

THOUGHTS ON FREEDOM

IT is natural enough that more than one reader found reason to comment on the discussion, "Science and Freedom," in MANAS for April 9. No man who seeks a philosophical foundation for his life can avoid long and sometimes agonizing thoughts on the subject of freedom, while science represents several aspects of our civilization which are now on trial.

How is science on trial? It is on trial as a theory of knowledge, and on trial as a means to salvation. If you have never thought of science as holding such promise, then, of course, science is *not* on trial.

The readers who write in defense of science are really writing about the genius of human discovery, about the faithfulness of men to the ideal of impartiality, about the determination of men to find, if not The Truth, at least a part of the truth, and to be satisfied with nothing less.

Most of the material printed in MANAS on the subject of science has been concerned with intellectual excesses committed in the name of science. Not enough space, perhaps, has been devoted to recognition of its positive achievements, which are all about us and which extend numerous benefits into the future. But the view of this journal is that the values contributed by science to our civilization are least of all to be found in the area of technology and material benefits. Rather the high contribution of science has been a temper, an attitude of mind, toward all matters which involve "finding something out." No thinking man of our time but has shared this benefit of science, for from science at its best, he has gained an almost omnipresent example of impersonal thinking. He has learned from science the need to make every problem of explanation into a problem of causal relations.

Had we not had these lessons from science, there would be no way of distinguishing vulgar superstition from transcendental subtlety. No man who has not exhausted, at least to his own satisfaction, the possibilities of mechanistic causation has any business reaching a firm conclusion about human freedom. That is, whatever can be produced in human behavior by some external cause cannot be taken as evidence of freedom. We must recognize this in theory, if we cannot test it in fact. For the man who dips into the literature of psychopathology—or better yet, makes an honest study of his own behavior—the margins of "freedom" may seem very narrow, indeed. Yet they are there—either they are there, or the man has researched and reasoned himself out of existence; and this, we may argue, is not reasonable at all, and cannot, therefore, be done by reason.

So science has created a broad plateau for the free philosophizing of modern man. It has plainly marked most of the grosser pitfalls into which unphilosophical religion may lead. It has not marked off the regions of philosophic truth, for that is not the business of science—not of the science we are familiar with, at any rate. But some of the clearest philosophical thinking of our time has come from scientists, or from men thoroughly aware of the meaning of science, simply because science has been an able instructor in the dangers of wishful thinking and in the follies of partisan doctrines, whatever their origin.

We have the same trouble, however, in speaking of "science" that we find in speaking of religion or Christianity. What is "true" science? Is it the high principles on which scientific inquiry is supposed to be based, and has been based, in the hands of the great discoverers? Or is it the vast body of facts, theories, arguments, criticisms, claims, and even ideologies proposed by all those

who speak in the name of science? When you refer to the complex influence over the past three hundred years that has been exerted by ideas in which science has played a decisive part, can you call it a "scientific" influence?

So with Christianity. Where do you stop, in defining Christianity? With the Sermon on the Mount? How about Martin Luther? How about Saint Augustine and John Calvin? How about Martin Niemöller, Billy Graham?

Can you isolate the dynamics of Christianity for purposes of generalization?

These things are difficult to discuss definitively because they represent ultimate meanings for so many people. The "ultimate meaning" always includes an incommensurable value.

Science has represented ultimate meanings for a great many people, also. Science as a method floods over into the area of science as a mood, as an inspiration. It is difficult, therefore, to define.

Well, you do the best you can. You pick a portion of the subject, adopt a point of view, define your terms as well as you can, and say what you must.

We have a letter from a reader on the subject of Freedom. He quotes for critical analysis the following sentence from the letter to which our article, "Science and Freedom," was a reply:

Science is our greatest single tool in conditioning our environment and conditioning our environment is the closest step to freedom of choice, and freedom of choice is freedom.

Our present correspondent dissents. This sentence, he suggests, "confuses science with technology." Further, "Science seeks truth, technology seeks power." Concerning freedom of choice, he prefers another definition: "I can see freedom of choice as one aspect of freedom: the freedom to acknowledge or to ignore truth and goodness."

We shall avoid, here, the old argument about whether science arrives at "truth," or simply helps to find ways to get certain results which we want to produce. There is certainly a sense in which science does both, and a truth—even if it is simply a truth about the physical world—is always a symbol of some larger meaning. There are elements of reverence and awe in the findings of great scientists, elements which seem to stand in some contrapuntal relation to philosophic truth. The matter is so delicate that we do not wish to debate it. The issue of freedom is more attractive.

Our present correspondent makes a distinction between choice and freedom. He writes:

Choice can leave out morality, love, and creativeness (I speak of these as one)—which have a transcendent and ordering and normative nature—but can freedom leave these out?

Let me illustrate. Here is an artist, a master. He has painted a painting, each stroke of which is carefully and consciously applied in both sufficiency and restraint according to the significance of his high mission so that, when he finishes, the painting is an integrated unity: to add to such a painting would burden it; to take away would weaken it. Another painter left-handedly slap-dash-splashes something on a canvas. To which of these deeds does the word "freedom" apply? Now let us say that these two paintings are hung in a gallery and I am asked to make a choice. If I am artistically blind I can choose, because to me they are on the same plane: they are both paintings. But if I have artistic perception—which is transcendent perception, as is morality—then to me there is no choice. Incidentally, neither is there comparison.

Let me put it another way. You are walking through the woods and, out of love and respect, are careful not to step on the flowers. Theoretically you could ignore your feeling and walk all over the flowers. Are we to say that this difference is a matter of choice and, in using the word "choice" make what goes on in you here the equivalent of what goes on in you when you order peas in a restaurant instead of beans? And in the matter of freedom, are we to call acting without love and respect "freedom" and call acting in love and respect (which includes non-action) "freedom," too, making them somehow equivalent?

There is one appalling step beyond this and that is to say that morality is not freedom and promiscuity is. . . . Since morality is "obedience" to X (no need here to give X a name), we are, by this "obedience," not being "free"! In these terms, rule equals tyranny. . . .

I have been suggesting that "choice" applies to the unsacrificial, and thus uncreative, activity. If we use the same word to apply to what *is* sacrificial and creative, I believe we weaken communication among men regarding what is most significant in life. For creative distinctions and relationships, for significant communication, and for freedom, I believe we have to go beyond choice.

These observations indicate the profundities to which reflection on freedom can lead. The important thing to point out, here, in relation to science, seems to be that this correspondent is distinguishing between what might be termed inner and outer causation.

In the scientific analysis of the human being, all action, all behavior, all thought, must be accounted for by means of an external stimulus. This renders the idea of freedom meaningless. But in our correspondent's analysis, causation is bipolar. The individual is affected by external causes, but he also has reference to an inner basis of action, best described, perhaps, as the *idea of self* and of the ideal relations of the self with others. Thus the man who treads carefully on the forest floor recognizes a kinship, a community of good, with the flowers. His act may be virtually a spontaneous reaction—without needing to take care, he is reverent of life.

We could, in theory, propose that human development proceeds in the moral universe created by these two poles of action—that as a man comes to understand himself and the world about him, he shapes his life to the terms of that understanding. When his understanding is complete, he has no longer a choice. A mother has no choice but to love her baby. In *that* universe, understanding and love are virtually complete. So, the ideal man, perhaps, would be a man who has no "choice" since he has long since

determined the ruling polarity of his life. But such a man would have no moral struggle. We do.

Our argument with the "scientific" account of man is that it allows only a single pole of causation in human life—the external. Now if it be said that this is not truly "scientific," but an abuse of the methodology of science taken from other fields, we shall readily agree, but add that this criticism needs to be made again and again, until the denial of man's bipolar life is no longer urged as a "scientific" criticism of a wide variety of philosophical views of the nature of man.

Letter from the Night

But yield who will to their separation,
 My object in living is to unite
 My avocation and my vocation
 As my two eyes make one in sight.
 Only where love and need are one,
 And the work is play for mortal stakes,
 Is the deed ever really done
 For Heaven and the future's sakes.

WHENEVER my interests become somehow separate and opposed, and what should be joy becomes questioned labor, the last stanza of Robert Frost's "Two Tramps in Mud Time"—quoted above—springs into my mind. It is also a stanza I have used to explain mature and well integrated men. For Frost, who applied the stanza to himself almost in afterthought, the statement finds a classical application.

Lionel Abel, recently quoted in MANAS (for April 30, from an article in *Partisan Review*), says that the total poet, in contrast to the amateur and professional poets, "will treat of the sacred directly; not merely of what is sacred to him, but of what is sacred to other men as well." For me, at least, Robert Frost is again described. When I was younger and more wrapped up in the experimental in poetry, his seeming simplicity bothered me—all the more so, because his intuitions found a way into my being. Because of his maturity, Frost has been an elder poet to at least three generations.

Quite likely he is suspected as a stodgy patriot and square by the later generations who have encountered his "Mending Wall" in high school text books. However that may be, had the people who censor text books been capable of reading poetry he would have been thrown out along with any mention of UN and UNESCO. When Frost wrote: "Something there is that doesn't love a wall," he had something more than two New England neighbors in mind; and when he has his neighbor say, "Good fences make good neighbors," he was illuminating the platitudinous ignorance that keeps men setting up borders to

fight over. The end of that poem is worth quoting for the exactness of its image:

. . . I see him there
 Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
 In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
 He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
 Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
 He will not go behind his father's saying,
 And he likes having thought of it so well
 He says again, "Good fences make good
 neighbors."

Frost's love of nature is the best expressed and most deeply felt of our time, and this for the reason that he expected nature alone to keep his faith. He can be compassionate about man and even, at times, whimsical about his fate, but he doesn't trust him with the earth or give him a heroic destiny. In one of his earliest poems, "Once by the Pacific," he prophesied:

It looked as if a night of dark intent
 Was coming, and not only a night, an age.
 Someone had better be prepared for rage.
 There would be more than ocean water broken
 Before God's last *Put out the Light*, was spoken.

This repeats itself in later poems, "The Lesson for Today," for example. Here he pretends to compete with ancient poets for a darker age than theirs, and says to one:

Space ails us moderns: we are sick with space.
 Its contemplation makes us out as small
 As a brief epidemic of microbes
 That in a good glass may be seen to crawl
 The patina of this least of globes.
 But have we there the advantage after all?
 You were belittled into vilest worms
 God hardly tolerated with his feet;
 Which comes to the same thing in different
 terms.
 We both are the belittled human race,
 One as compared with God and one with space.
 I had thought ours the more profound disgrace;
 But doubtless this was only my conceit.
 The cloister and the observatory saint
 Take comfort in about the same complaint.
 So Science and religion really meet.

Later in the same poem he says:

We all are doomed to broken-off careers,

And so's the nation so's the total race,
 The earth itself is liable to the fate
 Of being meaninglessly broken off . . .

The poems I have quoted were written before the first atom bombs were exploded or space invaded by satellites. Frost's nature poems are all the more poignant and sensitive because of his foreboding sense that something more than a personal-romantic disaster might cut short our careers. "To Earthward" is one of the most delicate lyrics of earth-love ever written. Here are a few stanzas:

I craved strong sweets, but those
 Seemed strong when I was young:
 The petal of the rose
 It was that stung.

Now no joy but lacks salt
 That is not dashed with pain
 And weariness and fault;
 I crave the stain

Of tears, the aftermark
 Of almost too much love,
 The sweet of bitter bark
 And burning clove.

When stiff and sore and scarred
 I take away my hand
 From leaning on it hard
 In grass and sand,

The hurt is not enough:
 I long for weight and strength
 To feel the earth as rough
 To all my length.

Only a man who could have written the above lyric could have devised the epitaph, "I had a lover's quarrel with the world."

There is a very good chance that Robert Frost's quarrel has given us the time's greatest poet. How great he is, we will really know when we have sloughed off enough our precocious literary sophistication to grow up to him. Lines of his that come to me by night always leave me with a new awareness by day.

W. W.

Los Angeles

REVIEW

FACTS AND VALUES

IN a sprightly article in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* for April, David Riesman, professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, and author of *The Lonely Crowd*, discusses the problem of what Americans are to do with all the "abundance" they have been piling up during the past ten years or so. While the "recession" of recent months may have done some small damage to the claim of unprecedented prosperity in the United States, it remains true enough that the economic position of Americans—even relatively "poor Americans"—is far better than the wildest dreams of the past. "We are a generation," he says, "prepared for Paradise Lost, who do not know what to do with Paradise Found."

Dr. Riesman asks, in effect, What shall we do with our money if we can get enough sense to stop stockpiling nuclear bombs? We couldn't possibly build enough roads to take up the slack. Not even a pretentious schedule of pyramid-building could meet the deficit for public works, if we discontinue our arms program.

Toward the end of the article, Dr. Riesman gets to his point. It is that the increasingly comfortable lives of Americans seem to have lessened instead of increased their thinking capacity. He studied interviews done with a cross-section of college seniors throughout the country, concluding that "serious discussion of the future is just what is missing in the United States: as our actual life-spans have lengthened, our timetables of the imagination have shrunk: we live now, think later."

We have, in short, done everything but overcome our aimlessness. Dr. Riesman sets the problem as he sees it:

There is liberation in plenty itself, up to a point. And yet I think we fear the future's opacity, and try not to pierce it with concrete plans. The terrifying prospect of atomic and biological annihilation has been one factor in this foreshortening, but for most

Americans it is not a very important (not nearly important enough) cloud on anticipation. What we fear to face is more than total destruction: it is total meaninglessness; and it is my contention that we may bring about the former, in some part because . . . our future as a country is not inviting or challenging enough to mobilize our attention and our energies.

Thus one of our more perceptive social scientists. Actually, social science is an interesting mixture of science and value judgments. It seems pretty evident that the importance of the contributions of men like Riesman lies more in the work of their imagination and in their value judgments than in their science. They do a few experiments or conduct some surveys, but the impact of what they have to say comes from their intuitive estimate of what men ought to be doing. Men *ought*, Dr. Riesman suggests, to be trying to find some worth-while way of using their energies. He even makes a prophecy on this basis:

I would tentatively suggest that expenditures (to keep the national economy going) which serve no real social imperative, other than propping up the economy itself, will eventually produce wasteful by-products to slow that economy down in a tangle of vested inefficiencies, lowered morale and lack of purpose and genuine inventiveness. Men will scarcely want to go on producing goods as mere items in a multiplier effect.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." Dr. Riesman has not improved upon the Old Testament, but he has repeated it accurately enough. Could he, as a social scientist, design an experiment to confirm this proverb? One wonders.

There is also the judgment that the people fear total meaninglessness more than they fear total destruction. This affirms something we have always believed: that metaphysical dissolution is a worse threat than physical dissolution, despite the fact that men seldom state their apprehensions in this way. They look, rather, for some more tangible explanation of their dissatisfaction; they'll blame it on the Communists, or the Republicans, before they will admit that the fault lies in their own empty lives.

It was this view, or something like it, which a few weeks ago was expressed in a MANAS editorial concerned with the scientific standing of judgments about the dangers of nuclear testing. Worse, it was suggested, than the effect of too much radiation in the atmosphere is the effect of having no more sense than to *put* it into the air. We doubt, that is, if you can frighten people into stopping nuclear testing, although you might be able to *shame* them into stopping.

There is, however, a question of fact in regard to the dangers from nuclear testing. We have read quite a lot on this question and have printed an article or two, quoting various experts. MANAS has also received letters from readers challenging the accuracy of the claim that the spread of radiation from nuclear testing constitutes a serious threat to human health. For those who would like to examine indisputable facts—"scientific" facts, if you will—relating to the effects of nuclear explosion, a new pamphlet on the subject seems as conclusive as it is possible to be at the present time. The pamphlet is *Every Test Kills*, written by Linus Pauling, Nobel-prize-winning chemist of the California Institute of Technology. Dr. Pauling, as is well known, has been a leader among the scientists who oppose continued nuclear testing. He is against it. Yet the facts which he marshals against it are the same facts which are used by the (few) scientists who contend that the tests ought to go on. We doubt if anybody can dispute this. So we suggest that readers who want to inform themselves concerning the issues of this argument send to *Liberation* (the magazine which originally published the article which makes the pamphlet), 110 Christopher Street, New York 14, N.Y., for a dozen or half-dozen copies. The price is ten cents, with reduced rates on bulk orders.

What sort of information is in this pamphlet? Here is one sentence:

From the estimates of American geneticists reported by the Committee of the National Academy of Scientists, I have calculated that the probable effect of bomb testing at the present rate would be to

increase by 5000 the number of seriously defective children born each year.

The argument between the scientists for and those against continued testing is not about facts like these but about whether the effects are on a large enough scale to be "serious." Statistically, that is, 5000 more defective children a year is an increase which is perhaps as small as one per cent. For people who deal with figures and calculated risks, a one per cent increase is not much.

Dr. Pauling takes another view. He says:

I do not consider the effects negligible. I believe that each human being is important, and that even a few thousand or a few million human beings, a small fraction of all those now living in the world, are important. Dr. Albert Schweitzer has said that "A humanitarian is a man who believes that no human being should be sacrificed to a project." I believe that no human being should be sacrificed to a project—especially to the project of perfecting nuclear weapons to kill hundreds of millions of people. The leader of a nation testing nuclear weapons should know that when he gives the order to explode a superbomb with 5 megatons equivalent of fission he is probably dooming 1500 people to die of leukemia, tens of thousands more to die of bone cancer and other diseases, and 100,000 seriously defective children to be born in future generations.

How did we get to the point where a distinguished scientist is compelled to reason with his countrymen with such moral desperation? Or have we been at this point for a long, long time, while only now our awareness (through experts like Dr. Pauling) is catching up with the implications of what we are doing?

It stands to reason that groups of people, and, more recently, nations, have long been doing things which produced consequences they were not aware of. *Rome and China*, an historical study by Frederick P. Teggart (University of California Press, 1939), shows how thoughtful monarchs and restrained and rational governments of nearly two thousand years ago established policies which, entirely without their knowledge, disturbed seriously the lives of peoples spreading over many thousands of miles of territory. They

did not realize, they did not know, they did not understand.

To us, however, it is given to understand. That is, we are being told. This is a moral penalty of being "scientific," of being able to manipulate nature in terms of cause and effect. We can no longer evade the knowledge—some knowledge, at least—of what we are doing.

But is even this situation really "new"? Has not facing the consequences of what we do always been a central moral problem of human beings? Is it not that moral perception is now being ostentatiously forced upon us, by the very mechanisms of scientific inquiry? Those impersonal techniques and massively effective methods, said to be morally "neutral," are putting an end to all neutrality on questions as nuclear testing.

For years, for generations, we have heard it said that science deals in "objective" reality. Well, now we have facts, in objective form—based upon the tests, studies, and conclusions of American geneticists in the report of the National Academy of Sciences:

The basic fact is—and no competent person doubts this—that radiations produce mutations, and that mutations are in general harmful. . . . We ought to keep all our expenditures of radiation as low as possible. . . . We must watch and guard all our expenditures. From the point of view of genetics, they are all bad.

Any radiation is genetically undesirable, since any radiation induces harmful mutations. Further, all presently available scientific information leads to the conclusion that the genetic harm is proportional to the total dose (that is, the total accumulated dose to the reproductive cells from the conception of the parents to the conception of the child)

There you have it, in the clear unemotional language of science. How much "vision" do we have to have to act on this information? Or would we rather "perish" instead?

COMMENTARY **RELIGION OR NEUROSIS?**

MR. J. W. GRAY'S "Vacancy for Reason" does not, perhaps, say anything particularly new in calling for what C. J. Ducasse has named "A Philosophical Scrutiny of Religion." Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, for example, in a New York interview on March 22, held that the time is near when all religions will "converge toward one," and that that religion must be at once "rational, ethical, and spiritual." At the same time, Dr. Radhakrishnan affirmed that the partisan attitude toward religious doctrines, and its historical result in terms of dangerous factionalism, is particularly characteristic of a Christianity which he hopes Westerners are about to outgrow.

Mr. Gray has had something more than intellectual provocation for speculating on the nature of a true "wisdom-religion." And when a man who has served on a battlefield, and subsequently works with displaced persons uprooted by the same war, begins to "do philosophy" in this direction, such points as those made by Dr. Radhakrishnan take on the impact of deep conviction.

As to Mr. Gray's criticism of what he finds to be typically "Christian" psychology, he can obtain abundant confirmation from men who are themselves Christians of unorthodox orientation. For example, Karl Menninger—Christian in his own original way—analyzed the worst aspect of the religious psyche in his book, *The Human Mind*. This quotation, incidentally, helps to explain why MANAS is often stringently critical of some presumably "Christian" pronouncements. Dr. Menninger writes:

From the standpoint of the psychiatrist a religion which merely ministers to the unconscious cravings for self-punishment, the relief of a sense of guilt, the repudiation of unpleasant reality, or the feeling of a necessity for atonement to some unseen power, by the repeating of phrases and ceremonials, cannot be regarded as anything other than a neurotic or psychotic system. One would be perfectly justified,

on the basis of some religious philosophy—the total denial of reality—in killing anyone he did not like and then pronouncing solemnly some incantation to the effect that "he whom I killed was not reality but only a spirit; one cannot kill the spirit, therefore I have done no sin," or some other incantation to the effect that "Jesus, who forgives all sinners, must forgive my sins; to show my penitence I will walk out of my house barefooted in the snow and then all will be made right."

This is not said in any effort to disparage or ridicule anyone's religion, but rather to point out that religion may mean different things to different people and that psychological mechanisms determine what type of religion will satisfy a particular individual. The manner in which a man utilizes his religion—whether it be to enrich and ennoble his life or to excuse his selfishness and cruelty, or to rationalize his delusions and hallucinations, or to clothe himself in a comforting illusion of omnipotence—is a commentary on the state of his mental health. The fact is that we do not live in a world by ourselves. No religion which does not take cognizance of people about us and our responsibilities to them (aside from trying to convert them to the same self-absorption which *we* believe) is really a religion; it is a neurosis.

This is precisely what one sees in the religious formulations which many patients in mental hospitals produce in quantities.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

CARL ROGERS—BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY

It is our pleasure to present still another "unorthodox" professor's discussion of what the educators call "the teaching-learning process." Carl Rogers, professor of psychology at the University of Chicago, made the remarks printed below in the form of a preface to discussions held at the Harvard Conference on "Classroom Approaches in Influencing Human Behavior" (April 4, 1952). They were printed under the title "Personal Thoughts on Teaching and Learning," in the Winter 1958 issue of *Improving College and University Teaching*, (quarterly of the Graduate School of Oregon State College).

Prof. Rogers first came to our attention in a book on *The Self*, edited by Clark Moustakas. Readers will doubtless recognize the affinities of his thinking with the work of A. H. Maslow, of Brandeis University, and with the reflections of Paul Wienpahl in a MANAS article of some years ago, "An Unorthodox Lecture (MANAS June 13, 1956).

I WISH to present some very brief remarks, in the hope that if they bring forth any reaction from you, I may get some new light on my own ideas.

I find it a very troubling thing to *think*, particularly when I think about my own experiences and try to extract from those experiences the meaning that seems genuinely inherent in them. At first such thinking is very satisfying, because it seems to discover sense and pattern in a whole host of discrete events. But then it very often becomes dismaying, because I realize how ridiculous these thoughts, which have much value to me, would seem to most people. My impression is that if I try to find the meaning of my own experience it leads me, nearly always, in directions regarded as absurd.

So in the next three or four minutes, I will try to digest some of the meanings which have come to me from my classroom experience and the experience I have had in individual and group therapy. They are in no way intended as conclusions for some one else, or a guide to what others should do or be. They are very tentative meanings, as of April 1952, which my experience has had for me, and some of the bothersome questions which their absurdity raises. I will put each

idea or meaning in a separate lettered paragraph, not because they are in any particular logical order, but because each meaning is separately important to me.

(a) I may as well start with this one in view of the purposes of this conference. *My experience has been that I cannot teach another person how to teach.* To attempt it is for me, in the long run, futile.

(b) *It seems to me that anything that can be taught to another is relatively inconsequential, and has little or no significant influence on behavior* That sounds so ridiculous I can't help but question it at the same time that I present it.

(c) *I realize increasingly that I am only interested in learnings which significantly influence behavior.* Quite possibly this is simply a personal idiosyncrasy.

(d) *I have come to feel that the only learning which significantly influence behavior is self-discovered, self-appropriated learning.*

(e) *Such self-discovered learning, truth that has been personally appropriated and assimilated in experience, cannot be directly communicated to another.* As soon as an individual tries to communicate much experience directly, often with a quite natural enthusiasm, it becomes teaching, and its results are inconsequential. It was some relief recently to discover that Soren Kierkegaard, the Danish philosopher, had found this too, in his own experience, and stated it very clearly a century ago. It made it seem less absurd.

(f) *As a consequence of the above, I realize that I have lost interest in being a teacher.*

(g) When I try to teach, as I do sometimes, I am appalled by the results, which seem a little more than inconsequential, because sometimes the teaching appears to succeed. When this happens I find that the results are damaging. It seems to cause the individual to distrust his own experience, and to stifle significant learning.

Hence I have come to feel that the outcomes of teaching are either unimportant or hurtful.

(h) When I look back at the results of my past teaching, the real results seem the same—either damage was done, or nothing significant occurred. This is frankly troubling.

(i) As a consequence, *I realize that I am only interested in being a learner, preferably learning things that matter, that have some significant influence on my behavior.*

(j) *I find it very rewarding to learn, in groups, in relationship with one person as in therapy, or by myself.*

(k) *I find that one of the best, but most difficult ways for me to learn is to drop my own defensiveness, at least temporarily, and to try to understand the way in which his experience seems and feels to the other person.*

(l) *I find that another way of learning for me is to state my own uncertainties, to try to clarify my puzzlements, and thus get closer to the meaning that my experience actually seems to have.*

(m) This whole train of experiencing, and the meanings that I have thus far discovered in it, seem to have launched on a process which is both fascinating and at times a little frightening. *It seems to mean letting my experience carry me on, in a direction which appears to be forward, toward goals that I can but dimly define, as I try to understand at least the current meaning of that experience.* The sensation is that of floating with a complex stream of experience, with the fascinating possibility of trying to comprehend its ever changing complexity.

I am almost afraid I may seem to have gotten away from any discussion of learning, as well as teaching. Let me again introduce a practical note by saying that by themselves these interpretations of my own experience may sound queer and aberrant, but not particularly shocking. It is when I realize the *implications* that I shudder a bit at the distance I have come from the common sense world that everybody knows is right. I can best illustrate by saying that if the experience of others had been the same as mine, and if they had discovered similar meanings in it, many consequences would be implied.

(a) Such experience would imply that we would do away with teaching. People would get together if they wished to learn.

(b) We would do away with examinations. They measure only the inconsequential type of learning.

(c) The implication would be that we would do away with grades and credits for the same reason.

(d) We would do away with degrees as a measure of competence partly for the same reason. Another reason is that a degree marks an end or a conclusion of something and a learner is only interested in the continuing process of learning.

(e) It would imply doing away with the exposition of conclusions, for we would realize that no one learns significantly from conclusions.

I think I had better stop there. I do not want to become too fantastic. I want to know primarily whether anything in my inward thinking, as I have tried to describe it, speaks to anything in your experience of the classroom as you have lived it, and if so, what the meanings are that exist for you in *your* experience.

CARL R. ROGERS

FRONTIERS

Vacancy For Reason

AT precisely what period of life does the inner spirit of a human being begin to function? Is it at puberty? Or earlier? Or later? I do not know. For myself it must have been around the very early adolescent stage because, at about that time, I remember becoming sorely puzzled by the tinselly, illogical blasphemies forced down my youthful neck in the name of "religion." To hear a priest whining of a "Prince of Peace" (with impassioned exhortations to "follow him") during a service being held for the sole purpose of "blessing" a battleship (or war memorial) or kindred death-dealing instrument, where "peace" or "brotherly love" were completely impossible ingredients, made it obvious to me that something was badly wrong somewhere!

I suppose the commencement of trying to think things out for myself came gradually after that and had been going on for some time before events which I either took part in, or observed, forced me to full concentration. Prior to these events I had accepted the broad fact that Something—something superb and immeasurably beyond the conjecture of mere humanity—was responsible for the minute perfections of the myriad teeming species of life on this little Earth; and, equally, was responsible for the perfections of the universe, the galaxies, the stars and the planets. Beyond that point I had not gone.

I had certainly not troubled to delve into the beliefs and reactions towards each other of the many dogmas of the various countries of the world until I took over command of an Assault Bridging formation in Burma during the Japanese occupation of that country. This command was a very mixed bag (in terms of religious persuasions), being composed of Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Indian Christians, plus a few assorted faiths of smaller denominations. A quarrel blew up between two members of violently opposed religious thought and it was this particular incident which opened my mind to the realisation of the animalistic hatreds which dogmas can—and do—breed amongst the peoples. Anyway, the incident also brought home to me the vital fact that, to understand fully the undercurrents of hatred and intrigue which so obviously existed between the rival devotees, I must get

down to a study—an intensive study—of comparative religious thought. This I did.

On my return to Europe at the close of the Japanese war, I agreed to accept a position which involved dealings with some hundreds of thousands of Displaced Persons. I had accepted the position eagerly, thinking that I would discover amongst these unhappy people a closely united brotherhood of man—albeit united through common miseries and injustices. But I found no brotherhood even on a man-to-man basis! What I did find was either blazing national hatreds (Ukrainian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Polish) or "religious" hatreds (Catholic v. Protestant). Sometimes they didn't "blaze," but went underground, so that one could work his poisonous intrigues against the other. But whether open or underground, I found the same hatreds—exactly the same in essence—amongst these D.P.s as I had found amongst their opposite numbers in the Far East. More, these European hatreds were usually aided and abetted by men of religion, the priests, ministers, pastors, etc. The difference here was that while in the Far East religious conceptions differed widely (according to modern concept) in dogma and creed, in Europe the various sects ostensibly followed the same leader. Once again, something was wrong. While there could be some understanding—some excuse for—the differences of opinion between the Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, Jains, Buddhists, etc., there could be no excuse for the European Christians whose one leader—the "Prince of Peace"—seemed on factual observation to be regarded by them as merely a happy excuse for open warfare between the rival sects.

It was then I realized that while in a million temples, mosques, cathedrals, pagodas, chapels, synagogues and churches, the peoples of the Earth cried for help, they were, at the same time, ignoring the very help for which they craved and which was lying right out in the open. It was ready for immediate use, if they but cared to see it—the Right to Reason, the Right of Mankind to negate the Jungle Way of Life and the Right to Query the Law of Creation itself. In other words, I saw the urgent, desperate need for a wisdom Religion—a religion in which Science could (indeed must) play its long overdue part by factually pointing out that all the "wonders" claimed by mankind as "invented by him" are, instead, minute expressions of

the ever present laws of creation to be understood by reason.

Science must come into it, if only for the fact that the Earth's teeming millions of human beings would give ready ear to a scientist, while they would laugh in the face of an idealist's intuitions. The first vital step is a new, infinitely more reverential acceptance and understanding of Creation. From this would grow the realisation that, out of some 250,000,000 different species of life (plant, fungi, insect, reptile, water life, air life, land life) only mankind has the gift to reason and the capacity to query the laws of creation. Only mankind has the right to negate the jungle way of life; all other species must live in accordance with the laws ordained for their particular species. All have their natural habitats, their natural prey and their natural enemies. A turtle evinces no desire to suddenly gallop around like a gazelle, nor does an elephant suddenly decide to swing from tree to tree by means of tail or trunk! But mankind, earthbound in terms of animal birth and species, not only flies above the earth to the limits of the stratosphere (and now sends satellites beyond that limit), but also descends into the depths of the oceans. Science points the way to universal Brotherhood, but the choice is left to mankind—to discover the great laws and work with them toward either good or evil. To date, his choice has been only too obvious, for he has chosen the path of mechanical animalism. True, at one period mankind had some excuse. At that period he was living in a cave and fighting the animals for his very existence. He might be forgiven his animalistic outlook then. Now he can no longer be forgiven it. Even less can he be forgiven the cold, calculated alliance of his sciences with the jungle way of life.

But, to get this knowledge, this realisation, across to the great masses of modern humans is going to be a very difficult job. Arrayed against the forces of reason are forces of evil—to date unquestioningly accepted as those of *good*—the established churches and big business. Pretending otherwise, they work TOGETHER. Their tools are channels of propaganda available to them by means of newspapers, magazines, television, radio and films. It takes no master brain to realise what use these agencies can make of such forces. They are hardly going to use them to further a Brotherhood of Man. But worse is coming. Science is on the eve of presenting her materialistic bosses with

still greater powers of propaganda: mass hypnotism by means of sound, and possibly *inaudible* vibrations. Another unseen ally materialists have had, from the days of pre-history, it may be, but very certainly from the dawn of the Age of Science. Its name is Apathy. Generations have considered it "smart" either to follow blindly the "faiths" they have been taught or, as a later alternative, to adopt the attitude of "we couldn't care less." Either attitude of mind creates an ideal atmosphere for "mind conditioning" by the unscrupulous. Given the continuance of apathy, plus the old and tried methods of propaganda, plus the still newer offerings of science, and the result will surely be more animalism—and a completely apathetic animalism at that.

As things stand, the voices of reason can easily be silenced by those who control the channels of communication: by innuendo, by smear-talk, by "impassioned" ecclesiastical harangue, by ribaldry, by constant repetition of false statement or by downright lying—all these methods, and more, are readily available in the controlled press, radio, television, and the rest. The thinkers are easily singled out and systematically "liquidated," as witness what happened in a "civilized" country—Germany—during the Nazi days.

There can be only one answer to the urgent problems now confronting mankind, and that is the gradual establishment of a Wisdom Religion. Then, with Science as an ally, pointing the way to Reason and the right to query, then only will mankind begin to form the basis of that upward climb which can never be halted.

J. W. GRAY

Glasgow, Scotland