

THE ADVENTURERS

SO long as there are intrepid roisterers and magdalenes with a flair for daring in their hearts, the world will continue to be a puzzle to moralists. A moralist is one who attempts to calibrate the scale of good and evil, to solve the human equation by establishing some sort of measure of the good life, on which to base his schemes of intentional change. But the moralist who works at this task seriously, and who, along with this high purpose, has some of the salt and humor of existence, is bound to discover certain qualities in man which irreducibly resist classification in either good or evil categories, yet are of the essence of being human. For some such reason, we suppose, Nietzsche invented the category, "beyond good and evil," and by similar cause other men have abandoned the project of becoming moralists altogether. Where in your system, a by-stander may legitimately ask a moralist, is the place of a sense of humor? Have you a region for adventurers to explore, and is it large enough for them to get irretrievably lost? You cannot make them happy unless you do.

We have words of neutral moral tone such as "curiosity" to cover some of the qualities that moralists often neglect, but "curiosity" has hardly the muscularity to account for the irrepressible questing spirit in men who are determined, say, to cross the sonic barrier. This will to see where sight has never gone—how shall we define it? These men who come alive only when they are plighting their troth with some new unknown—how shall we interest them in our codes of good and evil?

There is something locked in every man—and surely not locked in his "genes"—which some day bursts forth in the determination to have an hour, to reach a height, to hear a sound and see a vision which has never belonged to anyone else. It is in some small respect like, perhaps, the moment

when a baby first walks. It is a moment glorious, unique. The fact that countless million babies have walked before—have owned this moment—makes it not one whit less wonderful. There are other wonderful things each child and man grows up to, some of which we know of before they happen, while others hold their secret to the last, final impact of discovery. Old tribal customs of "initiation" doubtless represent folk wisdom of the importance of these events—customs which, incidentally, are entirely abandoned among civilized peoples, condemning them, perhaps, to a kind of eternal and collective immaturity.

It is not that we should learn something new and strange from adopting tribal initiations, but that the idea of discovery in ordeal needs to be restored to civilized culture. The lack of this idea, we think, may be responsible for any number of distortions and excesses which the adventurous spirit undertakes as substitutes. Sometime, somewhere, a man has to give evidence to himself that he is a man. Too often, this venture takes the form of doing what other "men" do, and is, therefore, a spurious demonstration. What does it mean to become a man? As we see it, there is very little difference between becoming a man and becoming a god—a half-god, at least. We are told that in past years in India—perhaps still today—the young Brahmin was obliged to spend an entire night in the jungle, alone, unarmed, in silent reflection. A tiger may walk by, but the youth must not fear. He must prove his worthiness as a Brahmin, his harmlessness as a human being. He must become a living testament to the law of life that he who fears not, harms not, is recognized as a friend by all that live.

This is a way—or symbolic of a way—of entering into the common pantheism of nature. The youth gets his touch of life without intermediaries. He has been alone with the Alone,

has in those long hours felt the rhythm of the earth and heard, if he listened closely, the music of the spheres. The theory is—or was—that a man born a Brahmin would be equal to the challenge of this ordeal, and the meaning of this, we suppose, is that when a man is able to stand entirely alone, yet feel his confraternity with the stars, the earth, and the wild creatures who move about him on silent feet, then he can never be lonely again, for all life belongs to him, and he to it.

It is a hunger for this private, inalienable touch with life itself, we think, which drives the adventurer on. To the outward evidence of this hunger, the moralist must bow, whether he understands it or not. For in it there is a bit of the divine madness which the heart intuitively respects. It is as though a man says to himself, "I could be at home on a star, if I could get there; and, who knows, perhaps I can!" Sometimes this attitude manifests as a way of going through life, instead of as a single, grand project. We have all met men in whom the spirit of adventure is a mood of approach to even ordinary affairs. They never want to do things the "old way." The annoying thing about them, apart from the time they waste and the mistakes they make, is that occasionally they do discover a better way of doing things. But, characteristically, the "tried and true" is somehow an affront to their integrity.

How different, these, from other people who are forever troubled lest they prove odd or freakish, lest they depart from custom and established ritual! The lovers of the established and the familiar always take their adventure in wholly tamed and capsuled dosages—they are fed "communion," or they become the conscripted variety of heroes when the security of their native land seems challenged by a foreign power. They are the unimaginative moralist's delight, for how easy it is to plan for people who are already insistent upon doing the proper thing!

A world with nothing but adventurers in it would be, perhaps, a sorry place, but not as bad as a world with no adventurers at all. For since

adventure has been divorced from philosophy, the adventurer has become a kind of secular priest in whom resides the responsibility of reminding his fellows that they are missing great things. He does not know this very often, and would probably be a bit contemptuous of the idea, yet nothing is more reasonable. In an age of specialization, every specialist becomes a species of priest, undergoing some particular region of experience more intensively than others and reporting on it for the benefit of all. Inevitably, distortion results, since no man can do the work of others for them without developing an abnormal sense of importance—they can't get along without *me!*—and this does not help him much in obtaining the appreciation of others. The general result, in psychological terms, is described by Ortega in his *Revolt of the Masses*, which is the portrait of a society in which the spirit of adventure has died out almost altogether.

Sometimes the moralist, feeling the blood of adventure run out of society, may be tempted to seek an adventure or two of his own. But adventure comes no more from "studying" than humor or mercy. It is one of the first things, and not a product of criticism or of synthesis. One wonders, however, if any man should attempt the labors of a moralist without having, himself, a natural flair for adventure. For if he does not have it, he is bound to compose treatises which leave out of serious account all matters in which he has no personal interest, and for which, therefore, he recognizes no "social" need. It happens, however, that adventure, as we have defined it, is not a social need, but an individual one. Adventure is a lonely enterprise by which a man declares his independence and his capacity for uniting with experience without the guarantees of our modern overstuffed and upholstered civilization.

Of the essence of adventure is the capacity to be unafraid. How is this gained? Probably as many envious sighs of soul have wondered after the answer to this question as timid lovers have wept without telling their love. To be without

fear is sometimes, as psychologists glibly assure us, a lack of imagination, an inability to see the horrors lurking around the bend. But it may also be an intimation of immortality. Socrates had this kind of fearlessness. Socrates feared death so little that he shocked his devoted disciples by his indifference toward what was about to take place as he drank the hemlock. He knew, we may say, that nothing evil could happen to what goodness was in him, and he was ready for only the goodness to survive. This, we suppose, was what Plato meant when he said that the philosopher is one who learns how to die easily. The philosopher has faith in the order of nature—transcendental nature.

So the adventurer, the fearless man, is ready for his leap. He makes a bargain with destiny. He leaps, and if he slips, then that becomes part of his bargain. He has a trust in the general decency of things, even things which are beyond his experience, for he feels that he knows even these in principle.

Fear, then, is a distrust of life; or it may also be defined as an inner suspicion that one has not played fairly with life, and is likely to be called to an accounting. It follows that the timid man can never turn into an adventurer by a sudden and anxious thrust into the unknown. A certain insouciance is called for, and this he does not possess. Without it, he will surely come to grief. He has the project, then, of learning to trust life. This will be difficult for him, seeming so terribly *impractical*—as difficult, say, as for the prudent man to decide that he and his wife should have a baby, when quite sure that he cannot possibly afford it; or as difficult for the same prudent man to abandon his life insurance, in evidence of his new belief that a just man will not sow disaster when he leaves this existence.

One does not contract for romance at will, nor is the spirit of adventure on tap and made to flow according to nicely reasoned philosophical conclusions. For adventure, in more ways than one, is a love affair with life itself. The wide-eyed

wonder of the child, his irresponsible enthusiasms, his unblighted joy in the simple things of life—these, as much as anything, illustrate the spontaneous response of the unfearing quality of human beings to the texture of existence. If we would promise ourselves never to belittle or grow too old for these immediate pleasures, and never to let our "experience" shadow the endless discoveries of childhood, we might be further on our way to becoming adventurers than we suspect.

An inquiry concerning the spirit of adventure touches all these things. We come into existence from pasts we know little of, save from what we manifestly bring with us. Our natures are variously mixed, each having a combination uniquely his own. The yearnings of the soul arise within us, and when we know them not, they make for themselves strange disguises, learning to speak alien lines. And then, like as not, we blame ourselves as sinners, wonder at our follies, and ask the Lord to destroy the gnawing unrest which steals away our contentment.

But what if we are truly adventurers turned into pastures made only for sheep and cows? We can at least make an attempt to find out. For even if we meet with disappointments, our lives will be the richer for having tried. And once having moved in this direction, the shining mountain, the measureless sea, the trackless forest, will always have a friendlier aspect, until, finally, we learn to walk alone.

Letter from **CENTRAL EUROPE**

INNSBRUCK—General Elections will take place in Austria on Feb. 22. As the term of Parliament is constitutionally set at four years, elections normally would have been due only in the fall of 1953, but the Government as well as the two major political parties which form the Coalition had agreed by last December that elections should be "as soon as possible." Ostensibly, the election is to settle issues of fiscal policy raised by certain figures in the preliminary budget for 1953.

Due to a variety of causes, Austria's economic recovery and development have not been as successful as originally expected. Last year the United States had to abate ERP contributions, and taxes which Austrians are obliged to pay cannot be raised any higher without killing economic life altogether. When the Minister of Finances and his colleagues (of the Austrian Peoples' Party) opposed certain appropriations for public works, other Ministers (of the Social Democratic Party) insisted on them. While the Peoples' Party claims that inflation will result from these expenditures, the Social Democrats argue that public works are necessary to prevent mass unemployment.

Three and a half years ago, at the time of the last election, the voter had the choice of four parties: the Austrian Peoples' Party (embracing generally the propertied classes and the farmers, with moral support from the Roman Church); the Social Democrats (mostly labour and petty officials); the Independents (a new group, arising from general discontent); and the Left-bloc (Communists and left-wing Social Democrats). There is little talk of "party" in the campaigns of this election. Candidates either mention the name of their particular party as rarely as possible or—as the Communists do—change their designation altogether. (Communists call themselves simply the "Peoples' Opposition.")

This time, more parties court the favour of the voter. Some new formations will be no more than copies of the main parties which—by this method—try to catch those who are not content with the attitude of the established group, but would not like to turn to a party with an entirely different policy. Others will be too small to be regarded as influential for the outcome of the elections.

So, the propaganda will boil down to the two slogans after all: "Fight against inflation" (Austrian Peoples' Party), and "Fight against unemployment" (Social Democrats). The average citizen would probably like to vote against both! That he cannot, but, as admitted by the parties themselves, must accept inflation *or* unemployment, is evidence of the political impotence of Austria.

It would be unjust, however, to hold the dominant parties responsible for the ominous outlook. The real fault lies with the still continuing occupation of this tiny country, the exploitation of Austria's most valuable industries by foreign powers, the habit of using her as a pawn in the moves of the "cold war," and all the attending uncertainties of the latter.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

THE BIG CHANGE

IT is often the habit of *avant garde* publications to regard established literary journals with a disparaging eye, which fact occasions the speculation that MANAS may not be "*avant garde*" at all, as it has sometimes thought itself to be. In any case, destructive criticism and disparagement are not in our professed line and we do not find the efforts of established journals to be altogether worthless. We often appreciate the content and writing of both the *Atlantic* and *Harper's*, which sometimes provide information and perspectives not available in the somewhat supercharged *Nation* or *Partisan Review*. We recall, for example, such *Harper's* articles as those by John McPartland, including his most excellent appraisal of the Kinsey Report, "Justification By Percentages," and his recent piece on the possibilities of interplanetary travel, "No Go, Space Cadet!" *Harper's* also has kept a weather eye open for original material of value from young unknowns, and has not catered exclusively to the Big Names.

These reflections may serve to introduce a book by *Harper's* editor Frederick Lewis Allen, *The Big Change*, one of the better Book-of-the-Month selections. There may be better over-all summaries of transition in America from 1900 to 1950, and there are undoubtedly a score of books which deal more effectively with certain specific aspects of those changing times, but until we see a better volume for general consumption, we are convinced that *The Big Change* should be a candidate for adoption in Senior High School curricula. Mr. Allen is a temperate writer, but one gets the feeling that his temperateness on such stirring subjects as Communism and anti-Communism is less due to any indifference or conservatism than to his effort to maintain the objectivity of an historian while dealing with contemporary events. Although we are admittedly not experts in the field, we detect no overriding political bias in Mr. Allen's approach, and see no reason why traditional Republicans or Democrats should feel that *The Big Change* is slanted against their own opinions—even though some extremists under both banners will doubtless loudly protest the dispassionate treatment provided.

Mr. Allen has undertaken a tremendous task, though he simplifies matters somewhat by deliberately avoiding discussion of the half-century's disorganization of family life and disintegration of conventional religion. He concerns himself chiefly with the "democratization of our economic system, or the adjustment of capitalism to democratic ends; the way in which an incredible expansion of industrial and business activity, combined with a varied series of political, social and economic forces, has altered the American standard of living and with it the average American's way of thinking and his status as a citizen." Mr. Allen continues:

I do not believe that the changes which I shall try to describe are as yet very widely understood.

That they are not understood abroad is demonstrated again and again. When a Vishinsky or Gromyko or Malik berates the United States, talking, for instance, about "lackeys of Wall Street," what he is doing is berating, exaggeratedly, the United States of 1900 rather than of today.

Not only that: the changes that have taken place in the American business system and American life are not fully grasped even by most of us here at home. Our own concepts tend to date sharply, particularly when we get into arguments. The chairman of the board of a great corporation decides to say a few words on behalf of "free enterprise" and against "socialism," and one is suddenly aware that the image of "free enterprise" in his mind looks more like an old-time country store than like the vast, co-ordinated, decentralized institution which he actually manages; and that the "socialism" which he excoriates is a textbook socialism quite different in direction and meaning from anything that has found a significant place in the American scene. The labor leader, in order to encourage the van and to harass the foe from the rear, decides to denounce management and the stockholders for their "lust for profits" and to arouse the "embattled workers," and he too pulls out of a drawer a well-worn stencil, cut perhaps about the year 1920.

The Big Change, according to personal taste, is either a mine of information on social and economic transition, or a discourse on the changes that have taken place in political philosophy and opinion. Some, for instance, will be startled and interested by being reminded that Henry Ford once produced an automobile that sold for the total price of \$290. Ford,

by the way, though granted by Mr. Allen to be a "cranky" and "self-willed" man, is also credited with introducing the \$5 per 8-hour day in the automobile industry to replace the \$2.40 per 8-hour day which obtained in 1914. These things are good to know, the latter, especially, for labor-liberals who have accepted Mr. Ford as an unadulterated symbol of "reaction." Personality symbols, certainly, are seldom entirely appropriate, and Ford is one case in point, since he was an "experimenter" with the possibilities of our economic system as well as an experimenter with material.

Mr. Allen's verdict on the Hoover-Roosevelt controversy is a verdict which does discredit to neither person nor party, but which illustrates clearly a fact that many Americans still need to recognize—that the essential changes brought in under the aegis of the "New Deal" were changes inevitable, with or without a "New Deal," and regardless of who and what party was in power. Whether the Republicans would have done a better or a worse job remains a speculative question, in Mr. Allen's view.

One of the best things about *The Big Change* is Allen's predisposition toward as much optimism as the facts of recent history will possibly allow. But he does not dodge facts in order to preserve his optimism. He is fair-minded even in cultural matters, as when dealing with the "Digest" magazines, and with the deluge of Pocket Books, the *Harper's* man is something better than disdainful. Since MANAS devotes considerable space to reviewing paperbound books, we are especially glad to reproduce a few paragraphs on this subject:

The situation is not as black as it has been painted. I agree with Bernard DeVoto that no book really worth publishing fails of publication by some unit of a very diversified industry and I would add that while there is trash on the bestseller lists, most of the books which reach those lofty positions, with very pleasant results for their authors' pocketbooks, are among the best of their time . . . volumes, priced at twenty-five or thirty-five cents for the newsstand and drugstore trade, are bought in phenomenal lots. In the year 1950 the total was no less than 214 million; in 1951 the figure had jumped to 231 million.

Two-thirds or more of these paper-bound books, to be sure, were novels or mysteries—thus falling into classifications too inclusive to be reassuring as to the

public taste—and some were rubbish by any tolerable standard. . . . But consider these sales figures (as of January 1952) for a few paper-bound books: Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*, in play form, over half a million; George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-four*, over three-quarters of a million; Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, over a million and a quarter; Ruth Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*, 400,000; and—to cite an incontrovertibly classical example—a translation of *The Odyssey* (with an abstract cover design), 350,000. And remember that these sales, which are above and beyond bookclub sales and regular bookstore sales, have been achieved in a nation of avid magazine readers. It is true that the financial returns to the author from such low-priced books are meager: he gets less revenue from a million of them than from 20,000 sold at standard prices. Nevertheless there is an interesting phenomenon here. There is a big American market for good writing if it and the price are within easy reach.

Mr. Allen shows finesse in dealing with the Communist and anti-Communist issues, which is the more notable since at the time of *The Big Change's* appearance America was in the midst of a fevered political campaign in which these words were peculiarly charged. Allen attacks no one, not even Senator Joseph McCarthy. But he does supply a perspective which makes continued irrational support of McCarthy's tactics or contentions extremely difficult to defend:

Because the Communist party was conspiratorial and imposed secrecy upon its members, the job of ferreting them out of government departments, and organizations for the support of this or that public policy, and labor unions, was difficult. Because a great many fine, patriotic people had worked in these departments or organizations or unions, it was almost inevitable that some of these people too should come under suspicion. Because most of the converts to communism had been radicals, and they had infiltrated most successfully into radical or liberal organizations, the suspicion took another form in indiscriminating minds: anybody who had any ideas which looked queer to his neighbors might be a Communist, or something like a Communist. And because these suspicions were rife, there was a wide-open chance for zealots (of whom the most furious were some of the very people who had got hooked in the nineteen-thirties, and were working out a savage atonement for their error) and for ambitious politicians to brand many decent and conscientious

citizens as virtual traitors, thus placing upon them a stigma which they might never live down. The chain of circumstances that had begun with Communist secrecy reached very far indeed.

And it has reached even farther than that. For, as a result of the inquisitions of various congressional committees, and the government loyalty checks, and the strange drama of Alger Hiss, and the fulminations of Senator McCarthy, and the terrorization of parts of the entertainment world by the publication of *Red Channels*, and the charges made against many school and college teachers, a great many useful and productive people have been frightened into a nervous conformity. If a college instructor, lecturing on economic theory, reaches the point in his lecture where he should explain the respects in which Karl Marx was right in his economic diagnosis, he is in a dither: suppose some neurotic student should report that he is teaching communism? If a schoolteacher so much as mentions Russia, she wonders what tongues may start wagging in the Parent-Teacher Association. If a businessman gets in the mail an appeal for funds for European refugees, he looks uneasily at the letterhead and wonders if it may represent some group he'd rather not get entangled with. If a politician running for the city council campaigns for better housing, he knows well that his opponent will probably call his proposal "communistic," or at any rate "leftist"—an inclusive term which might be applied to almost anything, but has vaguely opprobrious overtones and may lose him votes by the thousands. At many a point in American life, adventurous and constructive thought is stifled by apprehension. . . . We are by nature a sanguine people, but never before have we been subjected to the sort of prolonged strain that we feel today, and our patience, humor, and courage are being sorely tested.

Finally, while praising *The Big Change*, we feel obligated to note the comment of Peter Gay in a recent *Nation* review:

The Big Change concludes that our country is under a severe strain, but the nature of that strain can be grasped only if the fundamental maladjustments of modern society which this book slights, are fully discussed.

This seems accurate enough, but we doubt that the criticism contributes as much to the education of the average American reader as will Mr. Allen's book. Although *The Big Change* does not subject our society to deep ethical or psychological analysis, it does offer perspectives which may spur the average reader to

attempt more analyses of his own. And Mr. Allen's flavor of hopefulness is surely worth something of itself.

COMMENTARY

RULE OF EXPLANATION

ROBERT BOYLE, the great seventeenth-century chemist, was personally convinced of divine intervention; Isaac Newton, whose ways of thinking about the physical world became the very model of scientific inquiry, was as much or more concerned with the transcendental side of things, being an admirer of Jacob Boehme, a reader of such mystics as Thomas Vaughan, and an author of mystical tracts of his own; Alfred Russel Wallace, who with Darwin formulated the great principles of organic evolution, was a philosophical spiritualist; William Crookes, discoverer of chemical elements, inventor of the Crookes vacuum tube, and president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (1898), was a practical experimenter in psychical research, and the reporter of events which his colleagues found altogether incredible.

The conventional historian of science will usually interpret such facts as these as evidence of the slow decline of superstition, the grip of which, we are told, can relax only as the assumptions of supernaturalism are erased from the memory of man, and new, demonstrable principles of objective scientific method put in their place. What actually seems to be taking place, however, in the passage from "superstition" to the modern outlook, is not the complete rejection of supernaturalism, but its depersonalization. If there is a psychic universe, with forces, laws, and phenomena, it will be recognized not so much because of miraculous demonstrations by extraordinary individuals, nor by visitations from another world, but from the slow, almost pedestrian progress of investigators whose effort is to show the reality of, not a "ghost," but a super-physical state or condition; who are not interested in "little people," but in the latent capacities of people like ourselves. For years, we have listened with rapt attention to brilliant discourses on the wondrous mysteries of a piece of chalk, a worm, a drop of water. It is time, we

think, to consider the mysteries of the human being!

In other words, the goal of modern psychic research is to reform supernaturalism into a branch of naturalism, which, we suspect, it once was for certain of the philosophical ancients.

What may be objected to in the small-minded claim that men like Boyle, Wallace, and Crookes maintained emotional beliefs which they would not relinquish to the rigors of scientific method is the assumption that the interest of these men in superphysical reality had a superstitious basis. Rather, it seems to us, they were pioneers in the process of depersonalizing the supernatural.

Further, suppose, for a moment, that a serious man resolves on philosophical grounds to adopt the Platonic world-view—to say to himself that the forms and patterns of existence have a metaphysical origin. With this for his hypothesis, he would quite naturally regard with special interest all evidences of states of matter intermediate between the gross, objective world of the senses and the wholly intangible plane of thought wherein the imagination works and where, one might say, the Platonic philosopher seeks the primal beginnings of things.

We may not honor the Platonic hypothesis—we may even think it ridiculous—but what we must honor, regardless of opinions, is every effort at explanation which embraces a rule of order. It is the defiance of any rule of order at all which is the essence of superstition.

As a matter of fact, the history of science, from the days of the Greek atomists until the present, is filled with instances of speculative explanations of things according to some rule of order, which have eventually acquired the body and flesh and blood of scientific fact through later experiment and the accumulation of data. One rather impressive example of this is found in the writings of Henry More, the Platonizing poet of the seventeenth century. More disliked the overly "mechanical" doctrines of Descartes, and

proposed an intermediate *plastic principle* as the cause of living form. More held (as summarized by Prof. J. A. Stewart):

This plastic principle explains . . . the growth of plants and embryos, and the instincts of animals, such as the nest building instinct of the birds, the cocoon-spinning instinct of silk-worms. The Soul of man partakes in this plastic principle, and by means of it constructs for herself a body terrestrial, ærial (*i.e.*, celestial), according as the stage of her development has brought her into vital relation with the vehicle of earth, air, or æther. . . .

No one familiar with the recent work in morphogenesis can fail to recognize the parallels between the present-day theory of the "electrical architect" of organic form, or between the discovery of the "organizers" which seem to control the specialization of cells into organs, and these philosophically founded ideas of Henry More. More, interestingly enough, connects his theory with psychic phenomena as well as with formative organic processes, which may suggest a direction of future research for the modern students of psychic happenings.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

AN extensive experiment with the educational values of "nature-contact" was reported by a London dispatch in the New York *Herald Tribune* for Aug. 24 of last year. Formed by a non-profit organization called "The Outward Bound Trust," this venture, the report relates, "struggles with the problem of replacing the life-lesson which everyday contact with nature used to provide for the boy in rural and pioneer society. Much of this, educators feel, is lost to the city-bred boy. And much of it is vital in building body and character." The report continues:

In three separate schools the trust uses the mountains or the sea to provide such training for boys between the ages of fifteen and twenty in special courses of about a month's duration.

The schools are the Outward Bound Sea School, at Aberdovey, Wales; the Mountain School at Eksdale, in the Lake District; and the Moray Sea School, at Moray Firth, Scotland. Their purpose is simply stated: "The schools must give boys from all walks of life an opportunity of training through the sea, mountains or other natural elements, as a means of developing their own capacity to face hazards, difficulties, hardship and emergencies of all kinds."

Educators point out that the plan does not train boys for the sea or for mountain climbing but rather uses the sea and the mountains, the weather and the countryside to educate for life.

Boys are sent to the schools by industry, often with the employers paying the tuition (which is tax deductible), by exclusive private schools, by local public schools, government departments and youth organizations. An increasing number of boys has been arriving from the British Commonwealth, France, Germany and other European countries and from Asia and Africa.

Since the formation of the trust in 1946, under the guidance of educator Kurt Hahn, founder of the internationally noted schools at Salem, Germany, and Gordontown, Scotland, more than 1,000 boys have completed the course each year.

Indorsement has come from a wide range of British leadership. A special tribute said that "a strong spirit of adventure is indispensable to the progress of any race; yet as we become more civilized

and our lives more ordered and comfortable, this spirit becomes more difficult to maintain. Our young people still possess it, but many lack proper outlets for its development."

How important the plan has come to be in Britain can be seen from these figures: More than 200 industrial companies, seventy local education authorities (school boards), government departments, public schools and youth organizations sponsor continuous recruiting. Eventually the trust hopes to accept 6,000 each year.

This interesting information combines nicely with an article by Clellon Holmes in the New York *Times Magazine* (Nov. 16). Contending that "This is the Beat Generation," Holmes attempts to explain the excesses of contemporary youth in terms of the frustration of a strong will power and adventuresomeness precociously stirred up by the war years. Like other students of juvenile delinquency, Holmes holds that the present generation of youth is not so much dangerously immature as *too* mature; that is, this youth has grown up to realize the enormity of the challenges which face him in life—wars, A-Bombs, etc. The fact that he has no ultimate test or danger *immediately* in front of him to face, however, leads him to accept nearly all pseudo-challenges, amorally, perhaps, as a sort of training ground for later years. This is not a lost generation, Mr. Holmes argues—at least it is not trying to escape from anything—but rather reveals "an instinctive individuality, needing no bohemianism or imposed eccentricity to express it. Brought up during the collective bad circumstances of a dreary depression, weaned during the collective uprooting of a global war, they distrust collectivity." Mr. Holmes finds that the temper of feeling among the young "involves a sort of nakedness of mind, and, ultimately, of soul; a feeling of being reduced to the bedrock of consciousness. In short, it means being undramatically pushed up against the wall of oneself. A man is beat whenever he goes for broke and wagers the sum of his resources on a single number; and the young generation has done that continually from early youth."

We feel that both the report on "The Outward Bound Trust" and Clellon Holmes' article are commentary upon the irrepressible adventuring

proclivities of the human being. "Nature-contact" is important in part because the adventurings it offers are not transitory, have never been young, and will never grow old. The trials and efforts involved in pitting his energies against waves and wilderness may enable a man to participate in some of the basic experiences humankind has shared since the dawn of history; and we may speculate, too, that youths who have been encouraged to explore in these ways may grow up with greater patience and a calmer regard for the social and international problems they will inevitably encounter in days to come.

Mr. Holmes' thesis may be a little abstract and his reasoning obscure, but his thoughts seem worth pursuing. Nearly every child, in order to fulfill himself, has to discover and come to understand his own individuality. This "drive" toward the establishment of individuality is, quite logically, often expressed in terms of rebellion or deviation from the standards of the adult world. Sometimes, if the mores and precepts of community or family are quite sound and beneficial to human personality, the rebellion may be felt to be unnecessary. But even if "unnecessary," the rebellion will still take place if adults fail to allow the youth the right to *choose* the standards in question. This, obviously, is where many of the tensions between the generations start, for it is not actually the "rebelliousness" that is innate, but rather the basic urge to discover and express individuality.

Mr. Holmes' description of the present generation as one engaged in expressing a fierce individuality must be referred to the general tendency of our times to *submerge* individualities in the mass. George Orwell, writing on his early school days, recalled his thrill in discovering that acts of disobedience made him feel happier and stronger. The modern youth may not be "disobeying" stringent community disciplines so much as he is instinctively resisting subjection to pattern-in-general, which includes the machinations of vast impersonal forces over which he has no control and which threaten to soon engulf him—like the draft, for instance.

If the younger generation has little help in learning what *true* individuality is, it seems inevitable that it will make numerous false starts.

"True individuality," as we understand it, has nothing to do with power, prestige, or pride, but involves rather a certain sober humility by which each is able to appraise his actual strengths and weaknesses. Yet our social attitudes revolve so much around the specious distinction of "celebrity" that no wonder confusion continues.

Turning back to the "Outward Bound Trust," we are reminded of some reminiscing sentences by a psychoanalyst, who often found that the best therapy for various types of adult delusions was reintroduction to the simple ardors associated with hunting and fishing. He suggested to one patient, for instance, that he exchange his "cultural" hobbies for sports of field and stream—which, he found, held no interest whatsoever for "Mr. C." "Yet," writes the psychologist, "at my suggestion he made an honest attempt to cultivate an interest in these things in the months that followed, and with somewhat more than moderate success. For it has been my experience that persons in positions of respect need to cultivate hobbies where wealth and personal prestige are of no particular advantage. Even a B-grade movie actor or a second-flight executive with a generous expense account may be fawned over by headwaiters, barbers, bell captains, and assorted hangers-on. But who ever heard of a deer or a trout or a jack rabbit being influenced by such nonsense?"

Since our youths encounter a world filled with Mr. C's, as well as a world filled with wars, the objectives of the "Outward Bound Trust" seem particularly laudable.

FRONTIERS Ascent to Myth

AT the insistence of a reader who, noting our discussion of J. C. J. Metford's San Martín, the Liberator (in *MANAS*, June 4, 1952), felt we had by implication slighted another great South American, we have duly inspected what seems an excellent book on Simón Bolívar, having to report that only with difficulty do we return to life with ordinary mortals. A very different sort of man from San Martín, not so great a man in some respects, Bolívar nevertheless beggars all ordinary description. The volume we read, Thomas Rourke's *Man of Glory* (Morrow, 1939), boasts of its effort to remove the myth of perfection from Bolívar and to show him as mere man, with a normal complement of failings. The boast, while honest, is ineffectual and vain, for Bolívar's blemishes are likely to appear as virtues, or at least matters of indifference, in this generation, while his greatness still towers beyond measure in the Andean mists.

Let us at once remove the question of comparison with San Martín from our discussion by hearing the verdict of Bolívar's biographer. Rourke observes:

José San Martín . . . occupies a position of fame in South American history rivalling that of Bolívar—though Bolívar's field was wider and his achievements accomplished in the face of far greater difficulties. But in some ways San Martín, in character, was the nobler of the two. Austere, completely devoid of self-interest or any desire for fame, he lacked the charm of Bolívar, the ability to win and hold the affection of troops, to inspire them to superhuman deeds. He could never have succeeded under the conditions which had faced Bolívar constantly during his ten long years of war—not for lack of military ability or determination but simply because he could never have survived the psychological struggles which were so large a part of those conditions.

Bolívar has had many critics, the cruelest barb ever aimed at him in all likelihood being that of the Spanish writer, Ciro Bayo, who said: "His

[Bolívar's] career was a great vanity enlisted in the service of a noble cause." It is the cruelest because it has the most hope of being believed. But we do not believe it. The "noble cause" did not seek out Bolívar and exploit the poor man's vanity. Bolívar created the noble cause—gave it shape, embodied it with civic virtue, inspired others to its service, and lived himself a life of endless self-sacrifice and privation for its sake. If this be no more than vanity, then it is a tougher variety than any we have encountered elsewhere.

Bolívar was a mature political thinker, both idealist and realist, articulate in the language of Spanish *grandees*, with full knowledge of the rich European cultural tradition, yet he could speak to the illiterate peasants of his native Venezuela as naturally as to scholars and diplomats. He was undoubtedly a showman. Only a showman could make his suggestible countrymen keep on fighting for their freedom for ten years. Two things are wonderful about this book—the fidelity to principle of Bolívar and the infidelity to him of all but a small handful of his followers. Bolívar loved his people as children, and he treated them as children. His military successes were in a sense the easiest part of his labors; he died obsessed by what he counted his political failures after the military campaigns were over. A leader can inspire men to march to the threshold of freedom, but he cannot set them free.

There was a certain magic about Bolívar, as there has been about many great leaders. It is difficult to find a single important instance of deliberate misuse of this power over his fellows by the South American patriot. He held together naked, hungry armies with the sheer force of his will; when utterly defeated and forced to flee to Jamaica, he wrote such masterly analyses of the revolutionary situation that he attracted new assistance. The candid reports of Spanish commanders to their sovereign, admitting inexplicable defeats by Bolívar, are enough witness to the *hombria* (personal magnetism and power) of the man.

From Mr. Rourke's book one easily sees why Bolívar is a legendary figure throughout South America. In a decade or so, Bolívar liberated Venezuela, Colombia and Ecuador, and consolidated for San Martín the revolutions of Chile and Peru and Bolivia. The man was utterly tireless. His famous mountain march across the Andes from Angostura to Bogotá was begun with 3200 men, finished with 1200, yet he defeated superior Spanish forces after this exploit rivalling Hannibal's crossing of the Alps. Hannibal's men, moreover, were well-equipped, whereas Bolívar's fighting men were almost always ragged and half-starved.

Was the liberty of the South American republics worth all this bloodletting and tragedy? We do not know. We know only that this was the sort of heroism of which South American patriots were capable, and to judge it glibly would be meaningless. And the heroism was fabulous.

Have we the right to argue that a wise destiny made use of the martial virtues of these men? Is it fair to reason that different epochs call for different species of courage and integrity? A book like *Man of Glory* leaves us with no other conclusion. The wonderful thing about good history is that it rapidly abolishes easy copy-book maxims about morality. The act of complete human integrity is always self-vindicating. Outside the limiting conditions of epoch and place, in the region of the Eternal Verities, there are always timeless principles by which we judge the things men do in time—but we need not judge the *men* by what they do. Men are measured by their integrity. The relation, then, of a man to his own knowledge, to his capacities, is a matter of morality, of good and evil; but the relation of a man's acts to the Eternal Verities—or what we hope are the Eternal Verities—is a problem in universal education.

Readers sometimes note a strongly pacifist current of thought in MANAS. This, we think, is mere sanity in the twentieth century. But what some of our pacifist friends do not always

understand is our feeling that a position against war is not the final and ultimate Good. More important than this, we think, are justice and honesty, for with justice and honesty there can be peace among men, whether they are "pacifist" or not. The question of whether, today, justice and honesty can be assured by war is a separate one, and leads, we think, to the pacifist position. In the market-place of ideas, however, we insist only upon first principles, letting the derivatives of first principles make their own way.

Bolívar brought death to many thousands of men. Let us admit it. If harmlessness be the highest good, then Bolívar was a criminal. But this, we think, is nonsense. Bolívar released moral power in his time and is remembered for his love of freedom. The real question turns out to be the question of what a man with Bolívar's integrity would declare for, today. A man, that is, with as much understanding of the present as Bolívar had of his own time.

No simple answers, please, to this question!