

TWO MORALITIES

A PROPOSAL from one of our European readers helps to bring into focus an idea which for a long time has seemed to us worth developing. It is, briefly, that the scope of "private morality" is rapidly changing; or, to put it in another way, that social morality is now fully as important as private morality, and that private morality which neglects social morality has become an anachronism.

This of course is not news to "advanced thinkers." As a matter of fact, the progressive thinkers of the past century have interested themselves in the problems of social morality almost to the exclusion of private morality. The enormous influence of Marxism has been in this direction, and until quite recently anyone who refused to lose himself in the dynamic current of social and political criticism was quickly labelled an apologist for reaction or a sentimentalist who was distracting attention from crucial social issues.

During the past decade, however, there has been a noticeable revival of interest in private morality. There are many causes, doubtless, for this change in temper, but the most obvious one lies in the experience of the Soviet experiment with Communism—the attempt to establish a society in which social morality is held to be all-important, and private morality either negligible or completely illusory as a human problem.

In broad terms, what we learn from social experiments in totalitarianism is that when private morality is held to be non-existent, the individual himself is soon declared nonexistent, or without "value." This, at any rate, is the only criticism worth repeating against such social systems, since the value placed upon *Man*—not man as an abstraction, who has reality only if identified with some scheme of social organization, but man as a living, human being, *an end in himself*—is the only value which deserves consideration.

So, it is fair to say that the new interest in private morality stems at least in part from this recognition of the importance of man. It is confused, however, by the so-called "return to religion," which comes about on the theory that "religion" has always honored the

individual, and is the source of the principles of private morality. The confusion arises from the fact that the conventional religions do not really support the value of Man, but attach value to him only if he is a believer in "God." So far as we can see, there is little to choose between these rival systems. In both cases the individual man has only a derived value—he is valuable as a believer-in-God, or as a faithful servant-of-the-State. Separate him from these system-based sources of value and he becomes a nothing, to be liquidated here or damned hereafter—or both.

We are back, then, at a major crossroads of history—or, if you prefer, of moral decision. We have once again to choose our basic principles. Two of the alternatives are clearly defined, but what are the others? Is there a system in which Man is the principle value, instead of either God or the State? Or is it necessary to have a "system" at all?

Questions like these are far too complex for categorical answers, so that we turn, now, to our European reader's proposal, for what may be another avenue of approach. He writes:

Here is a theme for inquiry in MANAS: Following the philosopher Hegel, who asserted that the development of Spirit leads finally to self-consciousness, we may assume, if we adopt the Hegelian view, that knowledge of ourselves is an essential and indispensable thing for modern man. This need is surely not restricted to the neurotic patient under treatment: there must be ways and means to bring self-understanding to other people. (We may remember that the psychoanalyst has in the course of his training to undergo the process of analysis himself.) The point, then, here, is that those who are interested in social "treatment," who hope to devise remedies for the social evils of our time, need to become self-conscious in terms of social relationships as well as in personal terms. They need, in short, to study the social sciences.

We started out by suggesting that private and social morality must be united; if we put this proposal in the terms of our correspondent, we should say that the self-understanding of the individual must now

include social understanding, and that the old "personal virtues" are not enough to provide the basis for even private morality, any more. This means that we cannot take the social system we have inherited and live under for granted any more—that the requirements for *survival* of the modern State are such that they reach into the private life of the individual and impose upon him conditions which may be morally repugnant, and even degrading.

This is the problem set by Reinhold Niebuhr in his title, "Moral Man and Immoral Society." It represents the potential or actual conflict between the individual and almost *any* modern form of social organization.

But why should we say that "now" this problem has become important? There are various ways to justify this insistence. We might argue, for example, that progress in technology and invention has intensified the effects of what men may do to their fellow men, simply through ignorance. To illustrate: a man accounted kind, good, and honest might take the money he has accumulated through hard work and build a factory to manufacture cosmetics. We have no special phobia against cosmetics, but this seems a fairly useless enterprise in contrast, say, to a low-cost housing development which, let us postulate, is greatly needed in the area where our kind-good-honest man lives. We are suggesting that this man's morality is defective. The closely-knit organization of the modern community requires that men who wield economic power think in terms of the general welfare. Yet for many good-kind-honest men, this would be an entirely new idea. Their notion of the general welfare is defined by a number of familiar institutions which are totally inadequate as means to broad social betterment—the churches, relief and charitable agencies, etc. It is now a question of the *primary* direction of a man's life and energies that determines social morality. It is the long-term ends of good-kind-honest men which have to be examined—ends which are inherited from their fathers and have come to be taken for granted, along with the natural environment.

A number of observers in the social sciences have been pointing out for a generation or more that, under the Free Enterprise system of the West, the accumulation of wealth has achieved the status of a *virtue*, because the practice of certain familiar virtues—industry, sobriety, etc.—often leads to the

accumulation of wealth. Moreover, possession of wealth is frequently taken as a mark of this-world salvation, promising, perhaps, similar rewards in the next world.

We have no quarrel with industry, sobriety, etc., nor even with the accumulation of wealth—MANAS could use a little of this, now and then—but we have a most energetic quarrel with the notion that by accumulating wealth a man may gain peace and blessedness. He won't. Not only will he fail to obtain peace and blessedness, but he will succeed in imposing upon his children and the children of other men a set of delusions which is likely to make them waste their lives in imitation of his. For this, as much as for anything else, the good-kind-honest men who ignore the problems of social morality will have to answer.

Another reason for maintaining that social morality has become an essential ingredient of private morality arises from the heightened awareness of the sufferings of exploited and underprivileged people all over the world. The virtues which were sufficient for a frontiersman, bending all his energies to coping with the wilderness, are not sufficient for dealing with the larger and more intangible wilderness of mental and emotional attitudes affecting the relationships of millions of people, taken as groups, in the modern world.

There were no slums in the wilderness, and even long after slums came into being, it was still possible for people to pull up stakes and make a new beginning. But today, people are caught in *man-made* situations. New beginnings have become exceedingly difficult. There is no longer a "West" for either young or old men to go to.

We have no particular theory of the "good society," and certainly no theory of the "best" type of social organization. Our proposition is really very simple—it is that "good men" can no longer ignore the problems of social morality.

Letters **American Abroad**

INDIVIDUALS and organizations tend to relinquish power with reluctance. "The Church," namely the Roman Catholic hierarchy, is very powerful throughout the length and breadth of Latin America. It looks with malevolent eye upon any curtailment of its influence and privilege. This means that missionary effort of various denominations is hampered to varying degrees. For example, the present law of Ecuador is that missionaries now active are to continue their work, but that the total number of persons so engaged may not be increased. The records of the Presbyterian missionary work and of the Seventh Day Adventist activity (and probably of other sects, but I have seen the organs of the two mentioned) give shocking and discouraging proof of the degree of violence directed toward workers of other faiths. Such weeklies as *Time* have carried accounts of personal attack and property damage in Colombia.

I did not talk to the narrator of the following story but to the person who learned from "Pedro" himself.

* * *

Pedro's family had been Protestant since his grandmother's day. Within his easy and not too distant recollection, his grandmother died in a village away from the city in which Pedro lived. He said that he and the other members of his family are sure that she was murdered. They were not allowed to go to the place for the recovery of the body.

Pedro is a young man who is a fine person in every way, but he bears the stigma (in Colombia) of being a Liberal. He worked for a foreign engineer as an expert draughts-man. The engineer knew his story and helped him to transfer funds into United States money to be banked in the U.S. For four or five years, Pedro saved all the he possibly could, for, in his words, "I literally am

not safe walking these streets of Bogota. I am a Liberal and a Protestant. I want more than anything to get my wife and child away from here. It is so unsafe for me that I dare not visit a little estate that I have in _____." As proof of what he said he pulled back his cuffs and showed marks of torture he had endured while jailed earlier—jailed for nothing more than having democratic ideas.

You will be glad to know Pedro, with his wife and child, is now employed in a midwest industrial city. They are free to worship as they choose and to enjoy the freedom that the United States still affords.

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In Bogotá you can see the gutted plant of a liberal newspaper that displeased the government in power; also that of a friendly publishing concern that undertook to get out the paper for its belaboured neighbor. Circulation records were destroyed, but thousands of loyal distributors supplied names of subscribers and a new start was made.

A resident of Bogotá living close to the scene said police formed a cordon around a publisher's house that was fired and would not let decent-minded citizens put out the fire. The inmates of the building escaped through a back patio, but not because of any help from the guardians of "law and order."

I was walking down a street of Bogotá (September, 1952) and jumped at a report. It sounded like gunfire. It proved to be a blowout, but the reaction was instantaneous on the part of the citizens around me. Here was I, recently arrived, but my nervous system already attuned to tension.

On the train from Puerto Berrío to Medellín on the lovely swing through the plains and lower Andes, it seemed strange to see soldiers aboard, on *business*, so to speak. The conductor was always followed by a soldier. When stationed at a town a gun was fired from the coach in which I was riding. No one said anything, no one seemed

to know the cause, and no one, except me, seemed very much surprised.

Soldiers checked the "*cédulas*" of every male on the train. In several cases they were most detailed in their search of papers and asked numerous questions. One man in particular had his cartel (an accordion-like shoulder bag of numerous compartments carried by many men of Antioquia) practically turned inside out.

On a bus from Ibaqué to Bogotá there was a stop at practically every town, during which soldiers came into the vehicle for a similar check. I ventured to ask a young man across the aisle from me what Colombianos thought of this. He looked wise and put his finger to his lip in an unmistakable gesture.

When trying to buy a current *Time* I was told by a disgruntled woman vendor as a cause of the delay, "Es este maldito gobierno." (It is this accursed government.) She was probably wrong as to the reason for the delay, but her attitude was clearly indicated.

In a pensión a young woman told me that she had been a teacher in a secondary school, but had been dismissed because she was a liberal in her views. Her funds were running low (what school teacher ever has much surplus?) and she did not know what to do next. Persons of the professional class, in Latin America, cannot just turn a hand to anything. I could readily understand her restless, bitter attitude.

It is desperately hard for adults to withstand the slights and more that they inevitably endure if they substitute a Protestant faith for that of the Roman Catholic. It is especially tragic to see their children maltreated by a sect that calls itself Christian. Such young people often are either not allowed to take examinations at the conclusion of elementary work for admission to schools of higher level, or they never pass! I know this from an unimpeachable source, but such is the situation that for the protection of those who confided in me I cannot give their names nor state their

locality. It seems almost unbelievable, but a young girl who was asked her faith and said she was a Protestant was put out of the school in the hot tropical sun for the day and forced to kneel on nutshells.

I was told that for one of the Roman Catholic faith to become a Protestant requires a whole new orientation of life with *his acceptance of responsibility for his acts*. This is greatly different from the belief in automatic performance of ritual and intercession of others between man and his creator.

ROVING CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

THE PUZZLING PROPHET

HAVING already reported on George Orwell's posthumously published essay, "Such, Such Were the Joys," when this delightful and profound article first appeared in *Partisan Review*, we are already strongly disposed to recommend a 1953 collection of Orwell writings reprinting "Such, Such Were the Joys" as the title essay (Harcourt, Brace). Mr. Orwell has clearly emerged as one of the most respected writers of his generation, and in this case respect is accorded for the best of reasons—reading Orwell is a stimulating and thought-provoking occupation.

In addition to the title essay (63 pages), this volume includes eight other pieces, all worth reading. And of these, it seems to us, "Writers and Leviathan," "Notes on Nationalism," and "Inside the Whale" deserve particular attention, since the trends of political analysis first dramatized in *Animal Farm*, and reaching convulsive proportions in *Nineteen-Eighty-four*, find further expression in these essays also. We noted something else about these essays. The eight selections have been arranged in what the editors apparently thought is a logical sequence, regardless of when they were written. This may create an erroneous impression. In "Inside the Whale," for instance, which appears at the end of the book, we find Orwell a pronounced pessimist, a prophet of intellectual disaster. Unless we note the dates of the essays, then we might feel that the more time Orwell's thinking had for maturation, the worse the prospects for the future looked to him. When writing "Inside the Whale," Orwell was strongly impressed by Henry Miller who, to Orwell, seemed profound in his acceptance of an intensified totalitarian trend for the rest of this century. "Miller," writes Orwell, "has performed the essential Jonah act of allowing himself to be swallowed, remaining passive, accepting." He continues:

What is quite obviously happening, war or no war, is the break-up of *laissez-faire* capitalism and of the liberal-Christian culture. Until recently the full implications of this were not foreseen, because it was generally imagined that socialism could preserve and

even enlarge the atmosphere of liberalism. It is now beginning to be realised how false this idea was. Almost certainly we are moving into an age of totalitarian dictatorships—an age in which freedom of thought will be at first a deadly sin and later on a meaningless abstraction. The autonomous individual is going to be stamped out of existence. But this means that literature, in the form in which we know it, must suffer at least a temporary death. The literature of liberalism is coming to an end and the literature of totalitarianism has not yet appeared and is barely imaginable. As for the writer, he is sitting on a melting iceberg; he is merely an anachronism, a hangover from the bourgeois age, as surely doomed as the hippopotamus.

"Inside the Whale" was written in 1940. In 1945 we discover that Orwell, after reading all the depressing signs of the times, is qualifying his prognosis of disaster. He still sees the "leviathan" state as the juggernaut which crushes the soul of poetry and letters, but it appears that the juggernaut will have to pause now and again for repairs—and even, perhaps, risk capture by some of the repairmen. In "Poetry and the Microphone" (1945), Orwell looked the English scene over from this perspective:

The tendency of the modern state is to wipe out the freedom of the intellect, and yet at the same time every state, especially under the pressure of war, finds itself more and more in need of an intelligentsia to do its publicity for it. The modern state needs, for example, pamphlet-writers, poster artists, illustrators, broadcasters, lecturers, film producers, actors, song-composers, even painters and sculptors, not to mention psychologists, sociologists, biochemists, mathematicians, and what-not. No one acquainted with the Government pamphlets, A.B.C.A. lectures, documentary films and broadcasts to occupied countries which have been issued during the war imagines that our rulers would sponsor this kind of thing if they could help it. Only, the bigger the machine of government becomes, the more loose ends and forgotten corners there are in it. This is perhaps a small consolation, but it is not a despicable one. It means that in countries where there is already a strong liberal tradition, bureaucratic tyranny can perhaps never be complete. The striped-trousered ones will rule, but so long as they are forced to maintain an intelligentsia, the intelligentsia will have a certain amount of autonomy. If the Government needs, for example, documentary films, it must

employ people specially interested in the technique of the film, and it must allow them the necessary minimum of freedom; consequently, films that are all wrong from the bureaucratic point of view will always have a tendency to appear. So also with painting, photography, script-writing, reportage, lecturing and all the other arts and half-arts of which a complex modern state has need. The application of this to the radio is obvious. At present the loudspeaker is the enemy of the creative writer, but this may not necessarily remain true when the volume and scope of broadcasting increase.

As far back as 1941, we find brief prophecies of Armageddon. In "England Your England," for instance, he writes that "The Stock Exchange will be pulled down, the horse plough will give way to the tractor, the country houses will be turned into children's holiday camps, the Eton and Harrow match will be forgotten. But England will still be England, an everlasting animal stretching into the future and the past, and, like all living things, having the power to change out of recognition and yet remain the same." By 1948, in "Writers and Leviathan," Orwell holds that the modern intellectual has a *moral* obligation to involve himself in politics, if only because he has no right to separate himself from the majority whose lack of perspective leaves political struggle as the only alternative to thinking. Meanwhile, *as a writer*, the intellectual is to refuse to prostitute his art for any political cause:

Well, then, what? Do we have to conclude that it is the duty of every writer to "keep out of politics"? Certainly not! In any case, as I have said already, no thinking person can or does genuinely keep out of politics, in an age like the present one. I only suggest that we should draw a sharper distinction than we do at present between our political and our literary loyalties, and should recognise that a willingness to *do* certain distasteful but necessary things does not carry with it any obligation to swallow the beliefs that usually go with them. When a writer engages in politics he should do so as a citizen, as a human being, but not *as a writer*. I do not think that he has the right, merely on the score of his sensibilities, to shirk the ordinary dirty work of politics. But whatever else he does in the service of his party, he should never write for it. He should make it clear that his writing is a thing apart. And he should be able to act cooperatively while, if he chooses, completely rejecting the official ideology.

Sometimes, if a writer is honest, his writings and his political activities may actually contradict one another. There are occasions when that is plainly undesirable: but then the remedy is not to falsify one's impulses, but to remain silent.

Mr. Orwell, in other words, can never for long reconcile himself to the thought that the battle for freedom of the mind is a lost cause, though if one were to take as his final judgment such sentences as "the autonomous individual is going to be stamped out of existence," which appears in "Inside the Whale," we might feel his pessimism to be unrelieved. That Orwell is also capable of a measured optimism is indicated in another passage, written in 1948, implying that "the prevailing intellectual atmosphere" will ultimately determine "what kind of a state rules over us." So here is a range of thought from dialectic materialism to Platonic idealism, with *ideas* finally emerging as the crux of the future and as capable of modifying any and all political orders, no matter how totalitarian. Orwell writes:

The position of the writer in an age of state control is a subject that has already been fairly largely discussed, although most of the evidence that might be relevant is not yet available. In this place I do not want to express an opinion either for or against state patronage of the arts, but merely to point out that *what kind* of state rules over us must depend partly on the prevailing intellectual atmosphere: meaning, in this context, partly on the attitude of writers and artists themselves, and on their willingness or otherwise to keep the spirit of liberalism alive. If we find ourselves in ten years' time cringing before somebody like Zhdanov, it will probably be because that is what we have deserved. Obviously there are strong tendencies towards totalitarianism at work within the English literary intelligentsia already. But here I am not concerned with any organised and conscious movement such as Communism, but merely with the effect, on people of good will, of political thinking and the need to take sides politically.

These last two passages quoted seem excellent points of departure for further reflection encompassing the entire gamut of political criticism, from Archibald MacLeish's "The Irresponsibles" to Orwell's own *Nineteen-Eighty four*.

COMMENTARY

A HIGHER GROUND

A PUZZLE almost unmentioned in our discussion, "Two Moralities," has to do with the fact that only a very small proportion of people have a natural interest in what is referred to as "social morality." Practically every human being gives evidence of having an inherent moral sense—there is immediate response to clear-cut instances of personal injustice—yet the broad application of moral judgment to impersonal situations is relatively rare.

In some measure, this is explained by the influence of the cultural environment. At home and in school, the child is instructed in the prevailing ideas of right and wrong. Cruelty is deplored by his parents, and lack of consideration for others in ordinary human relationships is not permitted to develop into a careless habit-pattern.

On the other hand, children who grow up in a family where there is frequent discussion of social issues do not always reproduce the interests of their parents. It seems, sometimes, that as if the determination to question the assumptions of the cultural environment is a special quality of life and mind which cannot be developed in the young by a "conditioning" process. Works of biography are filled with instances of altruistic fathers disappointed by selfish sons, and of socially minded sons frustrated by fathers who are wholly indifferent to the issues which engage the attention of their offspring.

This situation is of course complicated by the fact that "social thinking" is by no means necessarily wise or intelligently conceived. Dogmatic utopianism in social thinking can easily create an atmosphere in which *any* questioning of the *status quo* is regarded with suspicion by the majority—as, for example, in the current persecution of liberals as alleged "dupes" of Communism. Even though a liberal may give ample evidence that he has a far better understanding than others of the evils which a

communist order would bring, he is nonetheless condemned because he has not closed his mind to any sort of change.

But after such sources of confusion have been taken into account, there still remains the fact that some men are peculiarly endowed with an enduring interest in the morality of social relationships. Where does this interest come from? It involves, for one thing, the capacity to think in general or abstract terms—to acquire, that is, a feeling of "reality" with respect to situations which may be far removed from their personal experience. In illustration, there is the contribution to *Frontiers in MANAS* for Sept. 16, which compared the case of the communist spies, the Rosenbergs, with that of a Polish flyer who brought his MIG to an American landing field. The writer's point (given fresh currency by the North Korean pilot who recently did the same thing) was that the Russians regard the Rosenbergs as martyred heroes, and the Polish pilot as a traitor, while these feelings are reversed in the American point of view. The question then becomes—is there a stance of moral judgment beyond national partisanship, which may be applied to both these cases?

And our question is: What is the element in some human beings which compels them to seek such higher ground of evaluation? It is almost as though, as Plato would have maintained, that some individuals "bring with them" more capacity for independent moral judgment than others. Does anyone have a better suggestion?

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

OUR interest, mentioned last week, in comment on the subject of "art" was chiefly prompted by an essay by Charles Morgan "The Function of the Artist in the Community," appearing in his volume, *Liberties of the Mind* (MacMillan, 1951). A paragraph in this essay seems to us to be one of the best "advertisements" for reading books that we have ever come across:

An understanding of art's effect upon us, of its real value to mature men and women, may be reached by trying to remember what its effect was in childhood. Do you remember, can you still feel, what it was then to fall under the spell of a book? I remember well how, as I read, a circle seemed to be woven around me forbidding my thoughts to wander, so that attention became concentration, and concentration became at first effortless, then involuntary, then necessitous, and at last something more—absorption, self-surrender, a passing into another world. So the spell would fall. But the world into which I entered was never altogether the author's world, though I saw it by his light. My own identity was no more lost than a dreamer's identity is lost during his dream; but it was, as it were, distilled; what moved in the imagined world was not I, with the inhibitions of my self-consciousness, but the essence of I, freed from the knowledge that I was eight years old, or that I had a brother and two sisters, or that my preparation was not done, or that, if I walked round the little wood that bordered the tennis-lawn, I should come to the kitchen-garden: freed, that is to say, from the relationships of age, of person, of duty, of place, which tied me in my ordinary life: liberated from my social and temporal bonds, and yet liberated in such a way that I did not become, in the transition, anti-social, for I was liberated from my egotistical bonds as well. This was the first part of the spell—liberation, intensification, purification—a penetration of that film of personality to which name and circumstances are attached—a walking clean through the looking-glass.

The spell of Mr. Morgan's art is demonstrably great, and it is also fascinating to see how many of the debated "issues" involved in discussions of art can be thus dealt with without laborious arguments. He continues with a discussion of

what it means to "walk through the looking-glass," adding his view to that of Lafcadio Hearn in insisting that the highest art—and perhaps we may say the most practical art—can be recognized by its ethical inspiration. Certainly, overcoming "separateness" is the very heart and soul of ethical idealism, and in this light arguments about "art for art's sake" become rather meaningless:

On the other side of the looking-glass was not, as some pretend, an escape from life, but a new impulse and vitality. On this side of the looking-glass we are bound by an unreal sense of order, of partition, of what is congruous and what incongruous; we think of time as if it were a calendar on the wall, each day to be stripped off in turn, the past, the present and the future impenetrable by one another; and this is spiritually untrue; all time is simultaneous, in my end is my beginning. On this side of the looking-glass, we are bound always by a sense that each individuality is locked within itself, so that, even between two people who love each other, though there is communication like the tapping on prison-walls, there is no fusion, and we struggle continually towards a fusion unattainable in this world, giving many names to our struggle; sometimes the name of personal love, sometimes of friendship, sometimes of congregation in the worship of a god, sometimes of society or community. Under the spell of art this separateness may be transcended. On the other side of the looking-glass the prison walls are down. There is inter-penetration of individuality, of time, of place.

In case we seem to be throwing in these paragraphs at random, it is time to propose our growing conviction that art, in its broadest sense, is the universal language of the child. The child lives in imagination and in relation to its feelings for and partial evaluation of symbols. This is the world of art, and to the child the world of art and the world of natural religion are one and the same. Grace, beauty, fitness, balance and harmony—all of these involve a perception of proportions, and the symbols of worthy artistic expression are clearly those which inspire a truer feeling for proportions. There is such a thing as bad art just as there is such a thing as bad religion, but, just as a man may be said to be forced to choose some sort of metaphysics whether he wills to do so or not, so will each child ally himself to some kind of

art. The fact that most youngsters spontaneously enjoy playing with painting, with musical instruments, or with imaginative writing (or make-believe) should offer a sufficient weight of evidence to prove the claim.

So, viewed philosophically, the issue is never whether we are "artistically inclined" or not, or whether our child has a prospect of so being, but rather our own sense of art and our child's is either natural or distorted. Undoubtedly the reason why the poets fascinated W. Macneile Dixon much more than did the erudite philosophers and the zealous moralists was because he sensed in them fellow apostles of *his* "natural religion"—which means a religion which inspires spontaneously, through symbols consistent with the spirit of ethical idealism.

The devotee of "art as natural religion" realizes, above all else, that to show appreciation for a work of genius is to acknowledge that work as affording material for one's own reflection. Morgan expresses this admirably when he speaks of "the spell of art which breaks down the divisions of time, place and circumstance, and sets the spirit free to go on its voyages." Further:

The greatest tribute that a writer earns from us is not that we keep our eyes fast upon his page, forgetting all else; but that sometimes, without knowing that we have ceased to read, we allow his book to rest, and look out over and beyond it with newly opened eyes, discovering all else. Then lies open to earthbound man the firmament of the spirit; he takes wing and travels in it, liberated from the chains of partial judgment and from the blindness of close appearances. Like a bird released from a cage, he soars, and sees truth in new aspects. And though the spell of art breaks at last and he returns to earth, it is not to the cage of his former prejudice that he returns; . . . he has been a liberated spirit, and thereafter, in all life's embittered divisions, in all his faults and follies and self-imprisonments and hardnesses of heart, he never altogether ceases to be aware of the unity of the living with the dead, and in all his temptations to hatred or fear he cannot be without compassion. Art has planted in him a seed from which his own imagination shall spring, has fertilized his earth that of it he may be reborn. An artist does not renew society; he enables men to renew

themselves and so, in the long run, the society in which they live.

There is dogmatic art, there is moralistic art—just as there are dogmatic and moralistic religions—and there is also the art of license and moral irresponsibility just as there is the religion of materialistic hedonism. The characteristics of bad art, like those of bad religion, are those which are summed up by an exponent's convictions that he and he alone has the truth. Again we quote Morgan:

What is it then that an artist enables men to see? I think that ideally he enables them, looking out from the point of view of their own individualities, to see their own experience in a light of Truth—in a light, not *the* light, for there are many. But the phrase "in a light of Truth" is a vague one except to the man who uses it. I have used it, and cling to it, because it indicates to me something that is essential to my idea of the function of art in a community. . . .

FRONTIERS TOWARD WORLD COMMUNITY

LAWRENCE K. FRANK, one of the leaders of the New York Society for Ethical Culture, last July contributed an article on "Education for World Community" to the Bombay periodical, the *Aryan Path*. In this article, which later appeared as an Indian Institute of Culture Reprint, Mr. Frank concerns himself with the difficulties surrounding the development of a spirit of world community in a world where so many societies are suffering disintegration within themselves. As he puts it:

. . . today almost every culture has become confused, weakened, in some cases almost destroyed, as people have lost confidence in their traditional beliefs and patterns The renewal of their culture and the reorienting of their social order have now become the most urgent tasks confronting all peoples everywhere, who will undertake these labors only as they can reaffirm their goal values and reformulate their traditional aspirations and image of themselves *in new terms and in relationships more appropriate to and effective for attaining these goods in the world today.*

Mr. Frank seems to think that a world community can hardly be attained without the prior restoration of vigor in existing cultural communities of widely differing origin. How, he asks in effect, can any cultural group be brought into relations of mutual confidence with other groups unless it first gains confidence in itself?

There is no doubt but that the twentieth century is laying the heaviest burden of moral responsibility upon the shoulders of the human beings born in this epoch—heavier by far, it seems to us, than the people of any other time have been called upon to bear. For today, the obligation is to learn to think in world terms, and this at a time when even the smallest unit of society, the family, is torn by divisive forces and confused by changes in environment so rapid that they can hardly be understood.

Yet Mr. Frank's proposal is really quite simple. It is that men need to recognize that they all share in the common lot:

. . . efforts to foster the world community should be based upon an explicit recognition that people everywhere face much the same tasks in life, confront similar personal and social problems, however differently expressed and met; share the anxieties and perplexities to which all mankind is exposed by the very nature of human living as goal seeking and purposive striving. Moreover, it must be constantly remembered that people everywhere also experience grief and bereavement, the inevitable tragedies of human living as well as its cares, and above all, the fulfillments that are found in mating, child-bearing and child-rearing and all the daily tasks of living, however differently patterned and implemented.

The most natural medium for this sort of common understanding, as Lafcadio Hearn pointed out long ago, is literature. Cultural barriers and national egotisms are slowly but surely worn away by the cosmopolitan influence of literature which discloses the common beat of the human heart in peoples of every race. Serious writers and novelists—the novelists being sometimes quite as serious, and often more effective—are certainly doing their share in this direction. The "one world" of the future will owe a great debt of gratitude to men like Edmond Taylor (*Richer by Asia*) and Alan Paton (*Cry, The Beloved Country*), and Nevil Shute (*The Chequerboard*), to name but three out of the scores who are literary pioneers of the new spirit of world fraternity.

Mr. Frank continues:

Only as people recognize this common core of life everywhere, begin to recognize that, despite the differences in language, belief patterns and institutions, all mankind is engaged in the same basic human activities and striving for goal values, can we expect them to realize the cultural interdependence that will find expression in the world community.

He now turns to the obstacles:

It is likely that the most difficult phase of the proposed educational programme will be encountered among the Western peoples—those of Europe and America and the U.S.S.R. It is already clear that many people and organized groups, as in the United States, fear the United Nations and have a great hostility to Unesco, being antagonistic to every effort to foster the world community.

No programme of education that merely exhorts people to believe in the world community and to recognize national and cultural interdependence can hope to succeed in the face of such attitudes. It will be necessary to study these resistances and antagonisms, and to understand these anxieties and suspicions in each group of people as a threshold task for fostering world community.

Here, we think, is the crux of the matter. We have to *study* these attitudes, instead of making political issues out of them. What is needed is a therapeutic rather than a political victory over the "resistances and antagonisms" which stand in the way of the world community. A political attitude toward these things rapidly becomes a self-righteous attitude, and this is soon followed by application of the propaganda techniques which men use to gain political victory—to gain power, they say, in order to "do good." But meanwhile, during the struggle for power, the neurotic feelings and attitudes which first set the stage for the struggle have hardened into counter political forces which are usually more effective in an arena of this sort, simply because the passions of political controversy tend to degrade the issue into a merely partisan fight for control. The lower the level of contention, the easier it is for the "wrong side" to win.

We propose, in short, a therapeutic and non-polemical approach to prejudice, for the reason that any other approach seems eventually to lead to war, or at least violence, from which, in turn, more prejudice and partisanship usually result.

So, then, returning to the idea of "studying" resistances and antagonisms to world community, we have in mind two situations which might receive attention. There are naturally scores and doubtless hundreds of similar situations: we select these two because they happen to be handy to describe. The first is the situation in Los Angeles with regard to the study of the work of UNESCO in the city's schools. The extraordinary opposition to UNESCO which developed in Los Angeles a year or more ago is thoroughly discussed by Mrs. Dorothy Frank in *Collier's* for March 28 of this year. Mrs. Frank, who was a defender of the educational program about UNESCO, soon found herself a target for the most ignorant kind of personal abuse. She finally

concluded that "there could be no common ground with people who could insist that black is white and try to get away with it by name-calling and besmirching." Many of the violent opponents of UNESCO, she said, had never even *seen* the booklet used in the schools in the course on UNESCO, and obviously had no interest in examining what it said.

It is true that Mrs. Frank's article doesn't go very far in helping to *understand* people of this sort. Her time was largely taken up in trying to get a fair hearing for UNESCO and in defending herself against bigotry and slander. Actually, where do you begin in attempting to understand a situation of this sort? It is fully as complex as the situation described by John Bartlow in *Why Did They Kill?*—a book about teen-age murderers who, on the surface, apparently killed for no reason at all (see "Children . . . and Ourselves" in *MANAS* for Sept. 16)—and perhaps not wholly unrelated as to cause. What seems called for, here, is a full-dress sociological and psychological study of political fanaticism, with especial attention to the background attitudes leading to unreasoning hate of such institutions as UNESCO.

Our second "situation" is found in the modern state of Israel, which started out, as a writer in the *Jewish Newsletter* (Sept. 14) points out, with a "progressive, democratic base," but soon began its retreat from democracy "by the wholesale expulsion of the native Arab population. . . ." This measure, the writer continues, was "followed by the introduction of the Law of Return (making every Jew in the world legally a potential citizen of Israel); then by the Israel Nationality Law (which discriminates against the Arab minority) and finally by the Land Acquisition Law." Next is considered the Marriage and Divorce Law, recently passed by Israel, which is said to make Israel "more theocratic than any other European State which still retains an established Church." The logic of this is as follows:

. . . in none of these states is civil marriage banned entirely, as it is now in Israel. In no other such state, too, does the established ruling Church suppress all branches of its own religion as is now the case in Israel, where Orthodoxy has an official monopoly on Judaism and bans Reform and Conservative rabbis from performing their religious functions.

Israel is now the only state in the civilized world whose marriages are based on a racial principle similar to that of the Nazis, designed primarily to prevent by law intermarriage between Jews and non-Jews.

Israel, this commentator observes, has actually returned to the conditions which prevailed in the medieval ghetto before the Jewish liberal reform movement was born. "Zionism which in its early form was in itself a product of the democratic Jewish Reformation movement has capitulated to the most backward and reactionary force in Jewish life." Then comes this astonishing passage:

The most heartbreaking aspect of the event is that the overwhelming majority of the European people of Israel is made up of the freest men and women of western culture who have escaped to Palestine in order to be able to live in accordance with their convictions and conscience. Theocracy and medievalism have been imposed upon them by a small minority which received less than twelve per cent of all the votes in the last general election, and this was accomplished by a most cynical political deal of the age in which principle was sacrificed to expediency and lust for power. The Ben-Gurion government was interested in enacting a bill to conscript religious women for military service. In order to gain the support of some of the clericalist parties for that bill, the majority of the *Knesset*, consisting of Socialists, liberals and agnostics who like most Jews were formerly among the strongest fighters for the separation of Church and State, betrayed their principles and bartered their socialism, democracy, freedom of conscience and the entire heritage of Western culture for a stronger army for Israel.

Some of these people may now be wondering to themselves if having a "homeland" and being able to "defend" it are quite as important as they once thought, in view of what these objectives have cost. Being a "nation" in the modern world carries certain inevitable penalties.

This "situation" raises old, old questions about what men hold dear and what they fear. Palestine has turned out to be a very peculiar sort of "promised land," at least for those Jews who are rightly described as having dedicated themselves "to the teaching of an unbelieving world, by an example of centuries of living and suffering, that loyalty . . . to

justice, mercy, truth, love and other spiritual values . . . is greater than loyalty to collective interests of any one group or tribe, known as patriotism."

Truly, these are the situations which call for study. Our own studies have barely begun, yet we cannot forbear notice of the fact that the image of some "almighty God" is almost always present where irrational antagonisms and self-righteous partisanship are the bitterest.