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FREE ENTERPRISERS

THERE is a natural and inevitable tension between the advocates of social and economic change whose proposals are founded on humanitarian theory, and the "practical" men who insist that the existing system and socioeconomic relationships are bound to be better than any "theory," for the reason that they *work.* The practical men have on their side the fact that an attempt to force far-reaching changes often leads to a legally authorized savagery which is far worse than the conditions they would correct. Even more disastrous than this, however, is the way in which abortive reforms discredit all types of humanitarian program as impractical and even vicious. This latter result is amply illustrated in the United States, today, by the number of former radicals and even liberals who, after a few years of enthusiasm for theories of change, have returned to the fold of orthodoxy, eager to explain that they have "learned their lesson."

Finally, the general outcome of such events is a widespread attempt to renew enthusiasm for the half-truths of the *status quo*—an effort to make yesterday's slogans sound as though they embodied the spirit of progress. Still unconverted radical theoreticians are pushed into a marginal existence on the lunatic fringe, while in contrast, timid conformity and dogmatic orthodoxy gain the aspect of positive virtues. Meanwhile, the submerged human heart remains silent, awaiting the onset of a new vision with the power to surmount these psychological barriers. For those who feel "caught" in this backwash of history, the chief thing is to seek the sources of the new vision, and, if possible, to share in and increase its light.

In the *United Nations World* for November, Elliot Haynes tells of the visit last winter of three hundred European industrialists to the United States, where they were taken on a conducted tour of large plants, and, it seems, soundly lectured by successful American manufacturers. "The Europeans had hardly stepped ashore in New York before the twin American themes of 'productivity' and 'competition' assailed their ears." These slogans, Mr. Haynes informs us, were to pursue the visitors "relentlessly" throughout their stay, with special emphasis on the virtues of "competition." The European businessmen, however, did not take kindly to the sermons on competition, but were, instead, enormously impressed by "the living reality of American industrial democracy."

There is no reason to deny the existence of a measure of industrial democracy in the United States. The reports of these Europeans to their countrymen sound as though they had found some sort of industrial "promised land." A French observer said: "In the absence of class feeling and social stratification which is known in other countries, the American worker knows that the richness of his country depends upon the success of business enterprises and he realizes that his own interests are connected with the general interests of all the people." What this Frenchman and other European industrialists saw and valued on the American scene was not its aggressive competition, but the easygoing human relationships, the wide distribution of initiative, and the feeling of individual responsibility.

The expressions of these visitors may perhaps be taken as evidence that, given the original impetus and motives of the Industrial Revolution, the Americans have done more with those motives than anyone else, and have been notably successful in making them serve the common good. We need not, however, accept from Mr. Haynes what seems a complacent endorsement of those motives. Every revolution of history has been succeeded by another, and the Industrial

Revolution will be no exception. It so happens that, already, in Europe, a new way of life is emerging which promises to be successful in resolving the contradictions of industrialism. While Mr. Haynes writes an interesting article, we should be much more impressed if he were to report that a few hundred American businessmen had been to Europe to study the movement known as "Communities of Work," and had returned to the United States with a fervor to apply at home what they had learned abroad.

The Communities of Work—a socio-economic evolution during and since the war; even a result, perhaps, of the war—have renounced the motives of the Industrial Revolution while welcoming its techniques and material achievements. They are mostly in France, but if their growth during the past seven years is any measure of possibilities, the movement could easily spread all over non-communist Europe in a relatively brief period.

For an account of the Communities of Work, we shall draw on Claire Hutchet Bishop's volume, *All Things Common* (Harper, 1950), in which a score or more of these unique enterprises in freedom are described in detail.

Their beginning belongs to the story of a single Frenchman, Marcel Barbu, and his wife. As a child, Barbu went from a destitute home to an orphanage. He broke away from training for the priesthood at fifteen, then found office work unpleasant. Finally, he learned the trade of watch-case making, getting, as he put it, "a firsthand knowledge of what bosses are worth and also workers." This life, he decided, was not for him, so he and his wife went into business for themselves, "in order to shape our own means of liberation." They sold their furniture to buy machines—slept only three or four hours a night to get started.

Barbu became "successful." He also became a model employer, introducing a factory council and wage rates approved by all. Barbu alone was dissatisfied with these arrangements, wondering what more he could do. He tried to draw his workers into the search for a more constructive life, but they were not interested. Then came the war and the fall of France. The breakdown of normal life brought opportunity for a fresh beginning. Barbu was in Valence, but he could find no experienced mechanics:

> So he went out in the streets and corralled a barber, a sausage-maker, a waiter, anyone, except specialized industrial workers. He offered to teach them watch-case making *provided* they would agree to SEARCH with him for a setup in which the "distinction between employer and employee would be abolished."

They rented a barn and in two months were selling watch cases. After a period of exuberant freedom in mutual criticism, the workers settled down to weekly meetings for this purpose. Each step-of organization, thereafter, was in response to obvious needs. Very soon their weekly discussions showed the need for a common ethical basis. There were now two dozen workers—Catholics, Protestants, materialists, Humanists, atheists, and Communists. Together they formulated a "common ethical minimum" which, they said, could not be an arbitrary convention since it grew from their experience, with principles "tried in real life, everyday life, everybody's life." These young men—all under thirty—prefaced their "Rule" by saying:

> We express them [the common ethical principles] badly. For a long time we have hesitated to write them down because we know the ferocity, the sectarianism of the thinking brutes. We distrust philosophers and doctors.

The principles, as finally set down, are as old as man:

> Thou wilt love thy neighbor.
> Thou shalt not kill.
> Thou shalt not take thy neighbor's goods.
> Thou shalt not lie.
> Thou wilt be faithful to thy promise.
> Thou shalt earn thy bread by the sweat of thy brow.
> Thou shalt respect thy neighbor, his person, his liberty.
> Thou shalt respect thyself.

> Thou shalt fight first against thyself, all vices which debase man, all the passions which hold man in slavery and are detrimental to social life: pride, avarice, lust, covetousness, gluttony, anger, laziness.
>
> Thou shalt hold that there are goods higher than life itself: liberty, human dignity, truth, justice.

The workers promised to do their best to live by these rules. Following is a further formulation of their aims:

> We will put down in writing what is our ideal for living and acting. We will strive to conform our lives to it. We will reread it frequently.
>
> We pledge ourselves to belong to a spiritual group. The responsibility of the spiritual group is to see that all members observe the common ethical minimum, and each member his own particular ethics.
>
> Each week we will devote at least one hour to the collective study of spiritual, philosophical and religious problems.
>
> The failure of any one of us in observing the Rule will contribute to the education of all.
>
> The Community is not a selection of the best. It accepts every man as is, and asks of him only to turn, with good will and energy, toward the proposed ideal.

After establishing their common ethical basis, they felt the need of general education. Accordingly, they decided what they needed to live on and after they had worked enough to earn this amount they stopped working and held classes in the shop. They still made a good living, for the spirit of the men led to greatly increased production. "The new friendly atmosphere created by all at the start had made possible a speeding up of production, which in turn had made possible the studies." Before long all realized how much they had grown:

> Two years had elapsed. They had learned much. They had come of age. All of them (90), including Barbu, agreed that it was time to turn over the means of production to the Community. They took the leap. Barbu simply turned over to the Community the factory that had been created by the work of all. In order to safeguard the dignity of all, it was decided that Barbu would be reimbursed gradually his original layout in money, and that in the event he would want to leave and start a new Community a certain number of machines would be given to him.

When the Nazis occupied France, the Community of Work, which had taken the name. "Boimondau" unanimously rejected an order of the Vichy government. They carried off their machines to a farm they had acquired and worked in secret. Some of the Companions joined the Resistance and the farm became the French Resistance Officers' School. In 1944 the Nazis burned the factory and Barbu's home. Some of the Companions were sent to Nazi concentration camps. Two died in camps and one was shot. Barbu was sent to Buchenwald. When, in 1945, after the liberation, he returned to Valence, he found a new factory built and operating. The man elected by the Community to run the plant offered Barbu his desk, but Barbu decided to devote his time to spreading the idea of Communities of Work. Miss Bishop says:

> It must have been one of the happiest moments of his life when Barbu saw that the Companions had carried on with out him. Truly they were a Community. A community born out of revolt and meditation on their own suffering.

There are many such communities in Europe, today, varying in pattern, but identical in principle devotion to becoming whole men. Communitarians do not work for money, despite the fact that many communities are quite prosperous. (Boimondau is now one of the largest case-making plants in France.) There is no set plan. Some are agricultural, some industrial, some in the building trades. There is even a Community of Work formed by Swiss milkmen who together own and operate their routes. There are communities begun from nothing—from nothing more, that is, than the inspiration felt by a single individual in a lecture by Barbu—and there are communities which once were successful private enterprises, whose owners became disgusted, as Barbu was disgusted, with typical employer-employee relationships. One man spent months winning the confidence of his employees,

before instituting the change in ownership. Miss Bishop reports his view:

> "Capitalists are crazy," he said. "They think that if they go communitarian they will lose everything, right down to their car and their bath-tub. Actually, if they really knew their business they could easily be elected Chief of Community at a high salary. The workers want chiefs who have experience and ability."
>
> ". . . It is the only, only thing to do. It is to the interest of heads of firms to do it. Prosperous firms, understand? You don't go communitarian because you have failed economically as a capitalist."

All Things Common is obviously a fascinating book. One feels that Miss Bishop is an excellent reporter, even if a bit impressionistic at times. Readers will doubtless have many questions, but they must go to her book for the answers. Here, in conclusion, we can add only some bits of information. First, among the "spiritual groups" at Boimondau, the Materialists have equal respect with the religious groups. The Materialists have ethical convictions which qualify as a "spiritual" interest. Second, everyone is paid according to ratings which include "social" as well as professional qualities. Together with a committee, each person computes the various scores which determine his rate of pay. Finally, everyone is paid—housewives for their labors as "professionals" in this field, children for the "growing" which is *their* work, and the sick for getting well. These methods are not theories dreamed up by some ideological reformer, but the actual practice of people who are working together, owning in common the instruments of production, pursuing much of their lives together, yet joining in the life of their countrymen who are not communitarians. The discovery of all these communities may be put in the words of Boimondau, which was the pioneer:

> Doing away with private ownership and profit will cure many ills, but it cannot be a final aim. What man has to create is a manner of living in which he has the maximum possibility of being free.

Letter from **FRANCE**

A COLLEGE TOWN.—The other night the radio roundtable program, "La *Tribune de Paris,"* presented a group of six French businessmen who had just returned from a trip to the United States. They contrasted production methods in the two countries. American business, said one, is a successful system based on a harmonious combination of free competition, labor-union pressure, mass production and mass consumption. This statement was qualified by other visitors to the U.S. who observed that while free competition is often cited as one of the pillars of American business, there are many cases of agreements between "competing" companies. They also remarked that though the United States as a whole does not seem desirous of government control of business and industry, there are important exceptions to this rule, such as TVA, agricultural and other price controls, and regulation of trusts. They felt that, on the whole, the "free enterprise" of the United States is perhaps more preached than practiced, but that this is really of minor importance, as the American tends to judge by results, and means are considered good if productive. Often, when they tried to find out what facet of capitalist philosophy gave rise to this or that business practice, they were told, not that it was a certain part of a detailed plan worked out in advance, but that "it just happened"—and became part of the system.

French business, on the other hand, they found lacking in cooperation between the elements of labor and management, producer and consumer, as compared with what they found in the U.S. The difference between top and bottom salaries in a single company is far greater in France than in the U.S. (on the ratio of 10 or 20 to 1 as opposed to 4 or 5 to 1). Management wants to increase its profits as rapidly as possible, the worker wants salary increases to enable him to subsist; people have low purchasing power and prices remain high for want of demand for mass production. As a result, each individual seems interested not so much in the whole scheme of production with which he is associated, but in getting as much as possible for him

One thing they did not mention (but which certainly forms part of the background of the problem of production) is that in France, as elsewhere in Europe, more people are crowded into a smaller area than is the case with the U.S. The natural resources of a given area of France have to supply the needs of a much larger number of human beings, so that the per capita wealth is less. Where greater quantities of raw material are available, a greater amount of wastage or mismanagement can pass relatively unnoticed. Too often, this correspondent feels, people look at tables of percentages and other statistics, and assume that countries like France are not "doing their share." But human attributes like honesty, dishonesty, cooperation, division, altruism and egotism are not distributed according to national frontiers—and the same "free enterprise" which has the disadvantage of permitting abuses and excessive profits in the U.S. permits them in France, too. Here, however, their effects are more noticeable because the country really can't afford them.

FRENCH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
THE WRITER

THE popular instinct is in some respects seldom wrong, and in the case of the feeling, owned to or betrayed by many, that writers are somehow set apart from the common herd, the judgment of this instinct is too obvious a reality to be ignored. People who do a lot of reading, whether from necessity or inclination, are bound to wonder about this. What, after all, makes a writer? Some men are natural writers to whom the power to evoke the imagery of a scene or the feeling of authentic conflict comes almost as easily as breathing comes for the rest of us. A writer or story-teller is a man whose mind is always running away with him to shape dramatic sequences. Some people can barely get through writing a letter, while others hardly begin to live unless they are setting words on paper, generating some new incantation of feelings, circumstances, and relationships.

There is something direct and immediate in the respect felt for the writer, as distinguished, for example, from the reverence for the scholar in a mature civilization such as the old China, where the tradition of learning was honored above nearly all else; and as distinguished from the respect felt for any "elite" group which is elevated to distinction by cultural rule. The writer is honored because he represents a kind of "mystery" of the mind. He is a wonder-worker who carries around in his head the portals to other worlds. He can make a world in which the reader may live, if he wants to, for two or three hours, and hold the memory of the experience for as long as he likes.

At root, then, the writer is respected for his power to create. Just as the artist, with the sure strokes of his pencil, can make the rest of us feel like little children in relation to his skill, so the writer, speaking in the most universal tongue of all the arts, enchants not just one aspect of our attention, but the mind itself.

There are degrees, of course, in the self-consciousness of the writer, just as there are degrees of self-consciousness in all creative activity; yet the special field of the writer seems to be self-consciousness itself. Here, perhaps, is one explanation for the peculiar fascination of his art. The writer deals explicitly with the materials of self-consciousness. He continually weighs and chooses in the development of his story. Like a minor deity, he designs human beings, endows them with qualities, good and bad, confronts them with circumstances, then leads them on to the destiny he has selected. This is the power that all men long for in their own lives, and the writer affords tangible evidence of its reality. He is a maker of runes; he tangles, somehow, with the web of fate.

A people without writers or story-tellers would be a people without culture, without history, without memory. It is memory, after all, which supplies the perspectives necessary to self-consciousness for most human beings. What would India be without the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana,* or Europe without the *Odyssey,* the *Iliad,* the Arthurian legend, the story of the Rhinegold, and all the other tales of daring, striving, adventure, and quest which provide the very aura of being to the psychic life of the people in these lands? What would America be without its European heritage, to which have been added the tales of the pioneers, of the winning of the West, and the stories of the Indians and the Indian wars ?

The writer is cherished by the people because he is the source of their profoundest nourishment—he gives dramatic evidence of human freedom and human identity.

But what, actually, is the writer's capacity? To attempt a final definition would be foolish, yet the ability to see in the raw materials of human experience endless potentialities for drama should be capable of limited description. First of all, the writer must possess some measure of impersonality. Self-consciousness and

impersonality, it would seem, are inseparable in principle. The writer deals with character, and to understand character he needs the impersonality of a scientist, or something like it. He may even be impersonal in regard to himself, as was one of the greatest of writers, Leo Tolstoy. Further, impersonality is essential to compassion. A man can have sympathy without being impersonal, but in this case the sympathy is a partisan emotion. How could a Dostoevsky, for example, write about even the lowest of human beings without exciting in the reader any emotion except pity, if he had not been impersonal ?

All men, we may say, are self-conscious, in that the capacity to think of oneself as an individual identity, living in complex relationships with other identities, is what it means to be a human being. The writer's self-consciousness, however, attempts to reach a higher plateau of understanding. The writer makes a study of self-consciousness itself. His concern is with the general human situation, as distinguished from the personal situation. If he has some element of genius, he is attracted to this study like a moth to the flame. The understanding of man becomes the prevailing tropism in his psychological, perhaps his moral, life. And so, living the life of mind with this intensity, he learns some secrets about the springs of human action. Because he is also an artist—he must master the skills of his calling or remain inarticulate—he makes his knowledge of these secrets give a feeling of reality to his stories. And it is this feeling in the work of a writer which the reader intuitively respects.

This, then, is the state or condition of the writer. He is more at home in the world of man's psychological life than the rest of us. He knows a principle or two which others have not learned to use. To the common man, he is a kind of magician.

While the skill of the writer may be related to primary creative power, the use men make of this skill varies greatly. Sometimes we are tremendously impressed simply by the show of skill itself. There are, for example, mere *vignettes* of human nature so deftly executed that we neglect to notice that the story invokes nothing but the memory of the reader. Take for example two dramatic performances, both consummately faithful to certain aspects of human nature—Noel Coward's *Brief Encounter* and the prize-winning Japanese film, *Roshomon.* The pattern of action in these plays, however, was static—they had the character of pageants, representative of *traits* in men, rather than of actual human beings. Perhaps they attempted no more. There is need to recognize, however, that although their artistry may have absorbed our attention, in the end, they said nothing, really, except that mortals suffer temptations which invade their lives. The dramatists offered no more than the commentary of a mournful Greek chorus upon the familiar weaknesses, oscillations, and occasional virtues of human nature. There is no great movement—no heights are sought, no man or woman reaches beyond himself. The peace at the end is the peace of resignation. *Errare humanum est.* Let us pray.

A good story depends upon tensions, which may be tensions between a man and his circumstances, between a man and the conventions which surround and constrain him, or between a man and his ideals. There are all these and many more levels of struggle in human life, and all combinations of these levels for the writer to choose from. The magic of a story depends upon the use its characters make of their freedom, and how and where they choose to fight.

Sometimes a story establishes a theme which is repeated by other and lesser writers for generations after. *The Virginian* by Owen Wister, in which the distinctive integrity, strength, humor, and sagacity of the Western American envelopes and dominates all the events which overtake the hero, is such a book. Literally thousands of stories have been patterned after *The Virginian,* or after imitations of *The Virginian.* What began as a creative impulse has become a cultural myth absorbed almost inevitably by every American

adolescent boy and by a large segment of American manhood. The same cycle of stylization has overtaken many other themes in American literature, spreading out the creative wave, vulgarizing it, pouring it into rigid and unchangeable stereotypes. Just as in the past, every village green had its story-teller, so, today, every town has its drugstore library and newsstand. The propagation of cultural ideas as memories is eternal and inevitable. The works of the writer pass into the hands of the imitator. Yesterday's vision of originality becomes today's inflexible stereotype, just as the cry of the patriot is echoed in the patter of the ward-healer.

Thus, as conventions overlay conventions, as habit overtakes thought, as freedom freezes into routine and liberty into privilege, the writer with genuine self-consciousness and impersonality must continually discover new tensions with which to confront his characters, his men who are to disclose that the sacred fire of being human has not died out. People read for many reasons, but one reason that they read, however obscure or buried from view, is the hope of finding that fire.

The writer may be likened to the artist—he is, of course, an artist—but he might also be likened to a priest. For every writer lights either a spurious or a genuine flame. He offers a story with living or artificial tensions. His battles are either worth fighting or they are not. To be a writer is to have the capacity to light this fire. In an age of organized religion and institutionalized belief, the writer, more than anyone else, performs for the great reading public the role of the Brahmin, the teacher, the priest. He can deal in discovery, at least in search, or he can deal in failure and defeat. He can deal in polished imitations or he can deal in rough-hewn originals. He is both the mirror and the modeller of his time. Today, he has a freedom seldom afforded to human beings.

COMMENTARY
FREEDOM MUST BE WON

THE most impressive thing, perhaps, about the French Communities of Work—a thing that is not especially clear in our lead article—is that simply to form a functioning Community of Work makes certain discoveries unavoidable. One discovery is that no man, however benevolent, can really "free" other men. This was demonstrated over and over again by the experience of owners who decided to go communitarian. Only with great patience and the willingness to endure the personal criticism, often unjust which comes from men when they first encounter a new kind of freedom, are former capitalists able to accomplish the transition from private to community enterprise.

Miss Bishop attended a general assembly of the members of a grape-growing community situated near the Mediterranean Sea. They had been communitarian for only a year, and this meeting showed both the immaturity of the workers and their gropings after freedom. The former owners, the Ott brothers, listened quietly to the complaints and often thoughtless suggestions of people who were tasting the heady wine of independence for the first time. The Otts encouraged them to speak freely, and they did, giving full expression to their psychological revolt in criticism of the elected Community Chief—one of the brothers. A "normal" reaction to this criticism would be to condemn the workers for "ingratitude." However, as Miss Bishop points out:

> They could hardly have paid the Otts a better compliment. And the Otts understood it. The revolt was indeed the true reward of their effort. The Otts had wished their workers to be free. But freedom has to be won against something. The workers were awakening to liberty, and the only channel left, since they had not originally of themselves started on the quest, was through banding together against the one who had shown the way. One may wish they had fought something or somebody else in order to come of age. But this book does not deal with wishes, only with facts. . . . And so it may happen that the proof that a head of a firm has really done his utmost for the liberation of the workers lies in the very fact that they push him out. . . .

In the case of the Otts, the workers elected the other brother for their Chief, realizing that they still needed the experience of the former employers. The workers had nothing personal against the Otts, and they, in turn, recognized and welcomed the bubbling ferment of freedom. The wife of one of the brothers remarked: "Before, it was all easy, peaceful, and dead. Now it is very difficult, and alive."

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

UNFORTUNATELY, it seems to be impossible to exhaust the subject of juvenile delinquency. We currently find two schools of thought expressing themselves vigorously on the causes of youthful misbehavior, the one holding that children lack sufficient opportunity for creative expression, and turn to destruction because of frustrations, the other school contending that the popularity of the "self-expression" theory is itself largely responsible. Both these arguments, however, have in common the belief that finding the proper notch on the sliding scale of "discipline" will solve the problem. We ourselves get a bit tired of the seesawing back and forth in terms of this hypothesis, inclining to think that the hypothesis itself is a basic error. Some children have become the world's most useful citizens despite rigid authoritarian control at home, and other children have similarly achieved without much external discipline or restraint of any sort. The subject of delinquency, to us, needs to be approached with consideration of the *content* of a child's life, much more than in terms of the external controls to be applied to his behavior.

Not that the exponents of "more discipline" or "less discipline" have nothing important to say. Psychological clinics have encountered a host of young and middle-aged adults whose neurotic tendencies are clearly connected with fears and revulsions developed in childhood. Surely, if there is nothing in the home environment to nourish the inborn capacity of children for aspiration and inspiration, then the "controls" themselves take on abnormal importance. And now, to illustrate the half-truths in "spare the rod and spoil the child" arguments, we quote a homespun version of this view from Robert C. Ruark (*Pasadena Independent,* Sept. 3). In a piece entitled, "The Age for Shooting Instead of Spanking," Mr. Ruark proclaims:

> It should rarely be necessary for police to have to shoot culprits in process of what used to be called "misdemeanor," and wouldn't be salubrious except that we have to do something in the cities these days to cool down a crop of kids who should have been cooled down earlier by their parents or scared into submission by teachers or whacked a couple of times by the friendly cop on the beat. We shoot them today because the young and callow villains are past reason, past parental control, past teacher discipline.
>
> Basically this is the fault of the times, and the times has itself to blame. We have been off, during the past 20 years or so, on a coddling binge. We have spared the rod and spoiled the child until I wonder we haven't raised a dynasty of bums. This goes for the young adults, and the middle adults as well.

Most MANAS readers will easily think of disapproving comments on Mr. Ruark's remarks, but we may, as he continues, see that his objections to what he calls "Progressive Education" do not wholly lack reason:

> Since depression days we have operated this country—and are trying to operate the world—on a thesis that the individual is owed a living. If he makes a mistake, it isn't his fault. If he commits a sin or a crime he is maladjusted. There is no such thing as right or wrong any more, only maladjustment. The world is out of step with the individual.
>
> There is very little emphasis put on personal achievement any more. Hard work is sneered at as a means to an end. Grab it fast and grab it easy and if you get caught in a swifty—well. You're misunderstood. Society doesn't understand you. That's society's fault.
>
> We operate lately on so much free stuff, achievable without work, that it is little wonder the punks roam in bands knocking over the candy-stores, heisting the filling stations and occasionally killing the easy mark they mug a little too hard.

Despite the truth in these contentions, Mr. Ruark wants things too simple. He really believes, apparently, that the only sure incentive is "personal selfishness," and thus he thinks that personal selfishness must be controlled by sharp and fearsome punishments. This seems directly descended from the theological doctrine that each child must be *expected* to be full of "sin," requiring stern repressive measures to keep the

hydra-headed monster down. In contrast, the Progressive educators have at least discovered that things are not this simple, and that you cannot encourage self-reliance and creativity by threats and beatings.

Why, then, has delinquency increased during a period when progressive education has largely dominated schooling in the United States? It is not, we think, because the Progressives are wrong about the danger of arbitrary discipline. The more likely explanation is that both the pro-discipline and the anti-discipline schools have seriously overrated the significance of the discipline factor. When we say that the "content" of our modern way of life as a whole is the causal factor, we mean that there seems to be little incentive *except* the incentive of "selfishness" to which Mr. Ruark refers. Few children, just as few adults, believe in "causes" any more. And while it may be that most of the "causes" people have aspired to in the past have been immaturely conceived, there is still something about the striving and the idealizing associated with "causes" that is fundamental to mental and moral growth.

The Churches do not supply the ingredients to fill this lack. Statistics show that juvenile delinquency is growing among adolescents who attend parochial schools just as it grows everywhere else. As a student of these questions, William Bernard, has said:

> You may choose from among great parochial systems maintained by religious denominations, lesser ones supported by political sects, or from schools conducted by fringe groups of all kinds, by foundations or individuals—some non-profit, others out for every dollar they can get.
>
> Inevitably, delinquency plagues these schools just as it does public ones.
>
> Yet it must be conceded that the "private" record is better. At least on the surface.
>
> Why not? The problems of badly crowded classes—insufficient staffs—less frequently exist.
>
> Control and authority are absolute, often extending over even the non-classroom hours.
>
> In the case of parochial schools, offenders are quickly passed on to denominational "welfare" and "correction" facilities, or simply thrown back into the laps of the public schools—which take all comers.
>
> But while they may reach the surface less frequently in and around the non-public school, this is not to say that delinquency and pre-delinquency, when they appear, are better handled. On the contrary. The public school, by its very nature, gives kids more chance to blow off steam, to adjust themselves naturally for better or worse, to get rid of personality quirks by simple attrition. In this respect, most private institutions are better at repressing and suppressing than at curing. If predisposing factors of delinquency are present in him at all, many a product of these schools, once escaped from their confines, explodes.
>
> There is no reason to believe that schools under religious or private auspices are doing any better than the public schools. But the point remains that in Catholic as in other parochial and private schools, education has failed to meet the challenge of delinquency.

After the war it was assumed that the increase of delinquency was the inevitable but temporary result of family dislocation and social disorganization during the war years. However, by 1948 "serious crime" waves showed yearly increases of five per cent, and during 1948 and the first six months of 1949, child-crime exceeded pre-war levels by a full *fifty* per cent, with no definite hopes for abatement in sight.

Strange as it may sound, all this seems to us to indicate simply that what is really happening is that our children are "coming of age" much sooner than they used to, *and in terms of the general disillusionment bequeathed to them by their elders.* Our children seem to have more energy and more mentality than the average child once did, and, especially when provided with no gentle "children's world" to live in, have early discarded idealistic fantasies for a more "realistic" outlook.

Above all, it must be recognized that economic conditions seem to have very little to do with delinquency—another of the illusions that have passed away since the turn of this century. "The more intelligent or more privileged

youngster," Bernard says, "is not necessarily the less delinquent one; he may be simply the one more likely to stay out of the hands of the courts and police."

These are only some of the factors figuring in delinquency, the exhaustive psychological and philosophical analysis needed for thorough understanding and correction being beyond the scope of our space, and perhaps beyond our abilities. In conclusion, however, we may quote some of Mr. Bernard's generalizations, as supplying support for the view that the crux of the delinquency problem resides in the "content" of children's lives:

> Chores and home duties no longer fall to any great extent on the shoulders of city children. But putting duty and program upon a child cannot be neglected if delinquency is to be avoided. The writer's opinion is that responsibility is virtually as important to normal child growth as love—in fact it is a demonstration of the trust, need and acceptance which signify love. By responsibility is not meant any heavy tasks or weighty, complicated duties, or strict regimens of any kind. But just as a dog "goes bad" without a bit of work, so does a child. It is through responsibility that the youngster exercises his strengths, builds his character acquires his self-discipline and control over his moods. If we love our children and fear for them, let us take the pains to see that each child has a service to perform, his and his only, according to his age and ability.
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> To neglect this is to neglect his growth!

FRONTIERS

Back Doors to Metaphysics

WE should think it self-evident, by now, first, that human beings do not get along very well, either individually or collectively, on a diet of religious revelation and dogma; and, second, increasingly evident that they do not get along while denying the validity of metaphysical reality.

In the first case, it is impossible to have universal conformity to revelation, since there will always be minorities who insist that truth should be made conformable to reason, and who will insist upon experiment to verify all proposed hypotheses in respect to man's nature. On the other hand, the "all-denying skeptics" are more held back from undisputed sway by "facts" than by rival theories. In the I850's, the phenomena of Spiritualism jolted many men of mechanistic bent from their materialism, and the discoveries of quantum and atomic physics have served, for others, as reminders that even solid matter is *not* "solid," but an aggregate of patterns taken by foci of energy. In biology, too, the "reality" of a plant or other cellular structure was discovered to be in an invisible pattern which by some mysterious form of magnetism determined the privative limits of each cell.

Today, this restoration of metaphysical dimensions to the human perspective affects more and more of the area of daily experience. The fastest growing branches of medicine are psychotherapy and psychosomatics, and every medical doctor not hopelessly blind to signs of the times is aware that a large proportion of illnesses are "psychogenic." (Dr. Rhine's persistent effort to establish the validity of extra-sensory perception has also stimulated the conjecture that some of our ordinary personal experiences may be best explained in terms of telepathy, while current articles by Rhine and others attest to the reality of psychokinesis, mind-reading, clairvoyant dreams, etc. And, as Dr. Rhine observed in *The Reach of the Mind*, all these admissions renew old metaphysical questions—including that of the possibility of human immortality.)

It is conceivable, however, that the psychogenic ills which now affect so many, and are being recognized as such, will have even more to do with encouraging an interest in metaphysics than the findings of scientific research. In the *Progressive* for October, for example, Dr. John A. Schindler presents evidence to show that fully half of all physical ailments are emotionally induced. (The Yale University Out-Patient Clinic estimates emotionally induced illnesses to be 76 per cent of its general medical practice.) While it is possible to argue that there is nothing "metaphysical" about glandular difficulties brought on by disturbed emotions, a little reflection on testimony of this sort might persuade us that the whole approach of Western civilization to physical illness may need revision; and, further, that this revision will involve a perspective less likely to brush off metaphysical puzzles. If ideas and feelings are primary factors in bodily illness, then the emotional and mental being who *inhabits* the body becomes the important concern.

For a time, after the great intellectual revolution which enthroned the skeptical outlook, it was commonly felt that the body produced the mind. Subsequent modifications of this view often allowed a reciprocal relationship between body and mind, but the view documented by Dr. Schindler balances the scales by completely reversing the early mechanistic assumptions. Dr. Schindler feels compelled to admit that, in respect to lasting cures, the average physician of today may not be too much of an improvement over the primitive witch doctor. Both get results, but if knowledge of the factors which produced disease is mandatory for development of effective therapy, the M.D.'s must often have had the proverbial cart before the horse. As Dr. Schindler says:

> Less than one per cent receive adequate psychotherapy by present standards. The majority of the rest receive what might be termed "substitute therapy," which consists in giving the patient a substitute diagnosis which he can readily understand

> as a cause of his illness and then carrying on the treatment for that cause. This is psychotherapy too, but of a bastard variety. Such substitute therapy has been the accepted treatment for thousands of years; The primitive witch doctor told his functional patient he was possessed with evil spirits. The treatment consisted in driving out the evil spirits by dramatic and suggestive measures. I wish I had a therapy half as suggestive. The medieval doctor told his patient he had an imbalance of the four humours and proceeded to remove one or the other. The modern physician uses such substitute diagnoses as "anemia," "low or high blood pressure," "slightly high or low basal metabolic rate," etc. The cultist tells his patient "the vertebrae are out of place" and proceeds to put them back into place.
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> Substitute therapy is made possible by the fact that 60% of all patients so treated are improved for two months. That is plenty long for advertising. It makes possible Hadacol, Lydia Pinkham's, and all nostrums and quackery for which the public annually spends billions of dollars.

Dr. Schindler, it seems to us, is circuitously approaching metaphysical areas in yet another way:

> Most people with emotionally induced illness have it because of the monotonous repetition in their living of *many small unpleasant emotions*, no one of them very violent or important taken singly, but along with the others producing an almost constant personal environment of anxiety, apprehension, worry, frustration, discouragement, and fear, which produces the constant manifestations in the body—tense muscles which begin to pain, intestinal spasm which we call colitis, high gastric acidity which in turn produces ulcers, spasm of the coronary arteries which we know as angina pectoris, dizziness, nausea, urinary distress, skin rashes, and thousands of other symptoms.

What really causes "anxiety," "frustration," "discouragement"? Surely, the individual's total perspective or feeling about his own existence, in terms of goals or purposes, obviously has most to do with "frustration" and "fear" or their absence. The problem of "frustration" or "anxiety," then, is a problem belonging as much to the field of religion as to medicine. Those whose life's purposes are clearly defined and understood seldom suffer from such difficulties, if those purposes are broad and compelling enough to override incidental obstacles. In all places and ages there have been men whose deep convictions have forestalled tension and apprehension. The pantheistic faith of certain tribes of American Indians undoubtedly contributed to the longevity of their people and the freedom from illness which prevailed while they were sufficiently isolated from the white man's civilization.

Of course, the character of a religion is of considerable importance, for all too many of the tenets of institutional religion are either founded upon or bound up with "fear" and "apprehension." In any case, Dr. Schindler's article seems another persuasive argument for more inclusive science—or more inclusive religion—and we suspect that if *either* were developed, it would encompass and embrace the other. For it was the divisiveness arising from ignorance which in the first place created the separation between these two areas of aspiration and achievement.