

REFERENCES FOR THE GOOD SOCIETY

SOME years ago Julian Huxley proposed to an audience made up of members of the British Association for the Advancement of Science that "man's supernormal or extrasensory faculties are [now] in the same case as were his mathematical faculties during the ice age." As a Humanist, Dr. Huxley interests himself in the possibilities of human development, and one thing we can say about this suggestion, which comes from a leading zoologist, is that, so far as he is concerned, the scientific outlook places no rigid limitation upon the idea of future human evolution.

This text from Dr. Huxley is sometimes used by enthusiasts to indicate that they have the permission of the scientists to press the case for a wonderful unfoldment of psychic powers in human beings. There may be a case of this sort, but it is not one we wish to argue, here. Even if people do, in a not far distant future, begin to read one another's minds, there will still be the question of whether what you find in another man's mind is especially worth reading—worth more, that is, than what you can read in good books. Even if men eventually find themselves able to look through walls and around corners, one may question whether this will help them to live better lives. There would be side-conclusions to be drawn, of course; such capacities are impressive evidence pointing to a conception of the human being which does not appear in the accounts of biologists and organic evolutionists; but the basic puzzles of existence would still be puzzling, and we should still have to work out the sort of problems we plan to discuss in this article.

All we want from Dr. Huxley's statement is the feeling that this is an open world, in the view of the best scientific opinion, with practically no directional commitments as to what may happen next, and no important confinements with respect to what may be possible.

It seems quite obvious that all the really difficult tasks of human beings arise from the fact that man is not one, but many. Each man, that is, is both one and many. He is a dreamer of the good society with a plan to put into effect, and he is an individual craftsman with something to make for himself and the people of his time. He is a parent with a child to nurture, here and now, and he is an educator who worries about the children half way round the world. He is a utopian with a stake in tomorrow and he is a vulnerable human made captive by the circumstances of today. He can sacrifice himself for tomorrow and he can sacrifice tomorrow for himself. He is a Craig's wife who agonizes about tobacco ash on the living room rug and he is a forgetful genius who goes boating with the town baker when dignitaries from the local university have come to call. He is the stern guardian of the status quo who has raised the utilitarian structures of the age, and he is the revolutionary poet with a gun in his hand who writes a tragic apologetic to posterity for the men he has killed.

What will be the final symmetry of the good society? For what do the utopians labor? Here, on a desk, is a stack of pamphlets representing the efforts of some of the best men of the day to penetrate these questions. The pamphlets are about law, the corporation, forms of government, the idea of freedom, the defense of liberty, the various lethargies which overtake our major institutions, the gap between traditional social ideals and the working mechanisms that have been set in motion for their realization. The thing that is notable in all these discussions is the lack of ideological ardor. There is another kind of ardor, a quiet, sure devotion to the fundamental decencies of human life, but no angry utopian contentions. Actually, you could wish for some passion, now and then, but when you look around

the world and see the little volcanos of current history which partisan social passions have wrought, you are glad that in these pamphlets there is at least some civilized calm.

You could also say that in these pamphlets is a relieving quality of maturity. There is essential pleasantness in reading the writing of men who are not angry, who can contend without quarreling. This is the good kind of sophistication, and with all our problems and crises this kind of sophistication has flowered in the United States during recent years. A characteristic expression of such concern and inquiry is found in Joseph P. Lyford's introduction to *The Agreeable Autocracies*, a recent paperback study of the institutions of modern democratic society. Mr. Lyford gives voice to a temper that represents, we think, an achieved plateau of reflective thinking. After casting about for a way of describing this spirit, we decided that it would be better to use Mr. Lyford's introduction as an illustration. He begins:

At one time it seemed as if the Soviet Union had done us a favor by providing a striking example of how not to behave towards other peoples and other nations. As things turned out, however, we have not profited greatly from the lesson: instead of persistently following a national program of our own we have often been satisfied to be against whatever Soviet policy seemed to be at the moment. Such activity may or may not have irritated the Kremlin, but it has frequently condemned America to an unnatural defensiveness that has undermined our effort to give leadership to the free world.

The defensiveness has been exaggerated by another bad habit, our tendency to rate the "goodness" or "badness" of other nations by the extent to which they applaud the slogans we circulate about ourselves. Since the slogans have little application to reality and are sanctimonious to boot, the applause is faint even in areas of the world where we should expect to find the greatest affection for free government. Shocked at the response to our proclamations, we grow more defensive, and, worse, we lose our sense of humor and proportion. Mr. Nehru is subjected to stern lectures on neutralism by our Department of State, and an American President observes sourly that Sweden

would be a little less neurotic if it were a little more capitalistic.

One thing you can say about Mr. Lyford is that he does not suffer from any insecurity as an American. Those who are insecure fear to be candid in self-examination. Only the strong look squarely at weakness. The maturity in this point of view lies in its recognition that no basic problem is ever solved without being clearly understood. Mr. Lyford continues:

Even if the self portrait we distribute for popular consumption were accurate it would be dangerous to present it as a picture of the ideal society. We would be ignoring the special circumstances of other countries. The picture is the more treacherous when it misrepresents the facts of American life. The discrepancy between what we commonly profess and what we practice or tolerate is great, and it does not escape the notice of others. If our sincerity is granted, and it is granted, the discrepancy can only be explained by the fact that we have come to believe hearsay and legend about ourselves in preference to an understanding gained by earnest self-examination. What is more, the legends have become so sacrosanct that the very habit of self-examination or self-criticism smells of low treason, and men who practice it are defeatists and unpatriotic scoundrels.

. . . although we continue to pay our conversational devotions to "free private enterprise," "individual initiative," "the democratic way," "government of the people," "competition of the marketplace," etc., we live rather comfortably in a society in which economic competition is diminishing in large areas, bureaucracy is corroding representative government technology is weakening the citizen's confidence in his own power to make decisions, and the threat of war is driving him economically and physically into the ground.

The interesting thing about Mr. Lyford's approach, and the approach of the contributors to *The Agreeable Autocracies* (Oceana Publications, 1961) to the situation of American civilization, is that it is concerned with comprehending the psychological relationships which are having a decisive effect on American life. In an ideological argument, the participants tend to thump the table. They are determined to *prove* something. The new spirit, so well illustrated by Mr. Lyford's

work, is wholly free of this anxiety. The problem is rather to find out what is actually happening, and this is especially difficult for the reason that "we are busily being defended from a knowledge of the present, sometimes by the very agencies—our educational system, our mass media, our statesmen—on which we have had to rely most heavily for understanding of ourselves." The Introduction continues:

We experience a vague uneasiness about events, a suspicion that our political and economic institutions, like the genie in the bottle, have escaped confinement and that we have lost the power to recall them. We feel uncomfortable at being bossed by a corporation or a union or a television set, but until we have some knowledge about these phenomena and what they are doing to us, we can hardly learn to control them. It does not appear that we will be delivered from our situation by articles on The National Purpose.

The Agreeable Autocracies is an attempt to explore some of the institutions which both reflect and determine the character of the free society today. The men who speculate on these institutions have, for the most part, come to at least one common conclusion: that many of the great enterprises and associations around which our democracy is formed are in themselves autocratic in nature, and possessed of power which can be used to frustrate the citizen who is trying to assert his individuality in the modern world.

These institutions which Mr. Lyford names "agreeable autocracies"—where did they come from? Of one thing we can be sure: they were not sketched out by the revolutionary theorists of the eighteenth century who formulated the political principles and originally shaped the political institutions of what we term the "free society." No doubt there are historians who can explain to a great extent what happened to the plans and projects of the eighteenth century. Going back over this ground and analyzing the composition of forces which have created the present scene is one of the tasks undertaken by the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, in Santa Barbara. But however we come, finally, to explain and account for the present, the truth we

are trying to expose, right now, is that the makers of constitutions and the designers of institutions find it difficult if not impossible to anticipate the behavior of the host of all their enterprises. The host is the flowing life of the human race. This life has its own currents and rhythms, its own multiple cycles and adaptations. On occasion it produces extraordinary novelties. Should Rousseau have been able to leave room in his social theory for the advent of television, atomic energy, and IBM machines? How would Thomas Jefferson feel after reading *Factories in the Field*? They tell us, sir, that we are free, because we have in one hand a ballot, and in the other a stock certificate. With these we shape our destiny and own our private property, and that, sir, makes ours the best of all possible societies. The reality of the situation, however, is described by Mr. Lyford:

Many of us may even be secretly relieved at having a plausible excuse to delegate ancient civic responsibilities to a new bureaucracy of experts. Thus the member of an industrial union comes to regard his officers as business agents who may proceed without interference or recall; the stockholder delivers his proxy; and the citizen narrows his political participation to the mere act of voting—if he votes at all.

You may call this a desperate decay and a breakdown of democracy, but the people don't seem especially upset. If they've lost their freedom, they are not complaining very much. They have their problems and the auguries for the future are far from good, but no one has a clear idea of how things ought to be changed. How *would* you change things, if you could? The problem redefines itself in terms something like the following: If you want to change things, today, you'll have to change the people themselves, and that is a democratic heresy. You can tinker with the system, but will the people really care? Will they *respond*?

Perhaps the difficulty is that, in all past efforts to redesign the social system, the need has been to get some heavy handed tyrant off the backs of the

people. This is a nice clean problem: You make a law that gets them off, or you shoot them off. But now it appears that the people are on their own backs, so it is no more a problem of passing a law or shooting anybody, but of explaining to the people what has happened. Propaganda for a great progressive movement that we all ought to join will not help us. Or, if you have another view, you can keep a fuss going about the few communists who are left, but after they are gone, what will you do?

Not only have we run out of authentic enemies; we have also run out of definitions of the good society. We are supposed to *have* the good society, and yet the best people—they certainly sound like the best people—seem themselves to be good to the extent that they are alienated from this "good society" of ours. Suppose you do get the corporations better organized for whatever it is they are supposed to be doing—suppose they get more democratic, or more profitable, or still more productive (is there any logical end to this production kick?)—by that time you may have interplanetary travel societies that want to run everything to suit their own institutional convenience, and you'll have to fix *them*.

What we are trying to suggest is that it may be a serious mistake to try to define the good in terms of the sociopolitical matrix of human life. You reach a point when it is time to stop fooling with the matrix and get on with living. Suppose you need a plow. After you make a good plow, do you really have to chromium plate it and put sequins on the handles? Do you have to listen every day to commercials on how nobody else has a plough with different colored neon lights on it for evening agriculture? Plowing is a good thing to do, but plowing is not an end in itself. Neither are those damn corporations. Why don't we stop talking about them? Maybe they're sick from self-importance. The Tower of Babel was a great monument back in the Old Testament days, but now we agree that it wasn't a monument to anything worth while.

So let us hazard the statement of a principle: Whenever you press the finality of definitions of the good society beyond a certain practical limit, you create an impossible goal—impossible because it is a goal which can never be reached by social means. The zest for social finality defeats itself because, being out of proportion, it displaces the role of individual excellence or good, and this consequence destroys or at least distorts the social good as well, leaving a bad taste on all counts.

It may be helpful, here, to go back to Julian Huxley's suggestion that "man's supernormal or extra-sensory faculties are [now] in the same case as were his mathematical faculties in the ice age." If we can allow this possibility, we can allow other possibilities as well. We can allow, for example, that the independent spirit typified by eighteenth-century libertarian political philosophy was also an *evolved* quality for human beings. In other words, the ideal society for the eighteenth-century vision of man was different from the ideal society for the human beings of two or three thousand years earlier. In short, there was a time when the hierarchical society of benevolent paternalism seemed the appropriate matrix for human development. Then, by some kind of mutation in awareness, men outgrew the traditional patterns of life under paternalistic control. They demanded and got their independence, and invented the social forms for an independent life. But with freedom came the need to understand the principle of freedom, and this was another evolutionary step which had to be taken. You could say that the various ideologies which have been developed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have all been attempts to define the principle of freedom. For the most part, the definitions have been in the form of political and economic systems. These definitions have not worked very well. They have made freedom depend upon a condition of society instead of upon a condition of man.

Suppose, for example, that Huxley's prophecy should come true, and that, a hundred or so years

from now, or sooner, we found ourselves able to read one another's minds. In a society filled with people like that, the only free human beings would be those who had nothing to be ashamed of in their minds. The others would ask the technologists to invent electronic thought barriers to protect their privacy. But in general, for the mind-readers, property might not be important at all. And politics, for them, would be a very different affair, as Edward Bellamy suggests in his story, *To Whom This May Come*.

That time, of course, is not yet, and it may never come. But it is reasonable to anticipate some radical changes—at least as many changes as those which have taken place in the past three or four thousand years. There is, one hopes, the imminent possibility of a world without war, which would mean a world with a sort of security for property radically different from the security we now enjoy—or rather, are terrorized by. A lot of the "necessities" we now put up with would then not exist. Decentralization of power and authority would proceed without anxiety or inhibition. Perhaps we should begin, now, to define the good society along these lines, instead of submitting to the current necessities.

But this assumes the existence of individuals whose realization of the good life requires such a society. The reference points for the good society are always the good individuals who are strong enough and numerous enough to block in the ideal. That is how the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States got written.

The thing that we seem to have lost sight of is the capacity of men to live an individually good life in any epoch of history. In his *Nation* article on Lincoln, Herbert Croly gave a precise description of such a life. Lincoln, he said, "achieved for himself a personality which speaks to human beings irrespective of time and country. He had attained the ultimate object of personal culture. He had married a firm will to a luminous intelligence." A good society is a thing which

happens under the limitations of time and place. A good man, however, is what he is, "irrespective of time and country." An excessive preoccupation with the good society, to the neglect of the idea of good men, means that we will get neither.

REVIEW "THE BOMB"

WE have already quoted (MANAS, March 1) from Fernand Gigon's book of this title his stark description of the almost incredible horror of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki explosions, constituting what we felt to be one of the most effective pieces of writing to show that atomic war is no longer "war." But this book is a documentary of importance in other respects as well, and should be considered as a library addition by MANAS readers. (*The Bomb*, translated from the French, was published last year in the U.S. by Pyramid Press, as a 35-cent paperback.)

Gigon's opening chapter is devoted to a study of the late Albert Einstein's reactions to the bomb his calculations had made possible. The great physicist finally concluded that atomic explosions invite much more than the original holocaust, and more even than the continuing effect upon later generations born to afflicted survivors. There was also, Einstein felt, a "poison" to the mind in the very idea of such a weapon, destroying peace and stability. These reflections, as Gigon said, "darkened Einstein's life." He did not believe that merely scientific and political measures could solve such problems arising from atomic energy.

Dr. Einstein has sometimes been regarded as a man who created a Frankenstein without knowing what he was doing, but Gigon's research shows that this was not the case. What actually happened, apparently, involved a betrayal of Einstein's trust in the political and military leaders of America. Gigon explains:

Einstein's secretary has told us how the scientist progressively lost faith in mankind as his strength waned. During the war, when he wrote to the U.S. Government that his calculations were such as to make an atomic bomb a possibility, and that he visualized the uses to which such a bomb could be put, he made one stipulation when offering his help. Once the first bomb was made and ready for trial, he said, representatives of Germany and Japan, observers from neutral countries, and, of course, the chiefs of staff of the principal allied powers, should meet on a desert island in the Pacific. The atomic bomb would

be exploded before this gathering of experts, and the explosion would be such that the immediate capitulation of the enemy would surely follow. Thus vast numbers of human lives would be saved and we would enter an era of peace.

The Government gave Einstein this promise, voted credits of more than two thousand million dollars to the laboratories, and then President Roosevelt died. The Pentagon, anxious to see the war ended, neglected the promises made to the great scientist and looked for a target in the centre of Japan. Einstein felt extremely strongly about this betrayal. His peace of mind disappeared. This also affected Professor Oppenheimer, who refused to work on the hydrogen bomb. But the White House had its own reasons. Einstein grew increasingly apprehensive when he realised the use to which the Governments of the world were putting his discovery. One day, surveying his life's work, he said. "If I had only known, I would have been a locksmith."

In this context, one is able to appreciate the aptness of a phrase used by Edmond Taylor in *Richer by Asia*. Referring to the H-bomb tests at Bikini, he called them "a black mass of physics." Fresh from a long stay in India as an OSS officer, Taylor tried to explain why the mystically-inclined people of that country regarded the bomb as a crime against all nature, and why they would feel that no one could explode a bomb which could produce so much of physical deformity unless he had some mental deformity of his own. The Bikini tests would also be seen as a corruption of man's responsibility to all the lower orders of life; even if the fish of the sea were the only living creatures immediately affected.

Yet one of the most striking portions of Gigon's book demonstrates that despite the careful calculations which preceded the test explosions at Bikini in 1954, thousands of human lives *were* involved. For one thing, many food fish brought in by far-ranging tuna boats were affected by radiation. Then there was the tragedy of the ill-fated *Lucky Dragon*. Its fisherman sailors were a hundred miles away from Bikini when the explosion occurred, without their knowing of the possible consequences of drifting fallout. A sort of "mist" began to descend upon the boat, a flaky dust resembling snow. These ashes were impregnated with the seeds of disfigurement and death and they fell upon the

twenty-three fishermen of the *Lucky Dragon* for twenty-four hours. One of the sailors tasted the "snow" and swallowed it: others followed his example. The crew of the *Lucky Dragon* reached Japan alive, but barely so. Their bloated and deformed appearances as they were taken to a hospital caused a wave of reaction throughout the whole of Japan—the feeling that the nightmare of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was still on stage. Twenty-two of the twenty-three on board the *Lucky Dragon* were made sterile by their encounter with the unpredictable drift of the Bikini fallout. Reparations paid by the United States government can hardly be said to compensate for this and for other heart-rending effects on all the families involved.

One survivor of the Hiroshima explosion subsequently dedicated his failing strength to a campaign for protesting further bomb tests. His story is a moving one as glimpsed in Gigon's account:

Perhaps the most spectacular protest by an individual has been Setsu Mukodani's one-man march. His white hair and flying beard are known all over Japan, and respected deeply. When the children see him approaching their village, they will stop their games and run to meet him. Before even he arrives at the centre of the village, a crowd of peasants will have collected around him, greeting him with reverence. For to them Mukodani is a hero. The whole of Japan knows what he has done and what he is doing. Everybody is aware of the route that he will take and of the places that he intends to visit. Wherever he goes people urge him to stay for a meal, and present him with whatever delicacy they may have available.

He used to be a stationmaster, atomised at Hiroshima. The disease which is corroding his blood and consuming his strength dates from August 6th, 1945. He was then sheltered by a concrete building. What he suffered at the time was insufficient to kill him outright, but the radioactivity that entered his body was enough to do so. He was completely dazed for several hours. He never again saw his home, which was reduced to smoking ashes. Eleven members of his family were killed in that explosion. For almost ten years the memory of the disaster has haunted him. He discovered at last an idea to give his life a meaning. He proposed to put what remained of his strength at the disposal of mankind. He was

determined to walk through Japan and to collect the signatures of half a million persons who wished to protest against the continuance of the atom bomb tests. And now for years he had been walking across Japan from village to village. Everywhere he goes he tells his story and asks for signatures. He finally reached Tokio with 480,000. He set off at once for the region of Nikko, to collect the 20,000 more that he had vowed to have.

Finally he handed over the half-million written protests to the Japanese Anti-Atomic Association, which added this contribution to the twenty-five million signatures already collected throughout Japan. This is far and away the biggest campaign of its sort that has ever been organised in the history of the world. The papers proving its immensity are now housed in a special Tokio building. Yet their effect on the atomic policy of the great powers has been, so far as one can make out, nil. Between the collection of these millions of signatures and the time of writing, at least twenty-seven explosions have been carried out by the United States, the U.S.S.R. and the British.

Today Japan is gearing its scientific and industrial future to developments of atomic energy. But, again, Gigon senses the doubt felt by some Japanese:

Not all Japanese are happy about this future development. Professor Soshio Hiyama, for example, of Tokio University has grave doubts about the wisdom of using atomic energy on such a large scale as it is at present planned throughout the world. He fears that mankind as a whole runs a risk of being made radio-active solely through the waste produced in such plants, quite apart from the ever-threatening menace of an atomic war. Professor Hiyama thinks that within the next twelve years, owing to the progress made by industry, man will find himself confronted with the greatest danger in his history. The problem of disposing of atomic waste on the scale in which it is likely to exist within a few years is one that has been scarcely tackled on an international level. We are only beginning to be faced by a problem, the immensity of which will be almost insoluble unless some firm international agreements can be reached. Professor Masao Tsuzuki, also of Tokio adds the following comment. "It will be at least fifty or sixty years before we know for sure what are the effects of radio-activity. It will be our children or our grandchildren only who will be in a position to decide on this matter, if our grandchildren are still alive at that time."

COMMENTARY

A MERE MAN OF TALENT

LET a distinguished human being speak his mind on an issue of vital importance to mankind and all the dogs start barking. Latest target is Lord Bertrand Russell, who led the recent protest in England against British acceptance of Polaris submarine bases. Mr. Russell is probably the most celebrated intellectual alive today. He is eighty-eight years old and has been, with some qualifications, a lifelong pacifist. Overlooking the fact that Russell was jailed more than forty years ago for his opposition to World War I, an American newspaper columnist, Holmes Alexander, now accuses him of lapsing into senility and says he used to "have much better sense." (Los Angeles *Times*, March 15.) Alexander presents an argument constructed mainly of abuse in which he classes Russell's campaign for nuclear disarmament with "the votes of the senile, the juvenile, the idiot, the illiterate and the pacifist on matters such as nuclear warfare." People who believe in unilateral disarmament, he proposes, "are far enough down in the evolutionary scale to warrant their loss of suffrage." Mr. Alexander ends his attack on Russell with these words:

Unfortunately, like so many men of talent and science and letters, Russell enters a second childhood when he enters the unpathed jungles of international politics—where only the wariest and most experienced hunters manage to make a way for themselves and their followers.

The wisdom of these men in their own fields is one side of the coin—their folly in unknown fields is the other side.

Actually, Mr. Alexander is upset and angry. He admits the possibility that the campaign for nuclear disarmament of NATO may continue to gather momentum. Ignoring the strong disagreements among those who *are* experts on the subject of nuclear weapons, he qualifies himself with the authority he denies to Russell, insists that nuclear weapons are peace-keepers

("to date"), and declares that those who disagree are unworthy of the right to vote.

But the claim that Russell ought not to speak on a subject "outside his field" is the silliest argument of all. Why should Russell or anyone else, however unschooled in "international politics," leave the issues of nuclear war to any sort of "experts"? When a leading American military strategist invites us to prepare ourselves for casualties of from 40 to 80 million of our people, in the event of nuclear war, how can anyone continue to claim that only "specialists" should have a voice in national decision?

And who are these "wariest and most experienced hunters" whom we ought to trust with both our lives and our morals? Are they the people who betrayed Albert Einstein's faith in mankind? (See Review.) Are they the people who have led us to the edge of the precipice and have set ticking the Doomsday Machine? Why should we leave *any* decision to them?

The best antidote to Mr. Alexander's brand of journalism is an acquaintance with some of the opinions he attributes to "the senile, the juvenile, the idiot, the illiterate and the pacifist"—not to mention Tolstoy, Gandhi, and Albert Schweitzer. In MANAS for March 1 we quoted from W. H. Ferry's paper on unilateral disarmament, saying that when it became available we would tell our readers how to get copies. This paper has now been issued in pamphlet form by the American Friends Service Committee and may be ordered direct from the AFSC headquarters, 160 North 15th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, or from local AFSC offices throughout the country. The title of the pamphlet is *Disarm to Parley—A Case for Unilateral Disarmament*. Single copies are 20 cents.

Review's "Notes on the *Texas Quarterly*" of two weeks ago reminded us of some quotation from the Summer 1960 *Texas Quarterly* in MANAS for Feb. 1, and our unfulfilled intention to give some more of Mr. Heilman's rare insights

into the forms of the drama. Robert B. Heilman is chairman of the English department at the University of Washington. His article appeared in the *Texas Quarterly* and was reprinted (condensed) in *Current* for November, from which we borrowed our earlier quotations. The passage we have been wanting to repeat concerns the meaning of "melodrama." As our Feb. 1 extracts showed, Mr. Heilman is primarily concerned with the distinction between tragedy, in the classic sense, and simple disaster—a distinction that has become lost in oversimplifying journalistic accounts of human happenings. Toward the end of his discussion he turns to a comparison of tragedy and melodrama:

In the structure of melodrama, . . . man [pitted against some force outside himself] is essentially "whole"; this key word implies neither greatness nor moral perfection, but rather an absence of the kind of inner conflict that is so significant that it *must* claim our first attention. He is not troubled by motives that would distract him from the conflict outside himself. He may, in fact, be humanly incomplete; but his incompleteness is not the issue. In tragedy, man is divided; in melodrama, he has at least a quasi wholeness against besetting problems. In tragedy, the conflict is within man; in melodrama, it is between men, or between men and things. . . . The identifying mark of the melodramatic structure is not the particular outcome of the plot, but the conception of character and the alignment of forces. This identity we can always find beneath a considerable diversity of arrangements of action . . . that extend from disaster to success, from defeat to victory, and a range of effects from the strongest conviction of frustration and failure that serious art can dramatize to the most frivolous assurance of triumph that a mass-circulation writer can confect. The issue here is not the reordering of the self, but the reordering of one's relations with others, with the world of people or things not the knowledge of self, but the maintenance of self, in its assumption of wholeness, until conflicts are won or lost.

Mr. Heilman's development of the meanings in the forms of the drama is so luminous, and so precise in its specification, that we urgently hope that this article is a part of a book to be published. Reading this material makes you want to go back to school, and at the University of Washington.

Failing this, there is last summer's issue of the *Texas Quarterly*, or the reprint of Mr. Heilman's article in *Current* for last November. *Current* is edited by Sidney Hertzberg. Subscription is \$7 a year, or \$3.50 for six months. *Current* is an exceptionally fine survey course in the best of current reading, published at 177 East 71st Street, New York 21, N.Y.

CHILDREN

... and Ourselves

READING

SOMETHING for parents and a suggestion or two for children:

Again we find ourselves delighted by some of the spontaneous compositions of youngsters, as reproduced in *Swing—Writings by Children*, summer issue. First of all, let us take one from a five-year-old New York girl, titled "TV Commercial No. 2," a fitting comment on the ceaseless advertising bombardment of child minds, and showing how one child reacted to the absurdities of commercial claims: Which one is the one

That takes stains away?
 From your hands and removes
 Scratches from Indian glasses?
 One day there was this little boy
 An Indian, you know.
 (A just pretending one)
 You know what happened?
 He went back to his mother
 Dried off the scratch and said
 "Do I look like a real chief?"
 She said, "Sure DO!"
 It removes stains, shirts
 Go away from dry-powder
 So when you get any
 It washes bird cages, doors
 Frigerators, umbrellas, purses
 Walls (lamps, no) beds, and everything!
 Of course the sack is good for everything.
 So remember the name.
 Sac-full-of detergent. It's IOC
 Good for your bird cage, hats, skin
 Panties, doors, drawers, mirrors
 And beds and typewriters and
 Playtex living girdles.

We also like this one of less recent origin, but always timely, by a nine-year-old Austrian boy:

While I was standing on my doorstep a man came and said: Little boy, do you know where Westbahn Street is? I said no. And the man said: You're a dumbell. And he didn't know either.

Finally, an example of the whimsical objectivity which young teenagers frequently express. This London schoolgirl composed two diaries, one "Ideal," the other "Prosaic." Here are the parallel Thursday entries:

Ideal Diary: Nothing very unusual happened. Our bus had a slight collision this morning wherein 3 people were killed and 6 injured. Won a scholarship to visit the moon with a Russian professor. Rather late coming home, about 3 hours as I was kidnapped in mistake for a film starlet and was tied up, thrown into the Thames and had a little difficulty in releasing myself. Went to bed at 2 a.m. after going to a ball at Buckingham Palace.

Prosaic Diary: We all overslept this morning and I only just got to school on time. The window cleaners were in school today. Forgot to bring my maths text book home and so I had to telephone Janet and pay Daddy for the call. I have only got 5½ d left in my purse. Practice. Homework. Bed at 8:30.

Swing is published, complete with attractive children's drawings and some excellent prints, in New York City, 222 East 21 Street, at 50 cents per copy or \$2.00 a year.

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One sort of "basic education" in our time clearly ought to be intercultural and "inter-racial." A significant educational effort in the greater Los Angeles area, for example, is the summer inter-racial program known as Friendship Day Camp. Here the directors have sought representative participants who can bring to daily converse, games, and music, distinctive and instructive contributions from their own ethnic background.

A New York psychologist, Mack Hanan, author of *The Pacifiers*, has suggested that, especially today, the first work of education is to help us get outside the "self-image." We need to learn how to come to terms with unfamiliar ideas, with people who speak a different language or have lived under a different sort of government, etc. The New Haven *Register* for Jan. 3 reproduced some of Hanan's remarks:

I'm not advocating the fostering of eccentricity, but of independent thought. Get your youngsters pen-

pals from little-known countries. If they are studying French, for instance, don't settle for a correspondent from France. Instead get one from French Equatorial Africa or Viet-Nam. Foreign consulates are good sources of suggestions for pen-pals. Remember that the purpose is not just to stimulate language study but to introduce children to unfamiliar cultures, other ways of living.

We have to face the mass challenge of the underprivileged nations of the earth. We are a society in detour. Neither in favor of very much nor against very much, we are mostly just going through life together, conditioned to accepting the symbol for the substance, the bypass for the throughfare.

We need more self-knowledge and a broader idea of the human potential. We have to look beyond personal prosperity.

A contribution to this broadening of perspectives for children is Dr. Frederick Franck's *My Friend in Africa* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1960). Dr. Franck is a Danish-born dentist-artist, now living in New York, who set up a dental clinic at Albert Schweitzer's Lambaréné hospital and treats patients there for a period in every year. This is a simple story for children which shows that the "aspirations of the African child," for instance, "are not different from those of children elsewhere as soon as the child is touched by education." As Dr. Franck points out in a letter to MANAS, *My Friend in Africa* is not essentially a book about Schweitzer and should not be so advertised. It is meant to show that foreign children are not primarily strange or "exotic," but simply children like other children. The young African village child "Bolo" comes to Lambarene with a serious affliction and stays to help, first finding a talent for easing the suffering of maimed animals. He gradually comes to see that the whole of life involves education of the heart, and that life is a whole:

"We do not always understand the Hospital," Bolo said aloud, "but we are very glad it is here. And we love the Old Doctor."

"It is wonderful when he gives me a smile. I am not a special friend of his. Do you think he likes me in particular?"

"You are a human being, and so is he," the doctor answered, "and that makes you like brothers. The Old Doctor believes that all men are his brothers, Bolo. All men need kindness and love and a helping hand, so all men must give these things to one another. A man must help his brothers or he has no use on earth. He even believes that the animals are his brothers. That is what Dr. Schweitzer believes. That is also why he smiles at you."

Bolo said softly, "I did not think about being brothers. The Old Doctor is a wonderful man."

FRONTIERS

Field Notes on the White Rhinoceros

UNTIL now, there didn't seem to be any particular point in commenting on the fate of the General Electric and Westinghouse executives who were recently sent to jail for collaborating in price-fixing. These men probably didn't *feel* very guilty or sinful, and not many of the people we have heard talking about it condemned them for what they did. Commercial "fixing" of one sort or another is so common in business that no one pays much attention to it.

What is of interest, however, is an item of history concerning the manufacture of light bulbs in the United States, reported in the *New Republic* for Feb. 27. The writer, T. E. Quinn, a former vice president of General Electric, relates that this company has enjoyed a monopolistic position in the incandescent lamp industry for many years. He says:

Its [General Electric's] position is formidable, like that of other monster-big enterprises, because of the forcible exclusion of other companies over half a century. Today, it would take many millions of capital, not available to new concerns, to develop new know-how and build and equip factories to move successfully into the tightly controlled electric lamp business.

Competitive efforts have always been hampered and stifled, competition itself rejected as a constructive force. Any representations to the contrary are simply not true. The effect and purpose have been to keep prices and profits high and investment down. Under these conditions, there have been no major innovations or scientific advances for more than thirty years. . . . There is no other household, commercial or industrial necessity that has extorted such excessive profits over so long a period for any private interest.

One wonders if the policy-makers at General Electric really believe in the free enterprise system. We are sorry those nice men had to go to jail, but if they are working for a company which is interested in subverting the American Way, they should have known better. Meanwhile, Clark

Foreman, director of the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, points out in a letter to the *Nation* for March 4 that both General Electric and Westinghouse are corporations "which dismiss employees who rely on the Fifth Amendment in refusing to cooperate with the House Un-American Activities Committee." Mr. Foreman comments:

It is interesting that these companies consider reliance on one's Constitutional guarantees as a more heinous offense than conspiring to defraud customers by violating the federal antitrust law. The same companies recently issued a statement that the fact that their employees were serving a sentence in jail would not preclude them from further employment.

Obviously, if you don't have to make any improvements in your product, and if you are able, through economic power, to keep competitive products off the market, you can make a lot of money without any special effort.

Why are goings-on like this kept secret for so long? Is it possible that the newspapers and magazines which argue so loudly for competition and free enterprise don't really believe in it either? In a *New Republic* book review (Feb. 27), Edward P. Morgan notes that even scholarly books which investigate mass communication techniques may neglect the effect of advertising on the public mind. Morgan's point is that the publishers and broadcasters who sell advertising don't care about the quality of the public mind. In fact, they'd like to keep it the way it is. He quotes Harry Overstreet's *The Mature Mind*, in which the author says that newspapers, broadcasting, movies and advertising are—

. . . part of . . . a money-making culture . . . in which the prime value that attaches to most things produced is their *exchange value*—their salability. . . . Hence, the primary hunt conducted by each of these . . . licensed mind-makers has been for a formula that would assure most people's being attracted most of the time. Once the formula is set, there is more profit to be derived from people's *remaining as they are* than from their growing up to some new level of insight and discrimination.

The project in the free enterprise system, the way it works today, is to keep the light bulbs and the people who buy them the way they are, so that you can make more money out of both.

If you want encouragement about these things, it helps to read the offbeat press. The commercial press doesn't even know it is destroying the qualities of human intelligence which alone will support a free society. The February number of *Liberation*, a radical monthly published in New York, has a pertinent article by Karl Shapiro, an American poet. Mr. Shapiro describes a fresh current in American life:

As a teacher and a writer, I have become increasingly aware in recent years of the spread of anarchist thought among the rising generation. They do not call it by that name, or any name; they do not philosophize about the State or Nonviolence or Disaffiliation, but the interest is unmistakably there. The Beat Movement symbolizes one extreme of youthful anger against the failure of modern society and government to keep peace among men. The Negro equality movement symbolizes a more dramatic failure of society and government to give the citizen his due. Throughout the world, the human right of insubordination against industrial society, colonialism, militarism and against the entire cult of the Western Tradition (religious, sexual, esthetic) is making itself felt in a thousand ways. The governments are losing their young. The lifeblood of history is flowing away from the centers of force. Patriotism is having its long-awaited nervous breakdown.

And not only the young. The generation of the total war is also abandoning the conventional political thinking of the past, Left, Right, and Liberal, and is returning to the example of individual moral force, as the world has so far known it through Thoreau, Whitman, Tolstoy, Kropotkin, and Gandhi.

At present we are going through the stage of withdrawal from the old political psychologies of organized governments. And we are witnessing the beginnings of successful passive resistance movements in America and abroad. But no appeal has yet been made to the vast American middleclass, the majority class, to detach itself from our competitive industrial insanity.

General Electric is of course trying to withdraw, but its methods seem a bit neurotic. Actually, they land good organization men in jail.

There must be another way. Mr. Shapiro continues:

It is indeed our industrial way of life that lends sanction to militarism and colonialism, Preparedness and suppression of human rights. Our enemy, strange as it may sound to American ears, is the Standard of Living. We worship at the altar of the White Rhinoceros, the American kitchen. Standard of Living is the holy of holies in whose name every other evil is committed. To lower this standard, or to equalize it among the peoples of the world, is our greatest need. And the first step is to disassociate ourselves from the industrial-scientific madness which rules our lives twenty-four hours a day.

We don't have any more space, but if you want to investigate some of the symptoms Mr. Shapiro is talking about you might look up Harold Taylor's article, "The Young Are Now Heard," in the *New York Times Magazine* for Jan. 29, and Kenneth Rexroth's discussion of America's young poets in the *Times Book Review* for Feb. 12.