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THE AGE OF McDARDLE

WE were swinging into the last lap of the flight home when the subject of McDardle came up. I asked Alonzo about him, because I never could understand why McDardle came along. There wasn't anything for him to do on an expedition like ours. You see, we had spent more than eight months on Planet 36—about nine days' space travel away from home (you'll have to figure how far that is in jillions of miles, yourself, as I never took an interest in that stuff)—and nearly everybody except Alonzo and me were specialists or technicians. Alonzo was a sort of boss or leader of the expedition, and I was the historian of the outfit—supposed to write everything up for the board of directors of Interspatial Colonies, Inc. It was Alonzo who let McDardle come along, and why he did it never made sense to me.

"Well," Alonzo said, "it was a kind of experiment." Ever since the time Alonzo walked across the Hemisphere Frontier, right into the arms of a squad of East-World border police, got up to see the top-level policy-makers of East-World and then came back with agreements to a settlement of the Lemo issue which everybody wanted but which nobody had sense enough to come right out and ask for—ever since then Alonzo could get his way in almost anything he wanted. The point, of course, is that he never asked for anything much. The fact is that he *has* everything, so he doesn't need anything. What he does he really does for the fun of it, or the hell of it, depending upon how you like your language. Then, of course, there's that thing about Alonzo that nobody can figure out—nobody can hurt him. You just can't get *to* Alonzo with any kind of force. At first he had the government frightened to death. Just on principle. Alonzo wasn't threatening anybody or anything. He asked some pretty tough questions—something like Socrates, I guess—but he never tried to start any subversive organizations and he wouldn't join anything. He was just around. But after the government found out about Alonzo's immunity to bullets and paralysis rays and everything else they tried on him, the officials were really scared. Suppose Alonzo wanted to do something to *them: they couldn't stop him.* So they built the Alonzo menace up to where they couldn't sleep nights. But Alonzo didn't want to do anything to them. Once he told me he wondered if it wouldn't be better for him to be able to die or get killed. "I'm a kind of miracle," he said, "and miracles aren't good for people." Then he said, "I guess the only reason I don't get really serious about trying to die is that my kind of miracle makes a sense of its own. You see, I have the theory—it's not mine, to tell the truth, but is as old as religion itself—that a really harmless man can't be hurt by anybody. There's something about me that won't let me do anything against other people, even in thought. So, ethically, there is an explanation of my immunity. Of course, it plays hob with physics and chemistry, but maybe a little confusion in those departments is a good thing. I haven't tried to figure it out beyond that. It's an arrangement of nature that seems sensible enough from a human point of view, but awfully awkward from a military or a political point of view. Anyway, I'm glad I make sense as a human being instead of as a military being."

So that was Alonzo. After a while, the government let Alonzo become a kind of state secret, and, as I say, he could do pretty much what he wanted; and when he had a project he wanted to try, you ought to see the high brass give! He wrote his own ticket. He cooperated on the secrecy stuff, too. I guess he figured that if he mixed people up too much by showing off what he could do, or what people couldn't do to him, they would all sit around trying to make up an

Alonzo Theory, instead of what they ought to be doing. So that's how Alonzo happened to be manager of the Planet 36 Project, and how he was able to bring McDardle along.

It was a fairly simple agricultural project. 36 has a climate something like ours, and the master-minds in the Biochemistry Section of the Department of Agriculture decided that we might be able to grow vegetables there without getting the L-Vibration Effect. (The L-Vibration Effect is something that nobody understands very well; the biochemists claim it's purely physical—the result of a wild radiation by-product of modern air travel—but the mystics think its a sympathetic reaction of plant life to human anxiety. Imagine that! Anyhow, it's a mystery.) And the project on 36 was supposed to prove something about how to grow better vegetables by establishing experimental farms under controlled conditions. Of course, it beats me how the scientists can think they "control" conditions on 36—what do they know about it up there—or down there or out there? There might be M, N and P Vibrations on 36 and these might be good for plants. Something's good for plants on 36, because the stuff sure grew.

Well, getting back to McDardle—Josephus Anatole McDardle. His career as a Senator came to an end rather suddenly. It wasn't that the people really caught on to him. He just got drunk with power and went around insulting two or three too many good men, and the Senate impeached him. There are some things you can't get away with, even in the Senate. So McDardle figured he could use a change, and being a curious character, he asked Alonzo if he could come along. They were quite a pair. It was like getting Hitler and Gandhi in the same room. Of course, McDardle wasn't crazy like Hitler, and Alonzo wasn't a great leader like Gandhi. But it seemed just about as strange.

On the trip up McDardle kept pretty much to himself. It was hard for him to realize, too, that the people in this crew on the way to 36 didn't know much about him. His name was just some kind of echo to them—an unpleasant echo; but they were men and women who were used to dealing with things at first hand, so they sort of forgot what they had heard about him and treated him like anybody else. At first he seemed to like being unknown. I guess he was a little sick of criticism, and walking around like an ordinary Joe gave him a rest. Then, there weren't any arguments he could get into. How could he get into an argument with technicians about their specialty?

When we got to 36 and our living quarters were set up, we had a big meeting to lay out the program. McDardle just listened. I watched him now and then, just to see the expression on his face. For a while I wondered if he were looking for angles, but pretty soon I saw that he was just bored. Three days later, when the crews went out with the equipment, Alonzo was sitting in the mess-tent drinking coffee with me. Along about 9 o'clock McDardle wandered in. He still looked bored. But he straightened up when he saw Alonzo and came over to our table.

"Alonzo," he said, "I'd like to get in the act." He straightened up a little more and said, "I'm still a young man and there's no reason why I shouldn't make myself useful." Alonzo said okay and took him out to the C contingent that was breaking ground on a side-hill. (That was the only trouble with Planet 36—very little flat land. Most of it was cut up with sharp little hillocks. And while the soil was rich, it had rocks in it.) Jeffries, who ran C Contingent, put McDardle to work moving rocks out of the way after the ploughs had turned them up. He had McDardle throw them in little piles between the furrows. So we left McDardle there. For the life of me, I couldn't help thinking of a preacher out with the boys on a Saturday night, trying to act like a regular guy. Of course, McDardle was a lot smarter than most preachers, and he knew how to be one kind of regular guy. But a regular guy on 36 was a little different. You

just had a job to do, because everything else had been figured out in advance.

This went on for several days, and when I didn't have anything else to do I used to study McDardle. He was like a bug turned loose in a sterile solution. No other bugs to argue with and eat up. Just a bland sea of undifferentiated sterile solution. I have to admit it, McDardle had guts. He piled a lot of rocks. He got thinner and he got tough. But he couldn't get interested. I don't blame him much. I wouldn't care about piling rocks, either, and the technology of the project was as far over my head as it was over his. But there was something about McDardle that wouldn't let him just get healthy piling rocks. He'd look at those damn rocks, and then one day he started piling the green rocks together and the yellow rocks together. I wondered if he figured he could talk to somebody about the green rocks having a subversive element in them. That's all there was, green rocks and yellow rocks, no pink or blue rocks at all on 36.

It was in the second month that McDardle got a kind of second wind. He stopped being all tired out at night and used to stand around in the rec hall and kid with the boys. But most of his free time he used to hang around Alonzo. There were always five or six, sometimes more, around Alonzo. It wasn't that they knew too much about him; I knew, of course, and Zemmel knew (Zemmel was the chief agronomist who planned the project with Alonzo and got Alonzo to work things out for Interspatial with the government), but the others were just drawn to him by the kind of a man he was. You could see that McDardle wanted to get Alonzo by himself and talk to him. Looking back, it reminds me of Nicodemus coming around at night to see what he could learn from the Lord Jesus—but it wasn't really like that. Personally, I think McDardle wanted to see if Alonzo had a weird angle of his own; he was just curious; and if Alonzo didn't have an angle, then what was he all about, anyway?

The two of them were deep in discussion one night when it happened. The Communications Officer came running into the rec hall and made for Alonzo. He looked excited so I went over to where Alonzo and McDardle were sitting. Phillips kind of smiled and then he said: "Well, I guess we're going to have to stay here for a while. Maybe forever. I just got a message from Space Division Point C88 which reported that the earth is under Galactic Quarantine. . . that's the way McCullough put it, anyway, before he signed off. He said that all Space Frontier Posts had better maintain absolute radio silence if they wanted to avoid destruction. He sounded as if we've been invaded and that earth isn't a very good place to be, right now. I've disengaged the transmitter just to make sure we don't send any signals. Looks like Peace and Quiet and bigger and better carrots and watermelon is all we're going to have to worry us, for quite a while."

Alonzo sat still for a couple of minutes; then he had a bulletin posted on the board so that everybody would know what had happened. The men wondered about what was behind it all, but they didn't seem very worried. They seemed to feel it was kind of a joke. You see, they had their wives along, and the girls who worked as statistical clerks were already romancing with the young biologists. Actually, we had a kind of Utopia on 36. There was some anxiety about the people back home, of course, but Alonzo made a little talk to everybody, pointing out that nobody could do much of anything to change the situation. So pretty soon the boys and girls got enthusiastic about making 36 into a model community.

McDardle was the only one who really seemed blasted by the news. He raged up and down about the "invaders," and went around mumbling about "unpreparedness" and the need for proper defense organization. Then Alonzo began to needle him a little. "What about *here?*" he asked McDardle.

McDardle looked at Alonzo as if he wished he could hook him for a little fifth-columning, but Alonzo looked too innocent, even for McDardle. "There aren't any enemies here," McDardle said. "There's nothing to do."

That was when Alonzo let him have it. I never heard Alonzo talk like that before. It seemed like he got a little worked up, and that was new, too.

"McDardle," he said, "don't you know what is the matter with you? You're no good without an Enemy. You need a sick and diseased society or you can't operate at all. And about all you know to do with a diseased society is to split the sickness into two sides and then you join one side and try to make the other side look as if it caused the disease. You live on the decay of human character, do you realize that?"

McDardle didn't say anything. He just looked mad and unhappy.

Alonzo went on. "The time will come," he said, "when historians will be able to call periods of history like the one they're having on earth—or *were* having, before the invasion—the 'Age of the McDardles,' or the 'McDardle Cycle,' or something like that. You're 'sincere' enough, I guess, if that means anything to you. You really want an enemy to hate. But there aren't any enemies here, and probably won't be, in your lifetime, since it usually takes at least a hundred years for a society to develop the complex social organization and institutional symbolism required for the set-up you need. What are you going to do in the meantime, McDardle? You'd better learn how to operate a plough—that is, unless you really like piling rocks."

I really think Alonzo might have got somewhere with McDardle, if the invasion hadn't been called off. Personally, I wish the scare had lasted a few months, instead of only a couple of days. By the end of the eight-month period, McDardle seemed about the same kind of a guy he was when we started, and he hadn't even learned how to plough. He was just itching to get back. He had some theory about what he called Points of Ideological Vulnerability in the defense system of the earth. "We'll have to get together with the East-World people and work things out so that no traitors, East *or* West, can make this thing happen again." He had notes all drawn up for a new loyalty checkup and in the last week on 36 I heard him say that he thought he could get elected to the Senate again if he made Universal Security a campaign issue.

So I couldn't write a history of what happened to McDardle under the controlled conditions on 36. Calling off that invasion spoiled the "controls." Well, as Alonzo said, "It was an interesting experiment." Funny thing, though. The L vibrations, which had been showing up with a modified rhythm in the first test crops, disappeared entirely during the two days we all thought the invasion was real.

Letter from **VIENNA**

VIENNA.—Do you know of many—or any—cities that have a *Kulturamt?* Or was Vienna the first metropolis to organise—after a destructive war, amid the rubble of bombed houses, schools and theatres—a special department for cultural activities? Stadtrat Hans Mandl, head of the Kulturamt of Vienna, thinks so. He started his Kulturamt with the visual arts, giving orders for the enrichment of the community buildings that had been world-famous before the fascists attacked them with cannons. Parks and gardens received new statues. Competitions for painters helped young talent, and in its own building behind the City Hall the department has a permanent display of new artists who may tomorrow reach the Academy, the Secession and other conservative or revolutionary exhibition halls. The city of Vienna has become a Maecenas of creative expression, to an extent that should incite larger and richer towns in wealthy countries to do likewise. But of course, Stadtrat Mandl found it easy to concentrate on art. He was an elementary school teacher following in the path of Professor Cizek who revolutionized the art teaching all over the world by his discovery of the natural genius of the child. He thought that the "infantile" expression of the inner world of the person who has not seen pictures in galleries, and therefore depicts his own inner world rather than copy some one else's, was the most original art, and he insisted that we could not give children a higher gift for life than that afforded by providing them with the tools to express this inner world—not that they would all become artists, but they may be happier men and women because of this freedom of self-expression.

The American Information Service has recently opened an exhibition of American "Primitives"—*Peintres Naïfs*—the work of non-professional painters from 1670 to our day—showing that Grandma Moses was by no means the only "infantile" artist. This amazing exhibit was opened by the American Hochkomissair himself and includes the broadcasting of American folk songs and music by Stephen Foster. It fits in beautifully with the general trend of active and receptive participation of a city where the walls of the Underground [subway] are covered with posters of "Art for Everybody," displaying masterpieces and new paintings for homes, schools and every piece of wall that can be covered with murals.

Stadtrat Mandl has contributed striking silhouettes to *Pictures Round the Year,* a little volume of the United World Books (the series reviewed in MANAS for Feb. 17). In a recent broadcast he reported on his efforts to subsidize literature by increasing the libraries (43 new ones have been opened in Vienna), by helping authors and publishers to bring out good books and fight *"Schund and Schmatz";* and his department has just published an anthology of seventy living Viennese authors—poems, essays and short stories—under the title *Lebendige Stadt.* I hope that some of this material will find its way into American magazines. Music is another special concern of the Vienna Kulturamt. The newly organized Vienna Symphony Orchestra gained its basic financial start by giving concerts in all the twenty-four districts of Vienna, before a total of seventy-four thousand boys and girls who were guests of the city. Concerts are being brought into the very classrooms. The children are shown the functions of the different instruments before the concerts start; the fine old custom of Hausmusik is encouraged. Special singing schools prepare future students of the Vienna Academy of Music.

All this inspires great interest in the population and prepares them for enthusiastic cooperation in the Vienna Kulturwochen that draw an ever larger number of visitors to the city during the summer months when open air concerts are held under the Arcades of the Rathaus and the

best of music and drama is offered in glittering splendor.

In revival of the theater, the federal government is running a race with the city. (It is a coalition government consisting of conservatives and socialists, about half and half, according to the elections last week.)

There is also a Renaissance of the classical comic opera for which Vienna has always been famous. Since the great Opera House was bombed at the end of the war (as part of the "liberation"!), and will not be opened until 1955, two small houses are playing opera and musical comedy, with new decorations and firstclass singers, and orchestra and ballet that make the performances wonderfully exciting. I saw a marvellous new show made out of an old operetta, *Der Vogelhaendler,* which might be a big hit on Broadway, with its up-to-date stage settings and entrancing ballet, including a chess dance performed with perfection and brilliance.

The Austrian poet, Ferdinand Raimund, an actor-playwright like Shakespeare and Moliere, has now three plays running in Vienna. *Der Verschwender* and *Der Bauer als Millionaer* combine realistic folksiness and fairytale-fantasy. One is played in a new house by actors of the Burgtheater who can sing as if they were opera stars, the other is at the Scala, the theater in the Soviet Zone, offering special youth performances at very low prices. The third play, *Alpenkoenig und Menschenfeind,* fills the charming Barock Volkstheater to capacity.

Leon Epp, director of the Burgtheater company, started his career with the first performance in Vienna—and, on any European stage, so far as we know—of Robert Browning's *Pippa Passes.* There is a romantic story here. Epp was engaged to a German actress and they were saving for a wedding trip in Italy when they read a German version of *Pippa* and fell in love with it. They decided to give up their honeymoon in Venice and used their savings to hire a theater and give the play, with the young bride as Pippa. It was such a success that the Austrian Radio made the first broadcast performance of a play by a poet who seems to have written for the radio half a century before it came into being. Browning, for example, puts all the stage descriptions into the dialogue; he makes the awkward background noises superfluous; turning the things seen into things heard, he paints the stage in pure poetry as hardly another dramatist, past or present, has done. This radio performance is something no Browning Society in America ever tried! Could Leon Epp be invited to tour American College Theaters to put on this and other plays, as a way of preparing for the international Drama Olympiad that Vienna was dreaming of before the lights went out in the early thirties?

HELENE SCHEU RIESZ

REVIEW
REVIEWERS AND WRITERS

WE don't expect reviewers of books to know everything—even though now and then some of them seem captivated by the thought—but they ought, we think, to be able to look up what others have said on the subject of Extra Sensory Perception before adopting *in toto* the conclusions of enthusiastic "debunkers." Orville Prescott, who with one or two others writes a daily column of book reviews for the New York *Times,* is the critic we have in mind, and the debunking book he approves without qualification on the subject of ESP is *The Spoor of Spooks* by Bergen Evans. *(Times,* Nov. 9.) Evans teaches English at Northwestern, and is also, according to Prescott, "a popular television master of ceremonies." Ho hum.

For reasons to be presented, we think Prescott ought to have known better than to write the following:

> Since Mr. Evans is committed to "the view of the world worked out with painstaking care by scientists over the past 300 years," the list of matters in which he belligerently does not believe is long and includes: ghosts, fortune tellers, dowsing, the rope trick, noneaters who subsist for years and subsist "solely on the smell of roses," love at first sight, the pretensions to wisdom and foresight of most politicians, the value to civilization of the automobile and the existence of ESP, the Extra Sensory Perception that Dr. Joseph B. Rhine has tried to prove by experiments with cards. Mr. Evans demolishes Dr. Rhine's "proofs" gleefully and thoroughly. The carnage is pitiful and only the true believers will be able to take Dr. Rhine seriously hereafter.

This, we propose, is half- or quarter-baked reviewing. Apparently Mr. Prescott chooses to be a true believer in Mr. Evans in preference to looking up the subject of ESP and proofs thereof, as well as informed opinion thereon, in the back-number files of his own newspaper. The *Times,* incidentally, has an excellent library with rag-paper editions of all past issues, in case Mr. Prescott doesn't know.

'Way back in the issue of Jan. 30, 1938, for example, he could find Waldemar Kaempffert, competent and respected science editor of the *Times,* discussing the experiments carried on by Rhine at Duke University, and remarking that the psychologists cannot continue to ignore these experiments and expect "the rest of us to accept them as scientists." The occasion for this observation was the fact that leading mathematicians had at that time publicly expressed approval of Rhine's statistical procedures. The *Times* itself unbent enough to say editorially:

> THE TIMES is neither for nor against Professor Rhine. But it does believe that, the mathematicians having approved Rhine's statistical conclusions, it is time for the psychologists to explain them.

A few months later, in the *Times* for April 17, Kaempffert returned to the subject, with obvious interest in Rhine's work. Kaempffert thought it worth writing about because of the widespread prejudice against research of this sort. He explained:

> Both physicists and psychologists—and psychologists are completely dominated by physical methods of experimentation—would accept clairvoyance and telepathy if the "laws of nature" were not violated. In other words, it makes no difference whether the distance that separates the subject from the cards is three feet or three miles. Light, heat, radio waves, magnetism, every form of energy with which we deal in everyday life diminishes in effect as it ripples out into space—diminishes in accordance with the well-known inverse square law. But not the "force" or whatever it is that is involved in extra-sensory perception. In the new experiments [in precognition] we have another seemingly outrageous violation of physical law.
>
> Investigations of extra-sensory perception now are being made in more than fifty universities and colleges. A few physicists in industrial laboratories are also dabbling in the subject. There never was a time in the history of psychology when so much real scientific interest was manifested in a subject long regarded as taboo.

Through the years, Kaempffert has kept up this sort of intelligent reporting and comment on the course of parapsychological investigation, but Mr. Prescott obviously had no use for "expert opinion" already expressed in his own newspaper. He probably would classify Kaempffert, and John J. O'Neill, science editor on the *Herald Tribune,* and various other distinguished science writers as well as scientists, among the wishful thinking "true believers."

The impressive thing about the spread of interest in experimenting with telepathy is that many of the workers who started out in this field did so with the avowed intention of proving Dr. Rhine wrong. The number of those active in parapsychological research has certainly not diminished since 1938, so that, in effect, for more than fifteen years an attempt has been going on to *mass-produce* evidence against belief in ESP. *Where is it?* The fact is that most of the people who do research in ESP become convinced that it is a reality, regardless of "the view of the world worked out with painstaking care by scientists over the past 300 years."

If Mr. Evans can make a bright young man on the New York *Times* back away from a record like this, one must suppose he has a few psychic powers of his own, including spellbinding. It seems likely that the rest of us true believers had better not read the book at all, for life without the capacity to believe in ghosts, dowsing, fortune tellers, love at first sight, and automobiles (we live in California) would be a pretty dismal prospect.

Howard Fast, a novelist whom we have often admired in these pages, was recently called a Communist by Philip Toynbee, also a novelist, in the latter's review of Fast's book, *The Passion of Sacco and Vanzetti,* published in the London *Sunday Observer.* Mr. Fast objected to this designation in a letter to the *Observer* (Oct. 10), remarking that Toynbee had no "proof," and that Fast had never called himself a Communist in a public statement. Fast also pointed out that in the United States, Communists face total imprisonment of twenty-five years under three Federal Statutes, and that some states have made twenty years in prison the penalty for being a Communist. Fast did not, however, deny the charge.

This is a messy issue from almost any point of view. We can't see why Toynbee needed to call Fast a Communist in order to review his book on Sacco and Vanzetti, which is probably good. Anyone who can't be thrilled and even awed by the story of Sacco and Vanzetti must be dull in heart and mind, and anyone who, knowing the story, is not ashamed of what was done to them, has little justification for continuing to enjoy the constitutional freedoms afforded by life in the United States.

But Toynbee did call him a Communist. This isn't a question of loyalty oaths, or anything like that, so that the conventions of legal procedure need not be invoked. If Fast proposes that his political opinions should not affect æsthetic judgment of his work, we can agree, but the fact that penalties attach to being a communist seems irrelevant at this level of debate. If a man believes that communism is the hope of the world, why shouldn't he admit it? No intellectually honest communist will say that he belongs to a movement committed to gain power according to the rules of democratic procedure; the communist movement is committed to seizure of power in behalf of a dictatorship of the proletariat. Conspiracy, therefore, is an essential element of the communist program. What we are suggesting is that a revolutionist who believes in conspiracy as a means necessary to the highest social good ought not to demand a life without risk from the society he conspires against. The laws penalizing communists may be bad laws, but that is the affair of the people who passed them. Morally, it seems to us, a communist can't complain about those laws unless he is willing to place confidence in the system which passed them, and this is impossible for an authentic communist. This may be a

problem the communist has to work out for himself, but we get a bit curious about the inner logic of such decisions. At what point, for example, will a communist feel obliged to stand up and be counted? Under what conditions, other than when pointing a gun at his opponents, will he be willing to declare himself?

There really ought to be an imaginable situation in which a communist will say, "I am a human being with opinions of my own, and I think thus and so." Now there are two considerations which might make such a situation unimaginable. The first consideration is the fear of personal consequences to himself. We may suppose that a communist will never declare himself so long as doing so might bring him more personal discomfort or danger than he would otherwise be exposed to. Then there is the consideration that he will declare himself only when ordered to by the political society to which he belongs—the Party or the State. But neither of these considerations involves recognition of individual human dignity. What, then, is the imaginable situation?

We are, we suppose, thinking principally of American communists. And our question is really an inquiry into the meaning of personal integrity for the communist. There are times when it seems as though personal integrity must be redefined by the communist as ideological weakness or deviation—that for the communist, personal integrity simply can not exist. The trouble is, we don't see how a communist can even discuss such questions—openly.

COMMENTARY
TRAGIC LEGACY

THIS WEEK for Nov. 21 prints as an article a portion of Somerset Maugham's Preface to the recently published *Memoirs of Aga Khan*, in which the British novelist offers advice to Americans.

Maugham writes of the "legacy of hatred" the British left behind them when they left the Asiatic countries where they had so long ruled as a conquering colonial power. Maugham himself had first-hand contact with the feeling generated in Indians by the British belief that "all Asiatics were a second-class race, and 'white men' possessed some intrinsic and unchallengable superiority." He tells of an experience in India:

> When I was in Hyderabad the Crown Prince asked me to lunch. I had spent some time in Bombay and was then on my way to Calcutta.
>
> "I suppose you were made an honorary member of the Club when you were in Bombay," he said, and when I told him I was, he added: "And I suppose you'll be made an honorary member of the Club at Calcutta?"
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> "I hope so," I answered.
>
> "Do you know the difference between the Club at Bombay and the Club at Calcutta?" he asked me. I shook my head. "In one they don't allow either dogs or Indians, in the other they allow dogs."
>
> I couldn't for the life of me think of what to say to that.

The same conditions, Maugham says, prevailed in China. The best hotels would not admit Chinese except to special sections, and it was the same in restaurants. In shops Chinese customers had to stand aside and wait until any European or American customer had been served. And in Egypt, again, the same story.

Maugham concludes:

> In the world of today the Americans occupy the position which the British so long, and for all their failings not ingloriously, held. Perhaps it would be to their advantage to profit by our example and avoid making the errors that have cost us so dearly.
>
> A brown man can fire a Sten gun as straight as a white man; a yellow man can drop an atom bomb as efficiently. . . .
>
> I do not think it can be denied that the British conferred great benefits on the people over which they ruled; but they humiliated them and so earned their hatred. The Americans would do well to admit it.

We have only one thing to add, this: Today, we may find that the temper of the East has changed—that no longer is the Asian so vulnerable to humiliation. If this is so, Americans would do well to learn it.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

PERSISTING in our definition of education as involving, above all else, the acquirement of individuality, supporting arguments seem to crop up on every hand; at the same time the formulation serves as an excellent focus of criticism of ineffective educational efforts. And there is much to criticize in our schools and colleges, even if one considers himself in the main their defenders. Explanation of the fact that learning is both respected and derided in our culture—not only by "pro" and "anti" factions, but, on occasion, by nearly all of us—may be found by reflecting that *respect for teachers undoubtedly first came from respect for original or creative thinking, while the derision we also feel for some of the intellectual class results from the realization that many who do no original thinking nevertheless occupy posts of learning and enjoy corresponding reputations.*

Such distinctions are by no means abstractions. Every student feels the difference between a teacher who knows something of his subject through direct experience and one who knows it merely by the hearsay of books. In illustration of this sort of student response there is the marked popularity of courses in abnormal psychology following World War II: many young psychology professors acquired practical field experience in the armed forces, and afterward their lectures were keener and more authentic.

A curious remoteness is revealed by the "hearsay" teacher of any subject to those who listen to him talk, and perhaps one reason why science courses seem more real than some of their liberal arts counterparts is that the professor of science has usually dealt in some degree with actual experiment. The "instructor" in the meaning and beauty of English literature, however, is all too often one who has never created literature himself—he talks about literature at second-hand. And, while this comparison between imagined professors of science and of literature or history is hardly reliable for any specific campus, since some of the most imaginative and creative men appear in the latter fields, there is no doubt but that the *ideal* of science is that of direct experience, while that of the history professor is not. Thus students are more apt to be impressed by those who speak in the name of science than by those who represent traditional scholarship. All of which may serve as preamble to a communication received some weeks ago from a MANAS reader who brings into discussion one everyday dimension of the values of "direct experience":

> On minding our own business:
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> In having "serious" conversation with friends who would consider visits spent in a joyful rhythmic dance or a concentrated game of Canasta a waste of time, I've been struck by our tendency to mind everyone's business but our own. Our conversation verges on gossip because it is a field about which we are in no position to do anything. Women past 50 discuss painless childbirth, and express opinions about it. Men whose wives have had to work outside the home expound grandly on their belief that wives fulfill themselves more completely if they remain at home. In fact, we seem to discuss everything *except* the part *we* are now to play in our particular act on the stage of our lives. As middle-aged adults we all have new problems and challenges. One is a recent mother-in-law, one a new grandmother; a couple are in a time of marital crisis—situations new to each of them, situations where a creative next-step is called for, situations where there is need for each to mind his own business. But we would usually rather tackle someone else's problems *theoretically* than deal responsibly with our own. And with good reason! For if we have pet ideas on the duties and behavior of a mother-in-law, and expound them freely, we might be called on to "put up," since the world would rather be shown than told. That might be disillusioning all around. On the other hand, limiting our discussion to the areas in which we each now have to *act* might prove rewarding.

Our correspondent's point—that we should know something at first hand about the matters we belabor in discussion—can hardly be overemphasized. However, we should like to develop a special argument from this thesis,

related to previous thoughts about "individuality." This argument is not hard to make, for it is fairly easy to see that one who is either pretentious or intellectually irresponsible during conversation is not much of an "individual." What he says fails to impress us—unless we are simply looking for material to insert in idle conversations of our own—because it has no mental vitality, no connection which leads to responsible action. The chances are, too, that we have heard everything said many times before, for irresponsibles and pseudo-intellectuals never do much more than pick up thoughts out of prevailing patterns of opinion or prejudice. The really important question concerns ways and means for encouraging genuine independence and originality in our children. Obviously, we can't get results by talking repeatedly about abstract qualities, especially if we fail to give convincing definition of what they mean through our own speech and behavior. Both we and our children are involved in institutional associations which tend to make appreciation of individuality very difficult, because we are not encouraged to actually take our destinies in our own hands. Few men's luncheon clubs, few ladies' bridge combines, create an atmosphere wherein individuality can be appreciated. Similarly with Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the hundred and one other groupings of the young arranged by industrious, well-meaning adults. It seems clear that we entirely overdo our ministrations to the "social instinct."

None of the groups mentioned, of course, can be scorned or criticized for what they are: it is simply that when people, young or old, are submerged in a sufficient number of such associations through the years, the "daily wish" is apt to simply be for the approval of one's favorite group. Our ideal philosopher, on the other hand (where, incidentally, shall we find these wondrous beings we are always talking about?) always wants to know first of all whether a group opinion is good, true and beautiful. His initial concern is not with whether the group can be induced to like him, but whether he can really approve the group.

College fraternal associations, we fear, produce an entirely wrong atmosphere in this regard, though we select them for criticism only because they point up tendencies already overblown in our culture. The boy of eighteen who wishes a certain fraternity to pledge him, imitates industriously those he wants to please, in a way qualitatively similar to the manner in which the younger members of juvenile gangs try to show their leaders that they are not "odd-ball." But conformity can often be dangerous. Why is it that, at college reunions, we sometimes discover with a start of surprise that the once odd personalities among our former classmates or fraternity brothers are now the ones who seem interesting? The leading men of the campus often—not always, of course, but often enough to make our argument—drift into the dreariest and most unimaginative of lives, partly because they have always been too easily adaptable to mass patterns, and partly because they were allowed to believe they were getting somewhere by being popular—that is, by reflecting mass ideals with a personable flair.

To help children to avoid the terrible destiny of becoming washed-out bores, we suggest that concerned parents start encouraging their own latent tendencies toward nonconformity. If a Republican, startle your political cohorts in the neighborhood by voting Democrat every once in a while; begin reading the newspaper editorials you dislike, find something aptly critical of your own opinions in them, and admit this to your family. At least, do something to keep the knowledge alive that men do not always have to run to patterns, for when they do this they are both poor learners of anything new and poor teachers of the young, even when their patterns are "good" or "liberal" ones.

FRONTIERS

Two Suggestions to America

SINCE there is always value in listening to criticism of our own nation's conduct and attitudes, we here present two contrasting opinions originating in widely separated localities. One is from the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* for Oct. 21. The *Guardian* always seems a corrective tonic for the disease of "super-Americanism," not because its editors or contributors are anti-U.S., but only because they have the capacity to recognize bumptiousness and political shallowness when they see it. In this case, a letter to the editor, coming from Glasgow, begins with reference to the disastrous effect upon freedom of inquiry, in any land, of "heresy-hunting," then turns to establishment of proof that a university can, when staffed by men of sufficient courage, actually improve its relations to government by taking an unequivocal stand on the matter of academic freedom. The letter relates to a college in Nigeria. We quote extensively:

> The distressing cases of Mr. Lattimore and Dr. Oppenheimer are too well known to require more than passing mention; and there are apparently many other cases in the American educational world, in which the less intellectual but more materially powerful State has considered it in the national interest to penalize individuals for holding to their own opinions and principles when these differed from the official view.
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> This practice, of course, is found in Communist-dominated countries, where it is to be expected; but symptoms of it have appeared also, where it is less to be expected, in British Colonies in West Africa. In the University College at Ibadan, Nigeria, Government interference has prevented the appointment of several well-qualified persons because they were suspected of Communist sympathies. An extremely useful member of the staff was barred from residence in Nigeria for the same reason. Reports from other educational institutions in Nigeria, and elsewhere in West Africa, give similar pictures of Government interference.
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> Although this interference is less drastic than that found in America and in the Communist-dominated countries, the principle violated is the same—namely, the right of the individual in an academic community to pursue, without intimidation or hindrance, the search for true knowledge. Behind the Iron Curtain, the dogma of communism, supported by ruthless force, is a power which it is difficult for a university or college to combat. In the non-Communist countries, however, the power of the State over academic communities seems to be largely a financial one, and one wonders if the inactivity of these communities in asserting their principles is to some extent governed by the fear of losing a grant.
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> It might be of interest to know how the University College of Ibadan has faced this problem of Government interference. It has considered the principle of non-interference sufficiently important to take a firm stand against Government pressure, in spite of the fact that the college could not continue to function without the Government's financial assistance. The stand, however, has not been made in a spirit of truculence or of defiance. The Nigerian Government has been told simply but firmly that the college will be responsible for the behaviour of members of its staff, and that it must be allowed complete freedom to decide who these members are to be. It has pointed out that it is as much in the interest of academic work as of political security to prevent the growth of Communist (or other) dogma in the college, and that the college authorities are not prepared to allow any member of the staff to be diverted from his academic duties to an extent which would interfere with them, nor will his teaching and research be allowed to take on an undue political bias. The college believes that it is fully capable of controlling any activities which might tend to be subversive; and the Nigerian Government, with a praiseworthy liberality, has accepted this point of view. The college is no longer subjected to annoying official interference, and the Nigerian Government has obtained the co-operation of an important and responsible body of men. Honour has been satisfied on both sides. The financial support of the Nigerian Government has not been withdrawn, and the loyalty of the college is not questioned.
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> What is possible in a relatively backward country in Africa may not appear to be so easy in the complex mechanism of an advanced material civilisation; but even in a material civilisation principles hold good, and much can be done through simple acts of good faith. It would be a good omen for our way of life if the great, established academic world of America were to take an example from one of the youngest colleges in Africa.

University of California professors, take heart! Some Africans share your ideals, anyway.

Next, in a Norman Thomas "news letter" issued by the Post World War Council in September, we encounter remarks quoted from U Nu, Prime Minister of Burma. This distinguished statesman, a devout Buddhist, speaks of Burmese attitudes toward other countries:

> We can see the Americans as a nation of great men and women who are capable of making this world a better world. We can also see them as heroes who had saved the world from the scourge of Nazism and Fascism during the two World Wars, at huge sacrifice of manpower and materials. We can also see them playing the unprecedented role of benefactors showering the needy world with billions worth of free gifts, when most countries are indulging in taking instead of giving. . . .
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> Then, let me tell you how we also see the Peoples' Republic of China. To start with, this viewpoint is different from that of most of those who are anti-communists. As we do not like communism, we do not want to see the spread of this creed into our territories. We have, therefore, been doing our best to prevent such a contingency here. But, it is far from our intention to meddle in their affairs. They have chosen communism in order to suit their own circumstances. . . . In the past we had witnessed China, with over 500 million people, bent low under a handful of foreigners. Things have changed under Mao. His China has earned the respect of many foreigners, and as Asians we take pride in this new phenomenon. . . .
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> Hydrogen and atomic bombs will have one result. If these weapons are resorted to, of course countries will be laid waste. Out of the ashes will grow the inevitable hatred against Anglo-Americans who wield the terrible weapon, and out of these ashes will grow communism which thrives on destruction and poverty. Therefore, a South East Asian today requests that his voice be heard by those who are principally concerned, so that a world wide conflagration does not break out. I pray that the United States of America and the Peoples' Republic of China may be able to work jointly and with understanding for world peace and progress.

Now, the "communist menace" is *really* menacing to Burma, so that if the Burmese Prime Minister can be philosophical about the right of other peoples to work out their own destinies, should not U.S. statesmen manage to do at least as well? This is, of course, harder for Westerners than it is for Easterners who have been influenced by the doctrines of Gautama Buddha. For Buddhism is unequivocally a teaching of non-violence, striking directly at every sort of "factionalism" as being beneath the true dignity of man. The Westerner's religion, on the other hand, though beginning with a message from Jesus of Nazareth which emphasized the same point of view, has somehow become a prime source of factional attitudes. "God" has usually been made into a symbol of power, a force one hopes to be able to invoke on behalf of one's special group or nation, and so in this case the Buddhist—who doesn't believe in a personal God—clearly has a healthier faith, so far as the longevity of the body politic is concerned.