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THE GUILT OF THE RIGHTEOUS

TO a far greater extent than is commonly admitted, the never-ending argument about the organization of society is a contest over moral issues carried on by men who believe that their convictions are either misunderstood or deliberately ignored. This is not to suggest that the substratum of moral feeling in socio-political controversy is necessarily either petty or personally defensive. The righteous indignation of human beings often attains to a moving splendour, especially when the lines of division in opinion can be clearly drawn, and when the contentions are made on the threshold of an epoch of far-reaching change. As a matter of fact, little of importance concerning the good of man is said without the support of the moral emotions. While specialists trained in the "objective" disciplines of science may complain that any injection of feeling into discussions of the social order brings the perversion of some facts and the neglect of others, the truth is that unmotivated research (research not connected with the longing for some kind of human good) does not exist, and those inquiries which claim to be completely "objective" are really inquiries whose human purposes are concealed or smothered by methodological convention.

The attempt to put the problems of society on an impersonal basis by refusing any role for the moral emotions in social science was a brave and in some measure fruitful effort to resolve the dilemmas of partisan politics. Its long-term effect, however, has been to provide elaborate "factual" disguises for what are at root moral and metaphysical arguments. Intuitive assumptions still rule, however much they may be hidden by reference to "studies" and "surveys," and men now add to the reproaches of their opponents the claim that they are not only "selfish," or given to "wishful thinking," but also tend to ignore "the facts." In short, the project of social science, which was intended to take the moral tension out of social controversy by limiting discussion to questions of "fact," has been a failure.

But the praise of "objectivity" has done a lot for serious social thinkers. It has made them more self-conscious and sophisticated in their efforts to describe "the facts."

In the current (Autumn) issue of *Dissent*, Paul Jacobs discusses "The Brutalizing of America." His point concerns the incapacity of people who enjoy relative economic comfort to understand the inner feelings of the poor. His conclusion from this point is that present efforts in the United States to remedy the conditions of the poor are little more than rhetorical gestures: they do not *identify* in any realizing sense with the plight of people without jobs and money and for this reason lack the necessary drive. Accordingly, they will fall far short of what ought to be done.

First to be considered is the fact of poverty in the affluent United States:

> Obviously, we are better off today than when President Roosevelt, in 1937, called one-third of the nation ill-fed and ill-housed, for now only one-fifth of the nation is ill-fed and ill-housed. But the ugly fact that we have not cut down substantially on the proportion of the poor is a sign of our brutality. Our technology has become the wonder of the world, but while other industrial nations with far less natural resources than ours have succeeded in virtually eliminating poverty, we still have it. It is certainly true that for the majority of the population, affluence is a reality today in some measure at least. But this fact only compounds our guilt, for that improvement has not been accompanied by a growth in responsibility for the less affluent. Instead, more and more have turned their backs on the poor and, much worse, on the children of the poor.
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> The distribution of income in the United States follows this pattern. In 1890, a very tiny percentage of the population owned most of the country's wealth. Today that wealth is spread far more widely, but still

disproportionately. Even worse, since 1947, no substantive change has occurred in the distribution of income among the poor. In that year, the 20% of the families with the lowest incomes received only 5% of the national income, while the top 5% of the families received 20% of the national income. In 1962, fifteen years later, those proportions were exactly the same.

Unfortunately for the poor, they have no organized voice and no economic power. Unlike the farmers, the mute farm workers get no subsidies. There are more lobbyists for utility companies congregating in the state capitols than there are lobbyists for pensioners. Unions seek to raise the wages of their working members, but can do little for the unemployed. And so, because no one speaks for the poor, not even the poor themselves, the gap between them and the rest of society widens more and more.

A realistic attack on poverty in the United States, Mr. Jacobs says, would require many billions of dollars. It would mean raising the minimum wage to $2.00 an hour and extending it to include all workers, and giving agricultural workers the coverage of unemployment insurance. It would mean, he says, "vast increases in transfer payments made to the aged, to those physically unable to work and to the displaced workers who are incapable of being trained for new jobs." Moreover, he says, private industry cannot begin to provide the jobs that are needed to employ people who are out of work:

To cite only one example: last year, the private sector of our economy did not create a single new job for teenagers at a time when the market was flooded with youth. Indeed, between 1957 and 1963, a period when the population of the United States increased by more than 17 million people, private industry generated only 300,000 new full-time jobs. *Nearly half the jobs added to the work force since 1957 have been in state and local governments.*

The moral bite in Mr. Jacobs' assessment comes here:

. . . we have become insensitive to poverty, and only too willing to accept myths to account for its continued existence. *The poor are still objects to us, objects to be studied, objects sometimes to be used for political purposes, or objects who should be helped because to do so will cut down on public assistance payments.* It is bad business to have poor people, the businessmen are told, while another popular argument advanced is that if we have poor people in the midst of affluence, we will look bad in the eyes of the world. The idea that poverty ought to be eliminated because it is immoral is advanced only rarely. So, too, the concept of over-all economic planning to abolish poverty is voiced generally by those outside the government structure.

Following is his final recommendation:

Thus, the great challenge of the next decade cannot be met by any governmental program alone although such programs are an essential framework in which to operate. Only people can meet this challenge, people who now live inside the communities where the victims of poverty and prejudice live, or people who will go, freely, into those communities, leaving behind on the dresser, the superfluous contents of their intellectual wallets. And unless we meet this challenge, the next ten years will find the country even more divided than it is today, and those ten years may then be known as "The Brutal Decade."

The war against poverty, the fight for civil rights and the struggle to make our communities into healthy living places will not be won by men in government whose commitment to community is diluted by sectional interests, an irrational fear of planning and brute-like prejudices. It is commitment that distinguishes man from the brute. Without committed individuals, society will lose; with them, there is the chance, at least, of winning.

Now no man can be "for" poverty and contend that it is a good thing, save for the few who argue that lack of material things in personal life is good for human character, and even these will not defend the anxiety and humiliation which come from not being able to feed and clothe one's children properly. The people who see virtue in poverty do not really *mean* poverty; they mean the capacity to endure it with dignity, by acquiring a stoic indifference to privation. When economic want *per se* is spoken of as a means of strengthening character, the claim has about as much validity as the assertion that a stint of military training is a good influence on young men because it teaches them "discipline." Such arguments cannot be taken seriously, even apart

from their paternalism and moral arrogance. This kind of presumption, as Mr. Jacobs says, comes from regarding the poor as "objects," and being unable or unwilling to put oneself in their position. His own confession, made by a serious investigator of poverty, is to the point:

> . . . no matter how I try to get some sense of what life is like for the poor by traveling the country as an unemployed worker, living in shabby skid row hotels, sitting in dreary casual labor offices, working as a dish-washer or stooping over tomato vines, I can get only glimpses of what it means. No matter how little money I take with me, I cannot know what it is like to really have very little money. It doesn't really matter that my sheaf of credit cards is left at home on the dresser when I put on my old clothes to go out as an unemployed worker, for I know that I can escape this ugly life *at will.* And that is my great handicap in understanding the poor for, unlike me, the poor cannot exercise their free will to escape. They are trapped, separated from our conception of a decent life not, as I am, by a bus ride or a telephone call, but by a gap so wide that my normal life is only a fantasy world to them.

The question which must be asked is this: Why would any reasonable human being resist Mr. Jacobs' argument? Several steps of analysis are needed to give even a partial answer.

First of all, people who bear responsibility for both the large and the small economic projects of the country have had some personal experience of other aspects of human nature. They know that there is no necessary relation between economic security and personal responsibility. They know that when the resolution of economic conflicts takes place, the factors of self-interest and fear usually play a decisive part. They have learned, for example, that while small companies may be able to establish face-to-face relationships with their employees and to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and genuine cooperation, large corporations which employ many thousands of people must rely upon the gross, statistical profiles of human behavior and design their policies on a basis which sees the workers as "objects" rather than subjects. Administrators who work at this level in commerce and industry may have private moral apprehensions about the situation, but they do not see how it can be changed.

Most people in business are too sophisticated to argue such questions publicly. Being in positions of power, they would be open to charges of obvious self-interest. It would be claimed that businessmen *want* an over-supply of labor, so that their bargaining position in respect to wage rates is strong. It would be said—and quite rightly—that employers have no right to make moral judgments about people who are out of work, in justification of their labor policies.

But the fact that these questions do not get discussed has the effect of suppressing them, and this gives the argument a certain insincerity.

Let us stipulate that businessmen, like other human beings, are animated by mixed motives. But let us also acknowledge that the men who run industrial enterprises get what fulfillment they have in life from doing this work and feel a normal responsibility toward doing it well. They have achieved some practical knowledge of the dynamics of a scarcity economy. While the factors in the labor-management relationships of a scarcity economy may present problems of control, there has been a long experience of working with them, and the possibilities are reasonably predictable. It seems natural that men with this background, who are burdened with the responsibilities of making the economy a going concern, should try to avoid the direct moral confrontation offered by Mr. Jacobs. Their own moral case is weak, since they are, at least technically, in the role of authority and power; and their practical case is embarrassed by the fact that it can offer no real solution.

The background for all this is the hazy area of metaphysical judgments about the nature of man, about natural law, and about ethical obligations and the differences among human beings. Ordinarily, the points of interest in this area are organized around its poles. There is the *laissez-faire* pole which many men cling to because it

represents a solid chunk of historical experience. Under this conception you say that men in a natural environment cope with their surroundings as best they can. You say that the removal of the factor of struggle through social legislation is a defiance of the ground-rules of life set by Nature, and can only produce social and moral disaster. You say that the weak may be helped through life by the generosity of the strong, but that care must be taken not to interfere with the basic factors of the struggle for existence.

The other pole is an attempt to replace this "Nature" philosophy with a social metaphysic. It is represented in Mr. Jacobs' contention "that poverty ought to be eliminated because it is immoral." The postulate of this view is that every human being has an inalienable right to be free from economic want, and to have his basic needs taken care of as an irreducible condition of organized society.

Two general lines of argument support this position. One is that poverty is no longer necessary. Modern technological knowledge and command over the resources of the planet make it entirely possible for everyone to have enough to eat and to be comfortably clothed and housed. It follows that it has *become* immoral to refer economic problems to the old "natural" order under which men contend with their environment as individuals.

The other argument is that the so-called "natural environment" no longer exists. Even if the *laissez-faire* conception of the social order was once reasonable and right, it now has neither moral nor natural logic to support it. The fact is that the artificial structures of modern technological society have replaced the conditions of the natural environment to such a degree that the great majority of people must now learn to cope with institutional complexities instead of the forces of nature. The argument is, further, that the qualities which come to the fore and reach a high development in men who rise to power in the technological society are not the most admirable qualities of human beings. From these observations, which are not easy to contradict, comes the moral obligation to *change* the social system.

An honest man can hardly meet this argument on its own terms. He can say, as Mr. Jacobs remarks, that things aren't as bad as they used to be; or he can put together some commonplaces about "human nature," admitting that the models of the good life afforded by a modern acquisitive society leave much to be desired, but going on to say that he doesn't see how they can be changed. His *real* argument, however, is to point to existing systems which, presumably, represent the best that men have been able to do in the way of establishing their own rules to take the place of the rules set by the natural environment.

At this point the dialogue gets enormously confused by the variable meanings of words such as "justice" and "freedom." One man means by "freedom" the opportunity to pursue a course in commercial enterprise without being harassed by bureaucratic controls. And his objection to these controls may be based on something far better than the desire to become enormously rich or to pursue anti-social practices in his business. Meanwhile, another man rejects for "freedom" any meaning but that of the liberation of men from grinding poverty. Still another man will contend that the only freedom of any importance is freedom of mind, and he will argue that since systems of total social control are in fact total philosophies of life, they invariably demand conformity in thought, and cannot therefore be tolerated. This claim, in turn, arouses the contempt of critics who assert that undernourished children aren't able to think about anything but their next meal, anyhow, and why should anyone listen to an argument which obviously comes from the well-fed and complacent middle class. Here, a peacemaker on the side of the welfare state may intervene by calling attention to the impressive achievements of the Scandinavian countries, both in eliminating

poverty and in the regulation of private enterprise, but he will be answered by a rejoinder concerning the lesser problems of nations with small, homogeneous populations. And someone will then add that the small and flourishing social democracies are not devoting a large part of their total resources to preparations for nuclear war, which brings the retort that they don't *need* to, since they are under the protection of the major powers in the West.

What comes out of this, after all the shouting, is a threefold explanation of the general rejection of "the concept of over-all economic planning to abolish poverty." There is first an over-arching emotional resistance to the proposition of total state control on the part of men who are in the main responsible for the incredible achievements of industry in the United States. The idea of political management of their affairs is repugnant to them. They are not persuaded that the divided and conflicting allegiances of politicians can replace the single-minded concentration of the businessman's attention to his business, which he knows intimately, and not only as a "profit-taker," but also as a productive human being who obtains a feeling of achievement from what he has done. It is extremely difficult for such men to contemplate careers in which they would have to "play politics" to get opportunities to go to work at what they know-best. And there is certainly a danger that individual resourcefulness and ingenuity would be blocked by unimaginative bureaucratic decisions.

A second explanation lies in the moral condemnation such men feel in the proposals for planning. Between the lines they read a kind of supercilious disregard for their hard work, and they sense—often correctly—that the reformers are ill-suited by temperament and inclination to originate, manage, and pilot to fruitful results any sort of industrial or technological undertaking.

Finally, there is the factor of self-interest, present in all men, in this case reinforced by the fear that they will lose their possessions, their status as leaders and builders, their role of patrons and authorities. Unfortunately, when the good motives of human beings are left unnoticed, and their hard common sense is ignored, self-interest tends to become the governing principle. And since self-interest always disguises itself in borrowed finery, the resistance to large-scale economic planning, when it is expressed, usually takes the form of argument from some ponderous orthodoxy—often a combination of Religion, Patriotism, and the Moral Fibre of Self-Made Men.

Now it is often said—and it is a hardly debatable fact—that the epoch of old-style free enterprise is over. It is argued with ample reason that the loose-jointed *laissez-faire* economy of the nineteenth century has been dead for at least a generation, and that the sensitive balances required by the age of power and automation in industry have made economic individualism as outmoded as the horse and buggy. The reformers—who are usually the serious thinkers in any society—are able to see this, whereas their unwilling clients, the businessmen, do not. The question is: How can these people get to understand one another? One thing seems sure. There will be no mutual understanding—because there will be no *will* to understand—until both sides in this argument begin to argue *from weakness instead of strength.*

The planners must begin to flaunt the unreliability of their plans, and the unpredictability of their results. This would be but simple honesty, for plans *never* work the way men expect them to, and new problems always arise. Maybe the planners should form some kind of trade union and oblige all its members to serve at least five years of apprenticeship in some business enterprise (we lose more good men this way!), in order to get first-hand experience of the constants in any form of economic production, regardless of the political system or ideology under which it takes place. A similar program for the business community would involve regular field trips for all

policy-making executives, led, say, by Mr. Jacobs and some of his colleagues in firsthand research into the seamy side of our society (business would lose some good men, too) .

The evils of the present do not lie so much in the systems under which we live as in the myths we build up in their defense. The systems may be bad—both the planned ones and the unplanned ones may be bad—but the weaknesses of both systems are compounded with the harder evils of self-righteousness generated by the conflict between the two. It is this angry self-righteousness which makes both ignore and hide from their respective publics the bitter truth that the good life will not result either from planning or from avoiding it. The good life comes when men set their hearts on having it, and when they let the dilemmas made by rival economic theories dissolve in the practical common sense that ought to rule in such matters.

It is a patent fact that, with some intelligent ordering of the relations between production, distribution, and consumption, the material and technological resources of the world are sufficient to put a final end to economic want. And by exercising another kind of intelligence, which recognizes the folly of plans which destroy initiative and confine originality, we could doubtless find ways of doing this without creating some kind of totalitarian mess. But we most certainly will not be able to do it in the name of the Good Society. The Good Society does not consist of an equitable distribution of Goods.

The propaganda for the planners' Good Society is false. Their plans will not produce it. The public will only be fooled again. The propaganda for the unplanned Good Society is equally false. We do not have it, and Mr. Jacobs' unhappy poor are only one of the symptoms of the underlying deception. All the propaganda is false for the reason that it tells the people that they will be happy and have a good life if they have enough things, or manage to get them under the correct social system. They will not, and it is a cruel lie to tell them any such story and to seek their allegiance for its claims. Actually, the poverty suffered by one fifth of the people in the United States today is only partly a lack of things. It is also and in some cases preponderantly the pain of feeling less than human because these people have been made to believe that a successful human being is someone with a lot of possessions. And it is mainly for this reason that, with all our productive capacity, there is not enough to go around. Both the businessmen and the planners are responsible for this. They are still fostering the doctrine that hope lies in Economics. They couldn't be more wrong.

REVIEW
ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ADDICTION

As the tough-minded founders of Synanon Foundation have effectively demonstrated, behavior patterns which include reliance on any psyche-changing chemical are the primary problem of the addict—not the particular chemical used. Alcoholism is often called a "disease"—sometimes, a "respectable" disease—but such labels need some reflective attention. For one thing, dependence upon alcohol (or barbiturates) is more "respectable" than dependence upon heroin, mainly because of social custom, not for any intrinsic difference between the addictions. Addiction, moreover, is primarily a psychological affair, and the use of the word "disease," as if some organic defect were chiefly responsible, can be disastrously misleading.

A controversial writer and researcher named Arthur Cain has been publicizing these points with fervor for some time, criticizing what he calls the "dogmas" of Alcoholics Anonymous. Dr. Cain's recent book, *The Cured Alcoholic* (John Day, 1964; $4.95), provides a basis for looking at the contention that the problem is never the drinking, but always a disorder within the complications of the man himself. Any alcoholic *may* be cured, says Cain—which means reaching a state of inner balance. Subsequently, even if such a man were to ingest some alcohol, a pattern leading to oblivion would not necessarily repeat itself. Also, says Cain, the alcoholic is less likely to become "cured" in the fundamental psychological sense if he believes that he is somehow fatally "different" from others.

Dr. Cain claims seventeen years of research into the causes and possible cures of alcoholism. He is, however, not a medical practitioner but a social psychologist with a bent for philosophical analysis. His doctoral dissertation, published in 1960, is titled "Philosophical Psychology of Socially Estranged Alcoholics." (Cain worked at the Yale School of Alcoholic Studies and had opportunity to consult with the noted expert, Dr. E. M. Jellinek.) A good summation of Cain's point of view, towards which the members of Alcoholics Anonymous and others feel little sympathy, appeared in his *Saturday Evening Post* article (Sept. 19, 1964), "Alcoholics *Can* Be Cured—Despite A.A." After objecting to what he feels to be the segregation of alcoholics as a special and separate order of human beings, Dr. Cain goes on to make his main point—*not,* incidentally, when he is criticizing A.A., but when he is praising it:

> Needless to say, I do not suggest that A.A. be abolished or that a single member quit. That A.A. helps many thousands stay sober is obvious. But Alcoholics Anonymous should return to its original purpose of being a much-needed first-aid station. The "arrest" of uncontrolled drinking is the essential first step in becoming a recovered or cured alcoholic. During this critical period, the alcoholic needs the sympathy and understanding that only another alcoholic can give. But after three months or so, when the shakes have subsided and the cobwebs are beginning to clear, the recovering alcoholic should go ahead. He should not be taught that he must remain forever crippled and bound by the paralyzing concept "Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic." It is at this point that the patient needs a different kind of understanding: an objective, dispassionate, clinical understanding that physicians, psychologists and pastoral counselors, not A.A. members, are trained to give.

In February of 1963, an article by Dr. Cain, "Alcoholics Anonymous: Cult or Cure?", appeared in *Harper's* (reprinted as a chapter of his book). Among his many criticisms made of the "cultish" atmosphere of A.A. in general (which we would consider it uncharitable and unnecessary to reprint) is an examination of "the concept of sobriety":

> The very word "sobriety" has taken on a religious flavor and is uttered with hushed awe, rather than spoken of as a condition necessary to health and happiness. Practically all members who have passed the pigeon, or novice, stage speak of the quality of so-and-so's sobriety, as if evaluating degrees of spirituality.
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> Sobriety has, indeed, become the A.A.'s end which justifies any means. I know men whose wives work and support them so that they may devote their full time to "A.A. Work." I have talked with these women at Al-Anon meetings (groups formed especially for the spouses of alcoholics). Most are not complaining about their lot as A.A. wives; they insist that anything is better than living with a practicing alcoholic. But other women confess that eating,

> sleeping, and talking A.A. twenty-four hours a day is almost worse than having an alcoholic husband.

Cain certainly has both a physiological and semantic point in his insistence that alcoholism is *not* a disease, unless we mean by this a social malaise which inflicts incalculable damage to human lives and even property in every civilized country. Abnormal drinking, as Cain puts it, is simply the way people behave. There *are* a large number of people who cannot control their drinking, and it is necessary for them to alter certain physiological conditions, as well as psychic patterns, by way of abstinence until the psychic orientation is entirely changed.

Here, we feel, Dr. Cain has substantiated the findings of Synanon, and it is also of significance that Charles Dederich, Synanon's founder, left work with A.A. because he felt that it did not go deeply enough into the problem of causes—and that a new philosophical orientation was the real need of the man whose "burdens" seem too great to bear without the help of some drug. Cain and Dederich differ in emphasis on another point, however, Cain arguing that a number of cured alcoholics have been able to resume normal drinking without loss of control, while Dederich assures alcoholics who have learned sobriety at Synanon that no Synanon graduate *will* return to drinking—not, perhaps, because he couldn't if he wanted to, but because he would not *want* to encourage an influence which runs counter to all that has helped his maturity to flourish.

It is of course on this matter of whether a one-time alcoholic can ever drink moderately again that most of the strong feelings about Cain's writing come into focus. A typical A.A. response is that such a suggestion is "immoral," because it will encourage some to try to prove that *they* are among those exceptional few who can drink after the alcoholic pattern has been broken. But Cain argues that, while this danger is undoubtedly present, it is simply not truthful to suppress such facts as those revealed by the Davies report of Great Britain (said to show that some alcoholics eventually became "normal" drinkers).

Dr. Cain disagrees with a number of A.A. persuasions. He contends that the "first drink"—which A.A. firmly believes to be the inevitable prelude to degradation—is often a psychological stance, not the chemical content of a beverage. There are so many of near successes and abject failures, so many memories of the euphoria of intoxication, so many associative patterns, it is small wonder that A.A. has evolved some rigid dogmas and a tight supervision to keep the alcoholic from succumbing. In practical terms, of course, it is A.A., not Cain, which "saves" so many lives. But there is hardly any way of comparing Dr. Cain's work with that of A.A.

Alcoholism is often prevalent among the sensitive and intelligent, as researchers have repeatedly found. And one who spends nearly all his energy staying away from that "first drink" is in a sense crippled—as he might be by any dogma which denigrates his capacity to be "autonomous" or "self-actualizing.)" Dr. Cain observes:

> Conventional psychotherapy today also recognizes that the alcoholic must stay away from the first drink. *And* he must learn to live with certain personality traits which predispose him to uncontrolled drinking. A.A. makes a thoroughly unscientific gesture in this direction with their meetings ("group therapy"), "moral inventory" steps, and other somewhat hazy gimmicks. Psychotherapy at least approaches an understanding of the psychological etiology of alcoholism. Unfortunately, it doesn't go far enough. The client too often winds up consciously (*self*-consciously!) "living with" both his "neurosis" (uncontrolled behavior with a noun-label) *and* his "alcoholism" (uncontrolled behavior with a noun-label).
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> It is hard to say which is worse.
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> The obvious answer to the problem would seem to be:
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> The alcoholic must learn to live without *either* his "alcoholism" or his "neurosis" *and* without his actual uncontrolled drinking or his actual uncontrolled mental/emotional/spiritual behavior.
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> Both A.A. and current psychotherapy say that it can't be done: They've never done it (they've never *tried*)—therefore it can't be done.
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> But it can be done.

COMMENTARY
SOME PYRRHIC VICTORIES

A CERTAIN uneasiness comes from reading about Arthur Cain's contentions in his book, *The Cured Alcoholic,* in this week's Review. It seems ignominious, or something worse, to let the capacity to drink "in moderation" stand for the achievement of mental health—or, at any rate, to make this the measure of a man's recovery from the disorder of alcoholism. No doubt, technically speaking, Mr. Cain is right. No doubt the excessive preoccupation with "abstinence" is a neurotic symptom, but what about the mental "health" of a culture which can find no better test of its psychological muscles than learning to do mildly what a great many people do wildly, to their own destruction?

It should be stipulated, perhaps, that any sort of "mass" solution for psychological problems is of necessity an oversimplified solution, and when it neglects some central truth it is not really a solution at all, but succeeds only by a kind of trickery. The man is still in trouble, although a trouble of another kind.

It can hardly be prudish to suggest that a return to "moderate drinking" would be an expression of extreme moral indifference by the "cured" alcoholic. Is this a good use of his hard-won normality, a proper testimonial to his triumph over the "first-drink" neurosis? What kind of "wholeness" is he demonstrating, and to whom?

Is a capacity to endure conformity to the *mores* of the cocktail set evidence of a superior way of life? And what will his new "discipline" and self-control inspire in others—his often more vulnerable friends whom he knew in his drinking days? It seems doubtful that the path to "maturity" can be pointed out to the "sobriety"-haunted ex-alcoholic by telling him that when he really grows up he'll have freedom to drink, once again.

Similar uncomfortable feelings are stirred when it becomes apparent that much of the action in the fight to preserve freedom of the press turns on the right to print four-letter words. It is not a matter of the issues; the principle is clear enough; but the battlefields where the action takes place give little dignity to the struggle; and the victories, when won, do not add much to our stature.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

CARL JUNG'S collection of essays, *The Undiscovered Self* (Mentor), provides especially good material on the hiatus between the claims of conventional religion and a long overdue evolution in ethical awareness. Take for example a passage which begins with the idea that Christ's essential teaching, "originally announcing the unity of all men and their union in the figure of the one great Man, has in our day become the source of suspicion and distrust of all against all." Why did this happen? Manifestly, because the custodians of a "plan" for achieving unity in formalized Christianity have used political managerial techniques.

The difference between education and politics, as by this time we all should know, is that the politician leans heavily on the credulity of the people—on their emotional reactions—in order to gain assent to the control which the politician believes is either beneficial and necessary, or to his own personal advantage. The educator, on the other hand, distinguishes clearly between *faith* and *knowledge;* he leaves matters of faith to the individual, attempting to teach only things which are subject to individual verification. Dr. Jung continues:

> Far too little attention has been paid to the fact that our age, for all its irreligiousness, is hereditarily burdened with the specific achievement of the Christian epoch: *the supremacy of the word,* of the Logos, which stands for the central figure of our Christian faith. The word has literally become our god and so it has remained, even if we know of Christianity only from hearsay. Words like "society" and "State" are so concretized that they are almost personified. In the opinion of the man in the street, the "State" is invoked, made responsible grumbled at, and so on and so forth. Society is elevated to the rank of a supreme ethical principle; indeed, it is credited with positively creative capacities.
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> No one seems to notice that the veneration of the word, which was necessary for a certain phase of historical development, has a perilous shadow side. That is to say, the moment the word, as a result of centuries of education, attains universal validity, it severs its original link with the divine person. There is then a personified State; belief in the word becomes credulity, and the word itself an inferna1 slogan capable of any deception. With credulity come propaganda and advertising to dupe the citizen with political jobbery and compromises, and the lie reaches proportions never known before in the history of the world.
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> Credulity is one of our worst enemies, but that is the makeshift the neurotic always resorts to in order to quell the doubter in his own breast or conjure him out of existence. People think you have only to "tell" a person that he "ought" to do something in order to put him on the right track. But whether he can or will do it is another matter. The psychologist has come to see that nothing is achieved by telling, persuading, admonishing, giving good advice.

We take it that Carl Jung would agree with a contemporary columnist, John Crosby, who recently remarked (New York *Herald Tribune,* June 15, 1964) that a defecting Irish clergyman who insists that true religion and credulity are implacable foes is himself a "most religious man." This former Church of England vicar, Dr. Alan Stuart, a scientist and philosopher, explained that he gave up his livelihood when he saw that compromise in behalf of loved religious symbolism could endanger one's integrity. He told Mr. Crosby:

> I resigned as a protest against the intellectual and moral foundations of the Christian religion. My resignation is only the continuation of my writing. I said to myself, "How can this man (meaning myself) in view of his writing continue to preach the dogma of the Christian belief?"

True "religion" is thus a dynamic rather than a static affair, and a man may feel compelled to desert a familiar "value-bearing system" because he seeks a broader view, one which desectarianizes its supporters.

In a recent work by a British biologist, C. H. Waddington, titled *The Ethical Animal,* (Atheneum, 1961), we note that it is possible for men of predominantly physicalist background to see a distinction between the ethics inspired by

individual discovery and the ethics which depends upon a system which has partisan advocates. In the preface to *The Ethical Animal* Dr. Waddington remarks that conventional codes of morality are "founded on the formation of 'authority-bearing' systems within the mind which also result in the human individual becoming a creature which goes in for having beliefs of the particular tone that we call ethical." However, "observation of the world of living things reveals a general evolutionary direction, which has a philosophical status similar to that of healthy growth," so that "healthy growth" and "authority-bearing systems" are in inevitable opposition. While biologists, anthropologists and psychologists try to show that most ethical systems depend upon conditioning or indoctrination, Dr. Waddington has another view:

> The conclusions of psychoanalysis are that in the genesis of "ethicizing" activity in normal human beings, both the internal and the external factors are certainly important. But there is considerable controversy as to their relative contribution to the diversity in such activities which we encounter in the human species, and a biologist would, I think, suspect that many psychoanalysts and anthropologists in recent years have tended unduly to minimize the role of the innate factors.

It follows that authority systems, by politicalizing man's innate capacity for ethical awareness, inevitably inhibit human development. Dr. Waddington emphasizes the "well-recognized point that it is desirable to reduce as far as possible the harmful and unpleasant consequences which follow from the peculiar manner in which the authority-systems become set up." Jung has a passage in *The Undiscovered Self* which provides a fitting conclusion:

> When religions compromise with the state I prefer to call them not "religions" but "creeds." A creed gives expression to a definite collective belief, whereas the word *religion* expresses a subjective relationship to certain metaphysical, extramundane factors. A creed is a confession of faith intended chiefly for the world at large and is thus an intramundane affair.
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> Since they are compromises with mundane reality, the creeds have accordingly seen themselves obliged to undertake a progressive codification of their views, doctrines and customs and in so doing have externalized themselves to such an extent that the authentic religious element in them—the living relationship to and direct confrontation with their extramundane point of reference—has been thrust into the background.

How does modern man need to be re-educated? He must, as Jung says, become aware of the tragic consequences of "losing the life-preserving myth of the inner man."

FRONTIERS

Viva Mexico!

ONE of the benefits of the stream of fine paperbacks now being published is the frequent arrival of forgotten classics which, once read, find a natural place in collections of indispensable books. Charles Flandrau's Viva *Mexico!* (University of Illinois Press, $1.95) is such a book. First published in 1908, this volume is the fruit of the author's long and repeated visits to his brother's coffee plantation "sixty miles from anywhere in particular," via Jalapa. While the publishers declare it is to be read "for its sensitive understanding of what makes a Mexican what he is," and that "no tourist will want to be without it," for some readers, at least, the reading of Mr. Flandrau after all these years may stir apprehensions that a trip to the Mexico of today would be an anti-climax. These colorful vistas of rural life at the turn of the century may produce a reaction similar to the feeling one gets about visiting modern Japan after reading Lafcadio Hearn, who wrote at about the same time, or a little earlier. Hearn's Japan, you are sure, has disappeared.

This is not a comment to be directed exclusively at "quaint" foreign countries. Anyone old enough to remember the quality of life in the United States before the first world war will have no difficulty in drawing the same comparison. Here, the monotony of tired and dated commercialism which corrupts the landscape is equalled only by the monotony of the public psyche which, on the surface at least, is like a great sponge saturated with the effluvias of mass communication. The prospect of travel, today, includes the hazard of finding that the rest of the world has become "Americanized" in terms of the endless parade of the clichés of an acquisitive society.

There is a strange, "stationary" quality about the Mexico of sixty years ago, portrayed by Mr. Flandrau. The people are not hurrying to get anywhere or "accomplish" anything. Here is a portion of one of the author's days:

> Lucio appeared on the piazza, apparently for the purpose of chatting interminably about the weather, the coffee, the fact that someone had died and someone else was about to be born none of which topics had anything to do with the real object of his visit. Three quarters of an hour went by before he could bring himself to ask me to lend him money to buy two marvelously beautiful pigs. I was kind, but I was firm. I don't mind lending money for most needs, but I refuse to encourage hogriculture. It is too harrowing. When they keep pigs, no day goes by that the poor obese things do not escape and, helplessly rolling and stumbling down the hill, squeal past the house with a dog attached to every ear. Besides, they root up the young coffee trees. No, Lucio, no. Chickens, ducks, turkeys, cows, lions, and tigers if you must, but not pigs. Lucio—inscrutable person that he is—perfectly agrees with me. As he says good-by one would think he had originally not come to praise pigs but to protest against them. After his departure there are at least fifteen minutes of absolute quiet.
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> Then arrive a party of four—two men and two women respectable-looking, well-mannered people, who stand on the piazza saying good morning and inquiring after my health. . . . For an interminable time their object does not emerge and in the face of such pretty, pleasant manners it is out of the question for me bluntly to demand, "What have you come for?" In despair I ask them if they would like to see the house, and as they stand in my bare sale, commenting in awed undertones, I have a sudden penetrating flash of insight into the relativeness of earthly grandeur. To me the sale is the clean, ascetic habitation of one who has not only realized what is and what is not essential, but who realizes that every new nail, pane of glass, tin of paint, and cake of soap is brought sixty or seventy miles through seas of mud and down a precipice three or four thousand feet high on the back of a weary mule. To them, the simple interior is a miracle of ingenious luxury. They gaze at the clumsy fireplace, touch it, try to see daylight through the chimney and fail to grasp its purpose, although they revere it as something superbly unnecessary that cost untold sums. The plated candlesticks on the table are too bewildering to remark on at all; they will refer to them on the way home. The kitchen range at first means nothing to anyone, but when I account for it as an American brasero the women are enthralled. One of them confesses she thought it was a musical

> instrument—the kind they have in church! There is nothing more to exhibit, nothing more to talk about, so during a general silence one of the men asks me if I will sell them a little corn—enough to keep them for two days—and I know they have come to the point at last. They work on a ranch a mile or so away and the owner, an Englishman, who lives in town, has forgotten or neglected to supply them; they have none left for tortillas. . . .

Urban enforcement of law and order under Porfirio Diaz had its fascinations. Arrested for what he calls "an exceedingly slight and innocent misdemeanor," Mr. Flandrau asked the officer:

> "But why do you arrest me? Why don't you arrest everybody else? I'm not the only one," I protested to the policeman with a lightness I was beginning not to feel.
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> "You are a foreigner and a gentleman and you ought to set an example to the ignorant lower classes," he replied without a smile. It was some time before I could induce him to let me go.

Viva Mexico! is plainly a light-hearted book, yet an extremely serious current runs through its pages. The author goes at once to the human qualities of the people he writes about, and has no patience with visitors, tourists, and even resident Nordics who put on airs regarding the Mexicans who have in fact made their lives extremely pleasant and comfortable. There are some excellent historical notes, one on Maximilian's brief rule, and the following on religion:

> In 1519 Spain and the Roman Catholic Church affixed themselves to Mexico's throat and were with extreme difficulty detached from it only after three hundred years. During most of that time, in addition to the fact that the Church got possession of something more than a third of the country's entire property, "real, personal, and mixed," the metaphorical expression "he could not call his soul his own," was true of the inhabitants in its baldest, its most literal sense. To call one's soul one's own in Mexico between the years 1527 and 1820 was to be tried in secret by the Holy Office of the Inquisition and then turned over to the secular authorities—a formality that deceived no one—to be either publicly strangled and then burned, or burned without even the preliminary solace of strangulation. "The principal crimes of which the Holy Office took cognizance," we read, "were heresy, sorcery, witchcraft, polygamy, seduction, imposture, and personation"—a tolerably elastic category. Without the slightest difficulty it could be stretched to cover anyone "not in sympathy with the work," and during the period in which the Holy Office was exercised it covered many.
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> . . . Until the advent of the conquerors this part of the world had been, for no one knows how long, a slaughterhouse of the gods. Spain and the Church continued a carnage of their own in the name of God.
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> The limited scope of these impressions permits of scarcely a reference to Mexico's history. I can only assert that almost every phase of it is imbedded in layer upon layer of the rottenest kind of ecclesiastical politics and that the great mass of the people today reflects—in a fashion curiously modified at unexpected moments by the national awakening—its generations of mental and physical subjection. . . .

Flandrau, as you might suppose, became enormously fond of the Mexicans. "Had I," he said, "the ordering of this strange, unhappy world, I think all children would be born Mexican and remain so until they were fifteen." But it seems clear that what he was really fond of, and responded to, was the genuineness of people wherever he found them. He wrote about Mexico, as C. Harvey Gardiner notes in his introduction, shortly before the Mexican oligarchy gave way to a surge of democracy. He wrote as a democrat, hobnobbing with peons, bringing to his readers of Anglo-Saxon descent an understanding of the Mexican people which has hardly been equalled since. A good book to read, after this one, would be William Cameron Townsend's *Lázero Cárdenas, Mexican Democrat* (Wahr, Ann Arbor, Mich, 1952, $4.00), the story of Mexico's great president during the 1930's. Cardenas consolidated the gains of the Mexican revolution and succeeded in putting an end to the frequent episodes of violence in Mexican political life. He is still alive and exerts a continuous constructive influence on Mexican public affairs.