my job to teach them another method: that of goodwill overcoming their evil intentions, or rather habits. The opposite of the Sermon on the Mount was what the whole world had been practicing, in prison and out of prison; and hate piled on hate had brought hate and revenge. It was plain this system did not work. I would never have a better opportunity than to try out the Sermon on the Mount right now in my cell. Here was deceit, hatred, lust, murder and every kind of evil in this prison. I reread slowly and pondered each verse: "Ye have heard that it hath been said an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth . . . whoever smite thee on thy right cheek turn to him the other also . . . take therefore no thought of the morrow . . . therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them. . ."

Hennacy is not what you would call a heavy thinker. His account of what is wrong with the world may seem over-simplified to many. His conclusion, not stated in so many words, but practically impossible to avoid, that True Morality is defined by what Hennacy has decided to do, or would like to do, to bring the world to reason, comes very close to being a tiresome species of naïve egotism. But Hennacy is a gorgeous example of how a man can make up his mind to live by certain principles, and then *go do it.* This is Hennacy's real example and lesson to the world. If you didn't know about Hennacy, you might think it couldn't be done. But he has done it. He has lived a generous, considerate, friendly life, rich with Irish humor, and if he has been a bit of an exhibitionist along the way, there are worse things to be exhibited. Incidentally, while working as a day laborer in Arizona, he put his daughters through college, living on ten dollars a month, himself. If you want to know how migrant cotton-pickers feel and live, read Hennacy, who has been one. If you think that the days of peonage are over in the United States, read Hennacy, who has stood in line with other laborers to receive his pay, only to find that the pay had been cut in half by the farmer, because the cotton's "not so good this year."

Early in life, Hennacy made up a few rules, and he's been living by them ever since. He hasn't much patience with those who live by other rules, but if anyone does better than Hennacy at the rules he has chosen, Hennacy is the first to admit it:

> One day I was working with an old man over seventy years of age. He was illiterate and when we signed our names to our checks he made an X mark. When he saw another fellow mark his check he thought his signature was being forged. He asked me, "Have you got the mark of the beast?"
>
> I knew what he meant by this question, but asked him anyhow. "Has the gov'ment got your number; did you give them your name and get a number on a social security, ration or draft card? For if you did you have the mark of the beast which in these last days seeks to corrupt all of God's children."
>
> I answered that I had used a social security card for three months, but since a tax had been withheld from my pay I had stopped working where it was necessary to have a social security card; that was the reason I was now working on a farm. I had used a ration card for a time, but had refused to register for the draft and did not intend to take any old age pension.

> The old man answered: "I have nary a card. Guess they thought I was too old to register for the war and didn't bother me. All of my family made blood money during the war and now my wife and brothers have the mark of the beast again, for they accept old age pension. I will work until I drop before I take money from the beast; from the gov'ment that makes bombs." And he added "Yes, in these days they number the babies in hospitals when they are born; get boys, and even girls, numbered up for war as they grow up; pester them with numbers when they die. The mark of the Beast is everywhere. The Bible says that people will be divided, for folks who witness for the Lord can't be a part of numbering and voting and war. If their families prefer blood money then such as I have to go where we are not numbered and do not get The Mark of the Beast. I'm sure glad to find a fellow with only two marks against him."
>
> "You are a better man than I am," I answered.

Until the days of WT (withholding tax), Hennacy was a social worker in Milwaukee. Because of his ability to get along with people, he was given the tough cases to handle. In this work he combined shrewd common sense with the Sermon on the Mount. When a relief client who had been in jail for thirty days for making the relief agency visitor dance at the point of a gun, phoned in to say that he was out and would shoot the next visitor who came, Hennacy got the assignment. He knocked on the door and identified himself. The client greeted him—

> "Hello, you hound," "Hello, hound yourself" was my answer, which was not to be found in Mary Richmond's text on social work or in the Sermon on the Mount. . . . I entered the room and the man said gruffly: "I want five mattresses." "Make it six; I am a wholesaler," was my rejoinder. . . . "Let's go up stairs and see what size mattresses you need," I suggested. "Nobody's going up my stairs," he replied. "O.K. Less work for me," was my answer. "All right, come up," he said as he led the way. I found that he only needed one mattress and told him so. He laughed and said, "I won't fight with you." And the whole thing was over. Previous visitors had stood on their dignity and were victims of his spleen.

When the social workers were given a raise in pay, Hennacy figured the relief clients needed it more, and he sent the raise back to the county every month until relief budgets were increased. While working for this increase he explained to his boss: "grocery budgets were made up by dieticians who fed the 'average family' and there was no such thing. Italians would not eat grits and oatmeal. They wanted wine and spaghetti, and so with all kinds of people; they wanted certain kinds of food and would not eat a 'statistical menu'."

Hennacy's book is almost entirely made up of anecdotes of this sort, for Hennacy's life, as he lives it, is really a long succession of "personal experiences," in which the world and the people in it react to Hennacy's "way of life." It makes interesting reading. The thing to remember, however, is that no *1984* type of society could ever tame an Ammon Hennacy, while thousands and millions of people who may look down their noses at the lean, sun-burned field worker who pickets against war and fasts against the atom bomb and writes long letters to the Bureau of Internal Revenue explaining (with excellent reasons) why he will pay no income tax at all, are the sort of people who could easily be gulled into the submissive conformity of George Orwell's grim imaginings.

One of the good things that may be said about America is that it is a place where an Ammon Hennacy can grow up, meet some really interesting people in prison, and plan and carry through a radical career which runs directly counter to practically all the customs and habits of esteemed respectability—a place where this can happen without exacting too heavy a price from the man who does it.

COMMENTARY
CONCERNING ANARCHISM

FOR many people old enough to remember the nervous days immediately following World War I, the terms "anarchist" and "Bolshevik" are practically interchangeable, both meaning a dangerous terrorist who makes bombs in his garret and tosses them at unsuspecting innocents. There was little enough to support this conception in the 1920's, except the anti-red headlines and cartoons in the newspapers, and the myth, sedulously cultivated by the FBI, that the United States was threatened by a small group of ruthless murderers preaching doctrines of political nihilism.

It is true that a generation of anarchist revolutionaries were preoccupied with what they termed "anarchism of the deed"—involving an act of sudden and desperate violence against the established order. They hoped by these means to call the attention of the public to injustices suffered by the working classes. Today, most anarchists feel that this method was a terrible mistake, for, instead of generating sympathy for the workers, the violence horrified all but the very few, and made it possible for enemies of the labor movement to claim that every militant effort to secure justice for working men was inspired by anarchist agitators who plotted insane vengeance against the property-owners and all "respectable" people.

The story of anarchist and other forms of revolutionary violence is traced in a number of excellent volumes. Books like Emma Goldman's *Living My Life*, and the Berkman volume mentioned in Review give the anarchist viewpoint, while the *Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*, Louis Adamic's *Dynamite*, and Robert Payne's *Zero* are versions by social historians. In fundamental psychological terms, the manifestations of violence in the anarchist movement are symptoms of alienation in men who were often moved by high principles, and who were able to show that the exploiters of the working man had themselves used violence for generations, almost as a matter of course, in suppressing libertarian and equalitarian tendencies.

Those who accept the notion of Moral Law can hardly contest this anarchist judgment, since, today, the entire world of respectability is threatened with violence of the most devastating sort, and if the guilt of violence were limited to a tiny minority of anarchists and revolutionaries, how could the fear of unleashed atomic fury haunt practically the entire world?

Meanwhile, the lessons of experience and the leavening influence of men like Tolstoy and Gandhi have brought about notable changes in anarchist thinking. Many anarchists of today are also pacifists, and *vice versa*. Since the end of World War II, a slow ground-swell of anarchist ideas has been affecting people of widely differing backgrounds. While anarchy means literally, "without rule," its practical implication for most anarchists is "freedom with self-rule," and some have even adopted the term *autarky* as embodying an affirmative spirit.

The important thing is this: the anarchist tradition and philosophy represent two ideas which are badly needed by the modern world—the ideas of freedom and individual self-government and responsibility. Whatever the future holds, whatever the politics and social organization adopted by the men of tomorrow, these two ideas will have to be the primary shaping influences, if there is to be any future worth talking about. The anarchist, then, is one of the few men of our time who is worth listening to.

It is easy to criticize anarchist philosophy, since the anarchist refuses to acknowledge the need for any sort of external constraint on human behavior. By doing this, the anarchist avoids the extremely difficult question of defining the *absolute minimum* of constraint required by present-day society, or any society bearing imaginable resemblance to the people of our time. We take the view, however, that criticism of anarchist views is now of practically no importance, while recognition of the major truth in the anarchist position is virtually a condition of survival for intelligent and free human beings.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

NOTES IN PASSING

As we read book reviews, week in and week out, our conviction strengthens that the best way to recommend a piece of literature is to offer sample passages—of sufficient length to provide first-hand experience of the author. This seems particularly good practice in regard to children's books, since, in the restricted space usually allotted them in such magazines as *Saturday Review*, each book sounds pretty much like every other.

It is of course possible that we of MANAS have lost touch with the tiny generation, but we still think that parents should be more concerned with teaching the young to read adult literature, and not only because, in our opinion, not many "children's books" are worth reading. Pabulum may be all right for an infant body, but young minds need something to stretch themselves on—something in the way of reading for instance, *almost* too difficult to master, requiring both imagination and some determination.

However, from time to time a truly unusual children's book appears which, without raising intellectual difficulties, serves an educational function by supplying subtle overtones of feeling or humor. There is, for example, Joseph Krumgold's *And Now Miguel*, of which we provide the following sample of style and content:

> I am Miguel. For most people it does not make so much difference that I am Miguel. But for me, often, it is a very great trouble.
>
> It would be different if I were Pedro. He is my younger brother, only seven years old. For Pedro everything is simple. Almost all the things that Pedro wants, he has—without much worry.
>
> I wanted to find out how it was with him one day when we were in our private place near the Rio Pueblo, the river that goes through our farm. I asked him "Pedro, suppose you could have anything you want. Is there anything you want?"
>
> "Ai, of course." He looked up from reaching below a rock in the river. In this way we catch trout, slowly feeling around in the quiet places beneath big stones. If the fish comes by, sliding soft against your hand, you can catch him. Pedro was just learning to fish like this. He looked up, not wishing to talk. "Of course, sure I want something."
>
> "Like what?"
>
> "Like not so much school."
>
> "School—yes. But that is something that you do not want."
>
> "Like I say—not so much."
>
> It would be good to be Gabriel. He is also my brother, and he is nineteen years old. Next to my Grandfather, and my Uncle Bonifacio, and my Uncle Eli, and next to my father who is called Old Blas, and my biggest brother who is called Young Blas and who wears a badge and drives the school bus, Gabriel is the greatest man in the world.
>
> Everything that Gabriel wants, he can get. He explained this to me one Friday last winter.
>
> All week long Gabriel goes to the high school in Taos, which is a very big town eight miles away, of one thousand people and many stores that sell marshmallow candy. This year Gabriel will graduate from high school. And that will be too bad for the basketball team and the baseball team as well as for the Future Farmers of America, a club of which he is president. From Monday to Friday Gabriel goes to school and wins the games there and is a president. But on Friday he forgets all these things and helps my uncles and my father with the sheep.
>
> That's the way it was with Gabriel. Everything that he wants he can get. With Pedro, it is the opposite. Everything that he has is enough.
>
> Both of them, they are happy.
>
> But to be in between, not so little anymore and not yet nineteen years, to be me, Miguel, and to have a great wish—that is hard.
>
> I had such a wish. It was secret and yet not a secret. For how secret can you keep high mountains that one can see for hundreds of miles around, mountains that face me when I first open my eyes every morning and are the last thing I see in the night.
>
> This was my wish, to go up there—into those mountains that are called the Mountains of the Sangre de Cristo.

If children don't respond to this book, perhaps parents, at least, will. Everyone who thinks and dreams is like Miguel—neither wrapped up in ambitions for tangible things, nor completely content with his present horizons. Of the three, it is much the best to be like Miguel—to know that one is unfulfilled.

The "Age of Science" does not entirely disregard the fact that human beings live much of the time in their imagination, but it seems to have little to offer to provoke the imagination of children. Many of our comics are now simply juvenile editions of the science-fiction stories so many adults use for "escape." This is something of a tragedy, for the child is much less a natural scientist than he is a natural mystic.

Having recently read Hervey Allen's *Bedford Village*, in which the role of freemasonry on the early American frontier is discussed in sympathetic detail, we are reminded of how natural it is for the young who escape obsession with machines to hunger after the "esoteric" or "occult." Masonry, it seems, opened up idealistic vistas for many a frontier youth, helping to provide him with a set of inner standards in coping with the harsh forest world. The young men who came into masonry during the decades preceding the War of Independence, moreover, were unknowingly preparing their minds for the reception of epoch-making ideals soon to inspire the colonists—the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights.

Masonry helped to demonstrate that at the level of moral or spiritual aspiration, all men lived, as Mr. Allen puts it, "on a common plane." The allurements of ritual and secrecy were present, "but there was infinitely more than that to the movement." The young men of Allen's story "had often suspected that someone must know the secret of the Path." Here, perhaps, is an intuition about "natural" religion, and a form of devotion far subtler than any implied catechisms of commandments.

Something of the appeal of "devotion" apart from institutional propaganda is conveyed by another children's volume, *Secret of the Andes.* This is the story of an Indian boy who was selected for a great and sacred trust, and who finally finds in himself the qualities required. It is also a story which reminds the reader that the supposedly superior white conquerors of the ancient Incas were less wise or worthy in their traditions than their victims. Above all, however, the author, Ann Nolan Clark, succeeds in showing that the young are not "conditioned" into accepting a great adult trust—may indeed be driven in rebellion away from it by such tactics—but instead must see the meaning of a "mission" in life, each in his own time and in his own way. Even the wise old teacher in *Secret of the Andes* had been too anxious with his first disciple: too strict, too fearful that the corruptions of the "outside world" would spoil the promise of the youth within his care. It is his second pupil, son of the failing aspirant, who finds an easier and happier trail, and by unconstrained decision learns to think generously of duty to tribe and ancestors before he thinks of himself.

CORRECTION

Readers will doubtless recall the letter protesting the addition of the phrase, "under God," to the Pledge of Allegiance, quoted in MANAS for June 16. The authors of this letter have called attention to the fact that while the circulated mimeographed copy was unsigned, the original letter sent to Congressmen bore the signatures of the writers. The reference in "Children" failed to note this fact, the writer probably taking it for granted, since legislators would give no serious attention to anonymous letters from their constituents.

FRONTIERS

Among the Optimistic Thinkers

IT is pleasant to think that the most hopeful of our writers and critics are also the most profound; and, actually, it is not unreasonable to think this, for if there is no relation between profundity and hopefulness, why is it that only the great men have the great dreams, and are alone capable of visions that lesser men would think preposterous? Without intending to argue that either Professor Lyman Bryson or Playwright Maxwell Anderson are "great" men—though they may be, for all we know—we note in both the presence of deep affirmative conviction concerning the future. For instance, while many deplore the low level of "culture" in modern mass civilization, Mr. Bryson claims to discern widespread evidence of mental awakening in the same phenomena. He begins *The Next America:*

> Human history should be thought of as continuous, because institutions grow out of one another while humanity maintains its line of life. But there are great breaks or surges forward when new roads open ahead. . . . The ground swell of new energy is mostly below the surface and thus escapes the notice of conventional observers. But in deep layers of living everywhere, notably now in the colleges and villages of the Middle West and fundamentally everywhere, a cultural revolution has begun. It is not like anything known before because it is on such a scale of participation that past standards do not apply. If it succeeds it will be the creation, by its own members, of a national community in which energy is more and more shifted from material and practical anxieties to the doing of things for the sake of greater human experience. It will be the recapture, by a whole free people, of the primitive wisdom that industrialism has almost destroyed. In this new phase, wisdom will use industry as the servant of a better life. We shall be doing things for their own sake, which means for the developing experience they give, for the demands they make on personalities for greater power and sensitiveness. And it is part of our recovered wisdom to know that we live not to pile up comfort nor ornaments, but for the quality of experience itself. . . .
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> One may well ask how any man can be an optimist in these days, but that question always has to be asked of those who expect great things of the future because any day of change is also and necessarily a day of disaster. Out of what comes faith? Out of experience? A man in his own time is much like a cricket among the bulbs of a big electric sign. Lights flash and go out; there is action going on and it has a meaning—if one could only discover it. At the distance of a hundred yards from the sign, or the distance of a hundred years from today, a rhythmic pattern will be easy to see, provided the record is looked at as a whole and the passionate testimonies of variously placed contemporary crickets are ignored. To the energetic speck in the sign now, however, no amount of running about will make the pattern entirely clear; all one can do is to look around and report. No one can claim to be a superior cricket, except perhaps in faith. And if man can make any changes whatever in his own destiny the declaration of faith is itself one of the factors in the result.

Bryson becomes specific concerning "book clubs," etc., arguing that "most statements about the days 'when there was a very high level of taste' are meaningless because one does not know what population was the repository of that fine taste."

> The comparative statement is often made, for example, about books. There is supposed to have been a time when the "whole reading public" was excited about Macaulay's next volume. The inference is left that the generations have backslid. The whole reading public of Macaulay's time was a small, expensively educated part of the expensively maintained upper and upper middle class of a small country; what the farmer or the shopkeeper's assistant or the factory worker read, if he read anything, was not considered.
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> Today, men and women, and indeed adolescents, roughly comparable to these neglected ones, are part of the "whole reading public." It is evident that the same proportion of the larger group does not respond to the best that is now being written or to the best of the past. But whether or not the absolute number of persons who read a book of high quality in America now is a larger or smaller proportion of the total population than was the number that read a good book in England in the nineteenth century might be hard to determine. Our taste in reading for entertainment seems to have changed little. It seems probable, judging from the figures on the printing of books, that the good nonfiction book of today gets a larger proportion of readers out of the whole population in either England or America, although a much smaller proportion of the general reading public, than it would have had a hundred years ago. None of this really makes a great deal of difference unless one believes that great books are not now being written because there is no public for them.

Now, turning to Maxwell Anderson's *Off Broadway*, we find what seems a really remarkable analysis of the ingredients of successful popular art. He contends that novelists and playwrights must have *some stature as philosophers* if they are to gain continuing popular recognition:

> Sometimes the convictions that underlie the most modern and snappy of productions are simple-minded or old-fashioned. But dig for them and you will find them. A play can't be written without them—or at least, it can't be a success—because no audience is satisfied with a play which doesn't take an attitude toward the world. Every artist is at a loss in a confused civilization, but the playwright is in the worst plight of all. For the best practice of his craft he needs a stable society within a stable congeries of nations. Our modern world has been the scene of vast mental and social confusion, and the theater has been shaken with every shift in the ideological weather. Those who have kept going as writers within it have done so because they could cling to inner beliefs not easily destroyed by exterior storm. . . .

Two other passages by Anderson strike us as so exceptional that we withhold further comment in order to reproduce them. For a pondering of their implications leads to a most hopeful state of mind indeed; it is here maintained that true religion is present everywhere around us, and is recognized and appreciated, much more than we think, by the general public. Anderson himself found "religion in the theater," where he "least expected to find it":

> But it is there, and any man among you who tries to write plays will find himself serving it, if only because he can succeed in no other way. He will discover, if he works through his apprenticeship, that the theater is the central artistic symbol of the struggle of good and evil within men. Its teaching is that the struggle is eternal and unremitting, that the forces which tend to drag men down are always present, always ready to attack, that the forces which make for good cannot sleep through a night without danger. It denies the doctrine of the nineteen-twenties emphatically. It denies that good and evil are obverse and reverse of the same coin, denies that good can win by waiting. It denies that wars are useless and that honor is without meaning. It denies that we can live by the laboratory and without virtue. It affirms that the good and evil in man are the good and evil of evolution, that men have within themselves the beasts from which they emerge and the god toward which they climb. It affirms that evil is what takes man back toward the beast, that good is what urges him up toward the god. . . . You cannot be pitiless, merciless, ruthless, arrogant, and without tolerance on the stage, and be considered a hero. That which is considered despicable on the stage will be held despicable in real life—not only evil but those who will not fight evil are rejected on both sides of the footlights. A man who accepts the wave of the future and analyzes honor to a breath can be the comedian to be laughed at but he cannot be the protagonist. According to the worshipers of the good who sit in our theaters a hero may have his doubts and indecisions, for that's only human, but when it comes to the test he must be willing to take steel in his bosom or take lead through his intestines or he resigns his position as a man. The audiences, sitting in our theaters, make these rules and, in setting them, define the purposes and beliefs of homo sapiens. There is no comparable test that I know of for what is good in the human soul, what is most likely to lead to that distant and secret destination which the race has chosen for itself and will somehow find.

Anderson's view of the awesome scope of ethical instinct, as revealed by cultural and religious history, is deeply heartening, and if his insight is a true one, men like Lyman Bryson have reason for believing that beneficial cultural transformations can take place at any time:

> From the beginning of our story men have insisted, despite the darkness and silence about them, that they had a destiny to fulfill—that they were part of a gigantic scheme which was understood somewhere, though they themselves might never understand it. There are no proofs of this. There are only indications—in the idealism of children and young men, in the sayings of such teachers as Christ and Buddha, in the vision of the world we glimpse in the hieroglyphics of the masters of the great arts, and in the discoveries of pure science, itself an art, as it pushes away the veils of fact to reveal new powers, new laws, new mysteries, new goals for the eternal dream. The dream of the race is that it may make itself better and wiser than it is, and every great philosopher or artist who has ever appeared among us has turned his face away from what man is toward whatever seems to him most godlike that man may become. Whether the steps proposed are immediate or distant, whether he speaks in the simple parables of the New Testament or the complex musical symbols of Bach and Beethoven, the message is always to the effect that men are not essentially as they are but as they imagine and as they wish to be.