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A TENDER HOPE

NOT far-beneath the surface of a great deal of contemporary expression are to be discerned the protean symptoms of a deep-seated longing—often put in guarded terms of expectation or anticipation—for radical changes in the affairs of men. It is difficult to find words to characterize what is for some a simple millenarian hope of some kind of "second coming," for others an irresistible compulsion to put together the elements of a new, universal religion. While the dreams of the utopian political movements have lost their credibility for most of the people in the technologically advanced societies, there are now hundreds of millions of others whose lack of experience of "modern progress," except as a distant glow on the horizons of other men's lives, makes them vulnerable to the magical promise of industrial power. In the latter case, it is not so much a question of whether the longings are identified with illusory forms of satisfaction; cherishing illusions is not the exclusive prerogative of peoples who happen to lack a particular form of historical experience; the point, rather, is that the sense of imminent change has become virtually universal, however much the vision of the new dispensation varies according to the deep-felt needs of population groups and individuals. Nor are the anticipations and voiced demands of groups in the underdeveloped countries necessarily a true picture of what they feel in their hearts. These people are using a vocabulary—the coarse symbols of material progress in the West—that they did not evolve for themselves, but took over rather suddenly during an acculturating "European" education, or picked up haphazardly from the foreign press, as children gather clots of undigested meanings from what they hear on the streets.

If we go to the opposite extreme of psychological attitudes—to what appears as the ultimate disenchantment of the Theatre of the Absurd—we find implicit in this sophisticated expression of modern drama a secret quest, and even a voiceless hope, which, as Shelley said, "creates from its own wreck the thing it contemplates." The dramatists of the Absurd are bitter iconoclasts almost to a man, yet their denials have a human purpose. As Martin Esslin says in his book on their work:

> In expressing the tragic sense of loss at the disappearance of ultimate certainties the Theatre of the Absurd, by a strange paradox, is also a symptom of what probably comes nearest to being a genuine religious quest in our age: an effort, however timid and tentative, to sing, to laugh, to weep—and to growl—if not in praise of God (whose name, in Adamov's phrase, has for so long been degraded by usage that it has lost its meaning), at least in search of a dimension of the Ineffable; an effort to make man aware of the ultimate realities of his condition, to instill in him again the lost sense of cosmic wonder and primeval anguish, to shock him out of an existence that has become trite, mechanical, complacent, and deprived of the dignity that comes of awareness. For God is dead, above all, to the masses who live from day to day and have lost all contact with the basic facts—and mysteries—of the human condition with which, in former times they were kept in touch through the living ritual of their religion, which made them parts of a real community and not just atoms in an atomized society.

It is easy to charge these and other iconoclasts with having nothing "positive" to say, but what this comment overlooks is the difficulty, today, of saying anything positive which reaches beyond platitude or is more than a revival of some already exposed illusion. A stern intellectual honesty, you could say, compels numerous artist-critics to be wary of all panaceas and to communicate their own desperation in a way that will help others to recognize the extreme situation of modern man. As Alfred Reynolds, defending

skepticism and "pessimism," said last year in the *London Letter* (March-April, 1963):

> In the stories of Till Eulenspiegel we read about people who built a house but forgot to provide it with windows. When they noticed the omission, they filled sacks with air and light to carry these into the house to dispel dankness and darkness.
>
> Those who point out that this cannot be done, and that windows are needed to let in light and air, are the cranks. The ones who carry the sacks, are the realists.

The present period of "transition" is to be distinguished from comparable epochs in the past by the elusive, even the *subjective,* nature of the causes of overtaking disaster. During the eighteenth century, in contrast, men of vision had no trouble in deciding what had to be done. The political relations of men and the order of society had to be redefined according to their Dream. The practical steps that became necessary—putting down the dogmas and social arrangements of the Old Regime, creating the constitutional requirements of political self-determination, organizing and fighting the revolutions which would turn these aims into realities—added substance to the Dream. It was then possible for idealists of far-reaching influence to speak of the coming changes with particularity. In his *Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution,* Richard Price wrote in 1784: "I see the revolution in favor of universal liberty which has taken place in America;—A revolution which opens up a new prospect in human affairs, and begins a new era in the history of mankind." He saw in the new country in the Western hemisphere "the foundation there of an empire which may be the seat of liberty, science, and virtue, and from whence there is reason to hope these sacred blessings will spread, till they become universal and the time arrives when kings and priests shall have no more power to oppress." Price was indeed "affirmative," and prophetic as well. Other portions of his essay bespeak a vision in terms that have since become by-words of all progressive thought. In his eyes, the political revolution was only the means to other objectives upon which the advance of all mankind would be based. Central among these aims was the provision of "*fundamental* but impartial inquiry," of which he said:

> In order to introduce and perpetuate it, and at the same time to give it the greatest effect on the improvement of the world, nothing is more necessary than the establishment of a wise and liberal plan of EDUCATION. It is impossible to properly represent the importance of this. So much is left by the author of nature to depend on the turn given to the mind in early life and the impressions then made, that I have thought there may be a *secret* remaining to be discovered in education, which will cause future generations to grow up virtuous and happy, and accelerate human improvement to a greater degree than can at present be imagined. . . .
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> The end of education is to direct the powers of mind in unfolding themselves; and to assist in gaining their just bent and force. And, in order to do this, its business should be to teach *how* to think, rather than *what* to think; or to lead into the best way of searching for truth, rather than to instruct in truth itself. . . . Education ought to be an initiation into candour, rather than into any systems of faith; and . . . it should form the habit of cool and patient investigation, rather than an attachment to any opinions. . . .

The familiarity of these high goals obliges us to note that while all the conditions which were supposed to lead to their realization have been achieved, the goals have not. The "secret" to be discovered in education is still hidden, the difference being only that we now know, or ought to know, that the manipulation of the external environment, and even the establishment of the forms of political freedom, are not enough to disclose it. Realizing this, and recognizing, also, the continuing importance of the objectives declared by Richard Price, we find ourselves reduced to a bankruptcy of means. We have no great "plan," such as the philosophers of the eighteenth century were able to outline, and so we remain in the role of acute and increasingly anxious diagnosticians.

It is not, however, the political philosophers, today, who are the diagnosticians, but the psychologists, the social psychologists, and the humanistic essayists, and all those who feel deeply the loss of both community and humanity in our "atomized society." The list of critics is a long one, including the most illustrious thinkers of the present and immediate past. You can go back into the nineteenth century to begin it, starting with men like Tolstoy, Heine, and Amiel, and end with contemporaries such as Erich Kahler, Robert M. Hutchins, Lewis Mumford, Erich Fromm, David Riesman, A. H. Maslow, Carl Rogers, and many others. The indictment these men make is of a society which submits voluntarily to dehumanizing patterns of behavior and seeks vain remedies for the effects of this behavior in wars and opiates. Unlike the enviable simplicity of the eighteenth century, today's scene reveals no objective "enemy," no identifiable evil power to put down. The fault—all-pervasive, insidious—supported by endless shallow rationalizations, lies in ourselves. Seeking scapegoats does not help, and the failure to locate them only increases the fury of the quest.

There is a sense in which the accumulated works of these clear-eyed men have created a full-dress "psychoanalytical" record of our past in self-destroying attitudes and actions. It is a fine-grained and quite complete portrait of modern man—the man who feels the pain of his condition, and who is just now beginning to realize that, for all the similarities of this historical situation to other epochs, the present is unique in one overwhelming important respect: *Despite his millennialist longings, his feeling of extraordinary need, his intuition of standing at some great threshold of historical change, there is little or no evidence that the "forces of history" are conspiring to give him assistance.* Indeed, what evidence is available seems to have an opposite meaning.

In the past, great changes have always come as a collaboration of men and events—between men with vision and events which provided opportunities for action in the direction of fulfillment of the vision.

Not so today. It is no accident that the Existentialists' reading of the universe can find no rational home in it for man. The world, they insist, is stone cold and indifferent to human welfare. This conclusion, its bleak metaphysic aside, is surely a way of giving definition to the crisis—or the confrontation—of the present. To the Nietzschean dictum, God is dead, has been added a twentieth-century tag—the world is dead, too.

Passing by the possibilities in the idea that these are precisely the findings of the scientific methodology that has dominated modern thought for three hundred years, we may say that never have human beings been thrown back on themselves with such force—with so much objective "knowledge" in their possession, yet at the same time afflicted by so much subjective weakness.

Is there, then, any possible interpretation of this situation, other than unqualified failure?

Common sense would suggest that help can come only from looking at our situation with different eyes, or from another stance. And this means looking differently at ourselves. Not unnaturally, we return to our best diagnosticians, the psychologists, and, continuing the analogy, we take from Erich Fromm once more the idea of the *therapeutic leap.* Somehow, the individual who is down, these days, must find in himself the strength to get up. There are moments in the life of every man when even the bare expectation of help from the outside will unfit him for what he must do. When he *feels* this, and acknowledges its truth to himself, health miraculously comes to him—not strength, immunity from repeated failure, but health, which is the seed of every human victory. This "health"—call it by any name—must remain without definition, since it becomes what it is through individual discovery and identification.

Can societies take a "therapeutic leap"? One wonders. Are there devices whereby an *esprit de corps* can be generated in small groups? Would the rule still hold, that nuclei of extraordinary individuals can lend both inspiration and shape to the determination of large numbers of men, as has happened before in history?

The reading of history as epic would suggest that this may still be possible. But epic action has nearly always been born in the matrix of myth, according to the cyclic intervention of heroes and avatars. The heroes of the present, apparently, will have to be self-born, makers of their own myths and visions. Every man his own Prometheus is now the rule.

In general, it seems that such final questions will have to remain unanswered until we develop a language which comprehends the immediacy of self-determining human consciousness. We must not use the terms of diagnosis, which give only an account of our circumstances, not of ourselves. A point is reached where endless talk about "circumstances" is weakening. Because people talk too much about circumstances and the confinements imposed by "facts," they do not understand a free man even when he speaks aloud. There may be a baby-talk of freedom which the maturity of men who remain in bondage is unable to recognize at all.

We know a great deal about the consequences of conditioning. There are whole libraries of the details of how people who are controlled by their surroundings respond to the various "controls." As yet, there are not even primers about men who are really free; or, perhaps, we have a considerable literature on the subject, but find it written in a cipher of past symbolisms that we cannot or will not translate. It seems likely that modern man will never learn to read that cipher without first taking the therapeutic leap.

What is wanted is the beginnings of a new literature of human freedom—a literature written by those who have already taken the leap and who are able to give articulate expression to their feelings and ideas in this new stance. It does not have to be a big literature—it takes very little life to triumph over a heavy body of dead material. It takes only a few seeds to fill a field with growing plants. And we must not forget the young, who each year suffer the blight of the defeats and listlessness of their parents. There are always a few in each generation who look and look for the air of freedom before they finally give up in disgust.

This is not the sort of discussion which ought to be prolonged. It depends for its value or acceptance upon the secret wonderings of the reader. And it takes more skill than is possessed by the present writer to amplify such tender and subtle hopes. But if there should be a little of the breath of life in them, they cannot help but grow.

REVIEW
AUTHORITY

ONCE in a while, not often nowadays, a book treating the larger issues in political philosophy somehow gets written and published. Such a book, by its very nature and rarity, is seldom anticipated and not always welcomed. Its reception is defined, we may say, just by the degree of its forthrightness in addressing *the human condition as such.* It avoids mere re-endorsement of "democratic institutions," current "ameliorist solutions," popular East-versus-West stereotypes. Instead, it turns to areas in which individuals, rather than parties, lobbies, or protest groups, can accomplish their most fruitful thinking and acting about the political dimensions of their existence. It addresses itself, in short, to readers who are (if only in process) combinations of Aristotle's "Political Animal" and Emerson's "Man Thinking."

This review deals with such a book. It comes from the series *Nomos,* the annual publication of the American Society of Political and Legal Philosophy, under the general editorship of Carl J. Friedrich. *Nomos I,* or *Authority* (Liberal Arts Press, $5.00), gathers thirteen studies on the nature of authority in general, in historical perspective, and in socio-political perspective. The contrasting viewpoints of these studies reflect very different philosophical commitments; yet, as Friedrich points out, there is a common core of concern here which the interested reader will probably identify readily.

In "An Exploration of the Nature of Authority," Charles W. Hendel finds persistent ambiguities in the early American formula of *the people* as the "source of authority." Because of these ambiguities, a "redetermination" of where the authority of the people lies and who is properly acting or speaking in their name is "always likely to become a problem of the day":

> What this means is that "the people" is not merely a substitution for the "sovereign" of the older European tradition, and further that sovereignty in a democratic society is a legendary survival. The sovereignty of the states is an ancient myth resurrected for other than either legal or peace-making reasons. The doctrine "all authority derives from the people" carries with it the consequence, then, that the original authority is indeterminate, not absolutely fixed on anything, and that it is necessary in every generation, or whenever serious issues arise, to redetermine and redefine what the relevant authority is and in which body it is vested. Authority never settles anything really important, because when matters are very important, we have to settle the authority itself which is to function in the case.

Whereas Hendel tackles one set of ambiguities involved in appealing to "the people" as authority, Carl J. Friedrich, in his study, "Authority, Reason, and Discretion," finds another set of ambiguities more significant. These arise "in common usage [where] authority is often confused with power or taken to be a synonym of power." They give rise to a variety of interpretations of authority in every area of human life. Consequently, "authority" has been alternately praised and condemned, often by the same persons. In light of these confusions, can we formulate *any* tenable interpretation of authority? Friedrich believes that we can, but only if we understand the need for distinguishing authority from power. Authority, as he distinguishes it, is a quality of *communications* rather than persons; it shows a particular kind of relationship to reason and reasoning. Certain communications, whether expressed as opinions, suggestions, or commands, "have authority" not because they are necessarily demonstrated through formal reasoning, but because "they possess the *potentiality of reasoned elaboration*—they are 'worthy of acceptance'." Furthermore, claims Friedrich, the capacity to communicate authoritatively has a vital relation to the phenomena of power. As such, it involves the practice (and the genuine willingness to let others practice) "discretion"—the attitude of making responsible choices in accordance with the situation.

In "Authority, Values, and Policy," Herbert J. Spiro extends Friedrich's approach to authority. He analyzes authority both in terms of its *status,* as providing reasons for the acceptance of policy, and of its *goals,* as elaborating the values towards which decisions are directed. One aspect of Spiro's analysis which may especially interest MANAS readers is his account of "individualism" and

"rationalism" as twin growths of the belief that the individual is largely responsible for his own fate. In our time, however, this belief is constantly challenged. The individual sees that much of what happens to him and much of what he wants to make of himself involves the fate of the groups to which he belongs, especially the nation. Spiro therefore advises the student of politics, who often looks for relatively stable patterns underlying unstable policies and institutions, to study values, policy-making, and authority together—not as isolated phenomena.

In "Authority and the Law," Jerome Hall considers authority as "a relational idea" and "an operative fact" in certain legal contexts. One of these is the authority of courts, usually called jurisdiction. On this topic Hall makes some penetrating remarks concerning Chief Justice Holmes and the criticism called forth by his statement "the foundation of jurisdiction is physical power." Another context is the authority of legal precedent. On this Hall points out that since it is always possible to *appear* to be following precedent by distinguishing facts, judges are not legally bound to obey the law; their only obligation is a moral one.

In "Authority and the Free Society," Frank H. Knight cites instances from many fields to show that "Men both hate authority and love it, in their own possession and in that of others; they often appeal to any convenient and plausible authority to evade responsibility." Knight's insistence that society acts only through personal agents balances Spiro's emphasis on "group fate" as the prime determiner of the individual's opportunities to "make good." His remarks on the economic concept of the "ideal" market, though brief, may provoke some readers to reconsider their views on the Common Market. Suffice it to say, on this and other topics Knight takes up, that such readers will probably find it difficult to grant that the transition from a preliberal to a liberal society has really been accomplished in America. We are still tied to ancestral myths. We have merely rebaptized some of our favorites as "liberalism."

In "What Was Authority?" Hannah Arendt, with her usual acuteness, probes "a constant, ever-widening and deepening crisis of authority." She begins with an account of the earliest Greek attempts to define authority—one of the best accounts of this sort which this reviewer has come across. She explains that since authority always demands obedience, it is commonly mistaken for some sort of power or violence. She goes on to show how a familiar misunderstanding arises from the frequent antithesis of authority and freedom. This antithesis, says Dr. Arendt, gives rise to "the liberal theory" postulating that each loss of authority is compensated by a newly won measure of freedom. But, she states as a "simple fact" (which, let us hope, will become more and more recognized), "for some time now, we have been living in a world where progressive loss of authority is accompanied by at least an equal threat to freedom." Consequently, if we examine the political concepts of freedom and authority in the classical world, we should expect to find them "so intimately interconnected and dependent upon each other that the validity and understanding of the idea of freedom become gravely compromised once the validity of authority has been lost." And under Dr. Arendt's probing analysis, that is just what we do find.

In "Knowledge, Tradition, and Authority: A Note on the American Experience," Norman Jacobson goes beyond the implied restriction of his title. What he gives us is a short survey-history of political theory in the West viewed as the history of conflicting claims to the exercise of political authority. He makes special applications of this view to America during the Colonial, Revolutionary, and Early National periods. But his conclusion, with its citation from Francis Bacon's *Novum Organum* ("For rightly is truth called the daughter of time, not of authority") is really trans-national, and if its insights governed the councils—and the counsels—of the United Nations, there is no telling what that august body might accomplish.

In "Authority and Its Critics," George E. Gordon Catlin concentrates on distinguishing the way the term "authority" enters discussions on the level of political science and on the level of political philosophy. In political science, Catlin contends, the first requirement for profitable discussion is the choice of neutral, or of what Bentham calls

"descriptive," terms, without "evocative," moralistic, or evaluative "loads" or overtones. For the purposes of political science, then, "authority," like "freedom," is in itself neither good nor bad. Authority, says Catlin, is approved power; it is when we ask the questions *Who approves it?* and *For what purpose?* and settle upon what are for us satisfactory answers that the evaluative overtones come in. In political philosophy, on the other hand, the key questions are *What authorities do we recognize? What authority do we support most?* and *What authority should we support most?* On such questions political philosophers must and do differ. For as Catlin wryly remarks, in "political philosophy . . . it is improbable that we shall be able to prove any conclusions."

In "Authority, Progress, and Colonialism," Wolfgang H. Kraus traces two developments in "the growing quandary of legitimate traditional authority" since the eighteenth century movement known as the Enlightenment. One development, in the realm of government practice, involves the increasing institutionalization of "personal authority." The other, in the realm of political ideas, relates to certain aspects of the doctrine of "progress" which has evolved since (and largely as a result of) the Enlightenment. Most of what Kraus has to say about these developments is not new and, as a matter of fact, has probably been said more cogently by Bertrand de Jouvenel in his *Of Sovereignty: An Inquiry into the Political Good* (University of Chicago Press). Kraus's main contribution, however, is an application of the insights of de Jouvenel and others to problems of Asian and African colonization. The question his study attempts to answer is: Can a "paternal authority" exercised at a distance through alien officials be informed by the people's needs?

In "Authority: The Efficient Imperative," Bertrand de Jouvenel states: "The scope of the present paper is quite modest: it is merely to propose a definition of the term 'authority'." He develops his definition through a conception of *the efficient imperative,* a "bargaining relationship" of bidding and complying. As he argues for this conception of authority, he presents accounts of "derived authority," "conservatism," "liberalism," and "social conscience." These accounts cannot be adequately summarized without injustice to de Jouvenel's theory. However, one statement should be quoted:

> During the last few years we have had an enormous volume of discussion on the theme "Authority and the Individual," sometimes stated as "Authority and Freedom." I submit that the problem is wrongly stated. I have yet to meet the individual who moves freely on a field where the only prohibited areas and mandatory paths are those traced by the state—the individual who, but for these public restrictions runs his life entirely by a continual process of bilateral bargaining with his fellows. The individual whom I can see is institution-ridden and institution-supported. The whole social field is built over with structures of various natures, offering goods, services positions, and posting up the conditions on which they will deliver these goods or confer these positions; and with no one of these structures can the individual haggle: it is not for him to discuss the conditions of his joining either the staff of General Motors or the Union of Automobile Workers. This is a universe of posted prices, in the most general meaning of the word "price." And it is highly doubtful whether any other kind of social universe can exist.

In "The Perception of Authority and Political Change," David Easton discusses one aspect of the relation between political authorities and the other members of a political system. He concerns himself throughout with describing the processes that produce, if not a direct transformation in a political system, at least a state of readiness among the members to accept, promote, or support change. Easton is particularly concerned with "images of authority." But he distinguishes his classification of "images" from the familiar threefold typology originally presented by Max Weber. In doing this, Easton designates the way in which the members of a political system do in fact view the authorities and related properties as the "perceived image." The way in which the members think the authorities ought to be organized, to act, and to be limited in the exercise of power he calls the "expected image." On the basis of this classification, he works out a method for "synthesizing and isolating the potential effects of these multiple factors [i.e., innovations in technology, economy, culture, social structure and the like] upon changes within a political system."

In "Authority, Legitimation, and Political Action," Talcott Parsons concentrates on certain aspects of the problem of authority which lie on the borderline between sociology and political science. Part of his study concerns how the values of a common culture are shared by the members, internalized in their personalities, and institutionalized in the social structure. A second part concerns the ways in which values are involved with the more differentiated social structure through certain institutions (especially schools, courts, and labor unions) which regulate what Parsons calls "the main different relationship complexes of the society." A third part concerns the ways in which a social system is organized for the formulation and implementation of effective group action toward collective or "public" goals—what is usually thought of as the *political* aspects of social organization.

In "Authority in Primitive Societies," E. Adamson Hoebel balances Parsons' previous sociological emphasis with an anthropological bent. Strongly influenced by Malinowski's observations on the Trobriand Islanders, Hoebel emphasizes the recurrent need of social groups to fix upon a limited number of permissible patterns for behavior. By this "imperative of selection," the groups thereupon arbitrarily rule out and suppress a much larger range of possible patterns of behavior, so far as group membership is concerned.

Many contributors to *Authority* stress how frequently authority is confused with power. It should be clear, on several grounds, that authority and power cannot properly be identified. There is no simple one-to-one correspondence here. Nevertheless, as some of these same contributors go on to explain, authority and power *are* closely associated; though as to the exact nature of this association they differ, understandably enough, in their accounts. This leads us to ask: If authority is in some way the exercise or evoking of power, then how much do we really know about the retroactive effects of such power upon the authority? In trying to answer this, we need not assume with Lord Acton that all power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. What we need to see is that power does work its own changes for good or ill upon its exercisers and evokers, that these changes can eventually become known both to them and to us, and that this knowledge (which may never be codified in any political philosophy) is immensely valuable to all men—just because it forms an important part of *self*-knowledge.

That "knowledge is power" is a truism. But that the possession of power can bring a kind of knowledge is also true. It tends to be a neglected truth in our time. We cannot neglect it forever. Our situation as Americans will not let us. The ghosts of Gandhi and John F. Kennedy will not let us. What we need, then, as citizens of this century, is to inscribe a reminder on our watch-dials. *Power, like weakness, brings a knowledge of limits.* For to experience the using or withholding of power, to observe its effects upon and within others, to recognize its inevitable recoil upon the user so that it transforms him, gradually or suddenly, to *its chief effect*—this, too, is knowledge: saddening perhaps, even embittering sometimes, but surely not the least part of a hard-won wisdom. It qualifies our own power. It weakens nothing worth having. It allows us to regret less so that we may respect—yes, and even love—more.

RALPH S. POMEROY

Davis, California

COMMENTARY
ALBANY NEEDS ANOTHER LIBRARY

[MANAS has received an appeal for help from Albany, Georgia—one which we print here entire. It is about the right length for an editorial, and we can hardly improve upon the content.]

ALBANY, Georgia, a cotton, peanut, and pecan center, has a population of 56,000. Of this number, 30,000 are Negroes. There is one large library downtown—the white library. Until last year Negroes were prohibited from using it. After a court order, Negroes were admitted, but chairs and tables were removed. The few Negroes who have worked up the courage to try to obtain entrance often discover that the library is "just out of cards."

In the Negro ghetto a one-room library exists. Many of the shelves are bare. The few books are cast-offs from the white library, too soiled, dog-eared, and out of date for the whites to use.

The Negro grammar schools suffer under the same disability. Old textbooks are worn to a point where they are no longer readable, and books for reference and pleasure are negligible.

At this time a book drive is under way to build a decent library which all members of the community can use without fear of harassment. Through a very generous gift, several hundred volumes of a private library have been donated. A local Albany woman with a master's degree in Library Science has volunteered her time to serve as librarian. A building has been donated and many people in the community have volunteered their time to prepare the facilities for use as a library, despite the fact that most of these people earn under $15.00 a week, eked out in the cotton fields or working as a domestic from sunrise to sunset, seven days a week.

Northern help at this juncture is imperative. There are no books suitable for children in this library and they are needed desperately. Library supplies will also be necessary, book pockets, glue, book jackets, stamps, etc. Please share the educational experiences you are providing in your area with the children of Southwest Georgia. If you would be willing to donate a small portion of your library, even a few books, it will help to brighten and broaden the lives of these children.

Contributions in books, material, and money should go to Mrs. Eliza Jackson, P.O. Box 1641, Albany, Georgia.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
CREATIVITY IN AN UNPREPARED ATMOSPHERE

[The "Children" articles for Aug. 12 and Aug. 26, contributed by William Mathes, were concerned with the pretentious nonsense in the sales promotional literature of a toy manufacturer. These discussions brought a response from a mother who understands exactly what Mr. Mathes was talking about.]

IF anyone cared to look into our youngest children's room. I'm afraid he would wonder, "What do they play with?" Outside of books and odds and ends and a few cloth dolls I once made them, there are no so-called "creative playthings."

Our smallest, who is eight years old, had to move out of his older brothers' room when he decided to build an office with desk like mine at one end of the room. This consists of a plywood board on one side of an old work bench. Between the wall and the plywood he has made a swinging door which houses some shelves of his rock collection, and bits and pieces of anything that seemed desirable, collected from our trash heap. He has a glass collection aping the one I have, which consists of a small kerosene lamp with a green glass bottom, bought at a rummage sale for 35 cents, a ruby colored glass vase, and other oddments. A Japanese lantern hangs over the shelf.

About two weeks ago this same child brought home a bedraggled baby sparrow that had fallen out of a nest and down a steep embankment. I wondered what on earth to do with it, it was so young. A neighbor girl suggested an eyedropper and milk. So we all started in a round of eye-dropping about every half hour throughout the day. Milk didn't seem to be quite the thing, but we couldn't figure out any other item that would get down its throat. The first few days we spent all our time moving the bird's box outside if the cat came in, and inside when the cat went out. One day the bird hopped up on the rim of the box, another day he managed to get to the floor. Finally one day we found him clear across the room sitting on the tail of a piece of sculpture, which was a bird, and then he hopped to a ceramic hippo's back and on along a ledge until he could reach the window sill. We felt he was making progress. We made a fake worm out of ham and he gobbled it up; another day he pecked at millet seed on the floor. As he got stronger, he made more peeps and noise. He followed us across the room sometimes.

I would like to say that this story has a happy ending, but it doesn't. After about ten days, one evening we put him to bed with a cardboard box over him, and apparently it caught on something, so that there was a space left. During the night the bird tried to get out from under the box, but it fell on its neck and the next morning we found him dead. Brandon cried for about two hours. Although he had buried our two gold fish when they died of old age after seven years, he would not bury the bird.

During the summer we had a relative's child visit us. She was soon homesick. She missed her familiar diversions and did not respond to games made up on the spur of the moment. Monopoly seemed to be her favorite. She cried to see television one night. She was a puzzle to our children . . . I think for the first time they didn't feel deprived by not having TV—not after they witnessed a tantrum by their guest when she couldn't see it.

Since we have eight acres of land and acres of trees, every summer the kids build a fort, as they call it, or tree house. All depends on what book they have been reading. *Swiss Family Robinson* brought about tree houses, *Treasure Island,* a fort.

It is interesting to see the progress. Mostly the fun is in the building. There are abandoned projects all over our place Once a structure is complete the fun seems to be gone, and another one is conceived. This year three of the little ones around here (all about eight years old) struggled

the whole day getting some old tossed-out celotex insulation strips (cut off from a huge piece and left in our dump) up the hill to their new location for a fort.

Two or three times, one or the other child came down to ask me for old sheets or anything big and like a curtain. I found an old oilcloth that delighted them. Prior to this activity a whole week had passed in digging a hole . . . a lot of giggles and jokes about their outside toilet. Remarks about toilet seats, etc. But once they got on to the house, the toilet was abandoned and only the hole was left as evidence of their digging.

The house on the hill has grown to a two-story one and talk is that now they will remove the bottom floor, leaving the upstairs to be a true tree house. Great excitement was created the day my husband decided it was time to go to the lumber mill with the youngest and get some wood for the project. The two old men who run the mill added a number of boards free for the fort. It was raining when they returned and all the wood had to be put in our garage.

The next morning I heard considerable noise and looked out to find that all the kids in the neighborhood had decided to "relay" the wood up the hill, to get it there sooner with less work for each one. I haven't been up to see the results since then but I have heard hammering and sawing at a real clip. The arrangement of the boards was interesting to begin with. It was done in a triangle, as there were three good-sized trees, very straight and grouped together. The boards were nailed between the three so that the house was rigid. On one side were two slender trees which became a lookout tower, and from the top a silk hanky hung on a stick. Apologies were made for borrowing a window from a pile where we had stored extra material . . . the kids had been scolded once before for using all the extra windows and breaking a few in one of their projects, so this time they quietly decided that possibly using one would be okay.

What this all amounts to is basic freedom. When it is allowed, the children find their own creative playthings. They will make them from bits and pieces of scraps and so-called junk and have a wonderful time doing it.

In our rush to be neat, clean, and sanitary, we have forgotten what fun a dump heap can be, and what dreams we can spin with a piece of rag and a few sticks.

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FRONTIERS

Aesthetic Experiences

[The late Andras Angyal, M.D., Ph.D., made a record of these observations during the summer of 1949. The beginning is indistinct. At the recommendation of Dr. A. H. Maslow, a transcription was published in the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* for the Fall of 1962, and it is here reprinted by permission of the editors.

Dr. Angyal was author of *Foundations for a Science of Personality,* which appeared in 1941, and was resident director of research at the Worcester State Hospital, Worcester, Mass. He wrote various papers on neurosis and showed an interest in the converging lines of psychotherapy and religion. The extraordinary combination, here, of the qualities of reverie and objective description and evaluation shows that there is no incompatibility between the riches of the subjective life and the scientific spirit.—Editors.]

. . . This period was characterized by an increased esthetic sensitivity. Even the most common objects were endowed with an unsuspected beauty; it was as if they were seen for the first time, as if they had been never *really* seen before; one was constantly amazed at the beauty that surrounds one. These perceptions had the immediacy and depth of emotional experiences but at the same time they were easily translatable into thought. This intellectual translation did not disturb or diminish the feeling: on the contrary it increased its value and depth. The "translation" developed easily and naturally and appeared to be a true expression of what the thing really was, a plain straightforward statement about its nature. This mode of perceiving and conceiving the object was truer, more accurate and more complete than the familiar everyday one; it had the characteristic of wholeness and added to the richness of the object, encompassing also its relationships to other objects or to human beings.

Sometimes the enrichment of the object was due to the addition of a new sensory experience. For example, a silver vase seen in a shop window exercised a great æsthetic appeal not only because of its optical features, its pleasing outline, but also because of the gracious distribution of weight in its parts; this enriched perception was felt to be a new and precious experience. Similarly the perception of a heavy arch of a Romanesque building included not only the shape of its curvature, but also its particular distribution of weight. In a Gothic building, the diminishing weight in the arch appeared as a pointer upward, towards infinity.

Not only new sensory qualities but many other aspects are added to the meaning of the object in the æsthetic experience. The object may be seen as existing not in the present moment alone: its present existence is embedded in its history from the time it came into being and it includes its anticipated future. Within the present itself, larger, more massive and coherent parts of an object or a scene are perceived. An avenue is seen not as this sidewalk and that sidewalk, pavement, cars, single trees, but as a whole, as a unit. The perception of a tree includes also the volume of air between its branches; although I had possessed theoretical knowledge of the perception of space, it was actually only during this period that I started vividly noticing space and perceiving its color. In other instances the outstanding feature of the æsthetic perception is the object's relationship to its surroundings. In the state of confusion the world appears in fragments and is impoverished in meaning: it seems to be no more than a heap of rubbish. In the experiences I am here describing the world is a cosmos: order and meaning are perceived in the object and its surroundings. In such a perception the object is a pointer towards the cosmos, and thus this type of esthetic experience naturally tends to transcend itself: it transforms itself into religious feeling.

These experiences have a holistic character also from another point of view: they are not segmented and isolated but affect all of one's thoughts, feelings and actions. Petty feelings and motives do not enter one's mind as long as the experience lasts, and mean actions are inconceivable. All of one's feelings and thoughts, not only those referring to the original object of

the experience, acquire clarity and definiteness; whatever one's attention is directed to appears distinct and clear-cut, is in focus.

Some of the esthetic experiences are based on a symbolic meaning. One looks out of the window and sees some dirty melting snow on the ground with some colored reflections in the puddles. This is not ordinarily an æsthetic experience but it can be: the reflections from the red stone building may appear very beautiful. The thought that follows is that the house reflects itself in the ground, one object is contained in the other; in the world's order everything is interrelated, everything is contained in something else, no existence is separate from the others.

Whenever these experiences were formulated in thought they impressed me as being expressions not of some exaggerated or sentimental ideas, but just of plain truth. Æsthetic experiences are often described as intoxicating; this may be correct in many cases, but the particular kind of experiences I have in mind strike one as being on the contrary sobering. In these instances, thought does not destroy or diminish the immediate emotional experience, but validates and confirms it. Intellectual formulation adds to the emotional enjoyment, and the emotional enjoyment facilitates the formulation of the thought.

The following example illustrates many of the points made, though it is a poor reproduction of the actual experience. Being æsthetically impressed by a bare tree in winter led to the following thoughts which greatly heightened the æsthetic experience. This tree actually is like the best things that can be metaphorically said about man. It is deeply rooted with its roots penetrating and hugging the earth—as a man who is realistic and down-to-earth—and its branches stretch out towards the sky. It has unity and a robust strength in its trunk which is all of one piece; it is also differentiated into many branches and achieves a subtle delicacy in the arabesque formed by its terminal branches. The fantastic criss-crossing of these branches which can be seen most clearly in the shadows they throw is not as fantastic as it seems: it is meaningful, not arbitrary. The branches take this turn or that not without reason. Their directions are a testimony of the tree's history, of the winds and other influences that were exerted on it and of its resistance to these influences. But more than anything else the turning of the branches expresses the tendency to seek and achieve the largest possible exposure of the foliage to the sun. The tree is like a bridge between the earth and the sun: it absorbs what it needs from the earth and absorbs the energies of the sun. And even when it is dead it has strength, it has grain, it has fibre; it still has the energy it had absorbed and transformed. When it burns in the fireplace the glow it gives is really a patch of the sun, just as much as if it had been dropped through the chimney directly from the sun. When the fire burns out the heat, after having warmed us, is dissipated again in the world and what had been taken from the earth is there in a few handfuls of ash, the cycle is completed. It is the end of one cycle and the beginning of another.

ANDRAS ANGYAL