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THE "NORMAL" PEOPLE

IT sometimes seems as though only the half-truths can be put to work or "proved" in practice. Whole truths are either so general or so paradoxical that they cannot be demonstrated in limited situations. What about unlimited situations? Well, what can you say about an unlimited situation, except that it lacks fixed reference-points? You might argue that life is an unlimited situation, in which are displayed a long succession of limited situations. You might say that if you ignore the unlimited aspect of life, because you can't prove anything about it, and give all your attention to what happens in limited situations—to what you can nail down—then you may produce a lot of exact definitions and a lot of neat proofs, but miss the meaning of life.

Well, all this has to be illustrated. We were drawn into this subject from reading an article by Judd Marmor in the *Saturday Review* for May 22. Dr. Marmor teaches psychiatry at the medical school in the University of California in Los Angeles, and is director of the psychiatric divisions of the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in the same city. His article is called "Psychiatry and the Survival of Man," and is about the half-truths that don't work now and can't be proved any longer. If his language were a little less professional, he would get a great many people mad at him. In his discussion, free enterprise and the profit system, nationalism, and war are critically examined and found to be a threat to human survival. He says at the outset:

> Let us look briefly at three major institutions—all sacred cows in our contemporary culture—whose influences on man, I believe, have become seriously maladaptive in terms of his survival. I am not implying that these are the only ones that present us with problems but merely that they are important representative examples.

Dr. Marmor is not one of those who contend that our troubles come from built-in attributes which are an unchangeable part of human nature. He is not persuaded, for example, that "hostility and destructiveness" are traits fatefully inscribed in our genes that must inevitably find expression in periodic wars and other ravaging enterprises. He thinks that what is wrong is correctible. In short, he wants men to look at the half-truths they live by and to replace them with a better faith. Before launching his analysis he says:

> It seems to me that too many commentators on the current human scene have tended to attribute our problems to defects in individual personalities. Thus, there is much talk of strengthening the moral fiber of our youth, restoring the influence of the family, or reinforcing our religious teachings. I believe these approaches miss the mark precisely because the problems threatening our survival lie not in our individual psychopathologies but rather in our socially sanctioned, ego-syntonic group values. It is not the "defectives" among us but we, the "normal" ones, who constitute the problem—all of us the pillars of the community, the state, and the church, with our shared and consensually validated group attitudes. It is we, the "normal" people, who continue to fight wars, cut down forests, pollute lakes and rivers, poison the atmosphere, destroy wildlife, discriminate against minorities, and pursue profits—we, the "mentally healthy" people, not the world's neurotics or psychotics.

But surely "normal" people will do the right thing when it is pointed out to them! The real problem lies here. Changing our institutions means changing ourselves; as Dr. Marmor says, "There is a deep resistance in most of us against the changing of fundamental institutions in our society, because our basic personalities—our needs, our expectations, our very language and perceptions—have been so profoundly shaped by those very institutions."

We cling to our institutions not only from habit and self-interest: we also believe that there is truth in them. Not so long ago men gave their lives to bring them into being and then to defend them. And truth *is* in them—but it is often half-truth, or truth, as Dr. Marmor shows, that no longer works the way it used to.

To understand this we need the help of history. We need to know something about the men who settled this country—where they came from and why they came, and how coming here opened up their minds and stirred their imagination. The half-truth of free enterprise was forged on the anvil of human experience. One side of that experience lay in a past of confinement, repression, closed doors, no land, a rigid class system. The other opened to a vast expanse of free and fertile land where a man could create a good life for himself and his family without interference. When interference came, he fought a revolution and went on as before. Free enterprise was for him a pretty wonderful idea: it meant a fair shake for everybody, and it could hurt nobody. It was a half-truth to conjure with, and its champions have been doing just that, ever since.

A lot more could be said on this subject, such as how the idea of competition played an increasing part in free enterprise theory, how social Darwinism was adopted by its advocates, and how the qualities of the strong, free, and ruthless were justified as a demonstration of the survival of the fittest. No doubt fathers still try to talk to their young sons in these terms—with humane qualifications, of course, yet making the principle clear. Dr. Marmor's article shows what can now be seen to be wrong with all this. There is really no defense against the totality of the criticism that can be made of the free enterprise system as it now operates—there is only the rejoinder: What else will work and preserve political freedom? The critics do not find it easy to answer this question persuasively. The historical answers have nearly all jettisoned political freedom, making a dilemma which probably has no resolution at all in merely political or economic terms.

There can be little doubt that national ideals once served to focus human energy and aspiration, but, as Dr. Marmor points out, present-day modes of communication, travel, and trade have made national borders practically meaningless. Moreover—

> Patterns of narrow nationalism in many ways parallel those of the free enterprise system. "My country, right or wrong" is the equivalent on the national scale of rugged individualism on the personal scale. Its basic motif is that of competition rather than cooperation, and its consequences are patterns of international aggression and distrust. If man is to have a future on this shrinking globe, the values of "One World" and of "The Family of Man" will have to supplant the ethnocentric biases and suspicions that now set nation against nation and race against race. Such a mature internationalism need not, however, mean the elimination of love of one's own country or the disappearance of cultural pluralism. A man need not care for his family less because he has a profound love for his country; neither need he cherish his country or his culture the less because he has a deep feeling for the welfare of humanity as a whole.

Love of country was never, in its beginnings, a partisan emotion. The founders of this country—some of them, at least—felt a large-hearted concern for humanity as a whole, and they thought of the United States as one means of serving mankind. Actually, it is only in fairly recent years that love of country and loyalty to its interests have come to mean feelings of antipathy for other countries. The "adversary" psychology was not part of the free enterprise idea in its primitive beginnings, nor had it any significant role in the beginnings of the American Republic. Our first war—the one fought for independence—was not aggressive but defensive, and the idea of a military establishment was long repugnant to a great majority of the American people. On this question, Dr. Marmor's observations are brief and to the point:

> Let us turn finally to the third of our sacred cows, one that is closely related to ethnocentric nationalism and is indeed its deadliest by-product: war. Here, too, is an institution around which have evolved deep-seated stereotypes that constitute powerful psychological barriers to its elimination. Children of all nations are taught that war is right and proper under certain circumstances. War is glorified as brave, just, and honorable, and its brutal realities are obscured by tales of heroism and victory. This glorification of war is so charged with overtones of patriotism that to seek peaceful alternatives is often regarded as subversive and disloyal. Institutionalized value systems such as these do not occur accidentally or capriciously. They are the evolutionary outgrowths of the needs of societies over thousands of years during which armed force had adaptive value in the achieving of urgent national goals. Once such value systems develop, they become self-reinforcing by

> being built into the personalities of most of the members of the society, and so are transmitted from generation to generation. We are now faced, however, with the stark fact that we have reached a point in human history where wars in the traditional sense can no longer be won, and where even small wars can become the sparks for a nuclear holocaust that might threaten the survival of the entire human race.

How do most men justify war? Often they do it by simple analogies. They think of the defense of the weak and helpless against cruel invaders. They think that a man is one who stands up against intrusion or indignity and refuses to cower. They recall that the youthful Abraham Lincoln, who was not a man of violence, taught a bully a lesson he did not soon forget. The moral truth behind these ideas becomes a justification for war.

And so, as Dr. Marmor says, the institutions which begin with clear moral grounds for their support become "self-reinforcing." It takes a man schooled in the limitations of half-truths to recognize how completely the justification of modern war has broken down. Consider for example what is now going on in Pakistan. It isn't really a "war," since two opposing forces of armed men are needed to make a war. In Pakistan today genocide is going on. Norman Cousins writes his editorial about it in the same issue of the *Saturday Review:*

> The people of East Pakistan, who are still suffering from homelessness and hunger caused by the tidal waves of less than a year ago, are now caught up in a man-made disaster. Their land has become a locked-in arena of authorized slaughter. Communications with the outside world have been reduced almost to the vanishing point. Those who have offered emergency medical aid or other help have been told to stay out.

As a result, you could say, of earlier wars and of cultural nationalism, Pakistan is made up of two separate territories, a thousand miles apart, East Pakistan and West Pakistan. The East Pakistanis began a movement for self-rule on the ground that they were being discriminated against by "West Pakistani's latter-day version of British colonialism." When a vote declared overwhelmingly for self-rule, the central government at Islamabad sent armed troops to prevent East Pakistan's independence. Slaughter of the people by soldiers with tanks and submachine guns began on March 26, Mr. Cousins says. He lists case after case of authenticated group murders of students, university teachers, and others. One old Hindu settlement of some 200 persons was wiped out and a hundred corpses put on "display." Mr. Cousins says that it is futile to attempt to estimate the number of dead or wounded. "Each city and village has its own tales of horror." While the U.S. State Department has a large collection of descriptions of such incidents, it has issued no report.

He continues:

> American guns, ammunition, and other weapons sent to Pakistan were used in the attack on the Bengali people. So were weapons from the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.
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> The United Nations has been helpless in the present situation. The central government in Pakistan claims it is dealing with an internal situation beyond the jurisdiction of the U.N.
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> This may help to explain why the U.N. has so far been unable under its Charter to take action against what appears to be a provable case of genocide. But it doesn't explain why men of conscience have not stood up in the United Nations to split the sky with their indignation.

The Pakistani central government is preventing food, medicine, and supplies from reaching the devastated areas and there are vigorous measures to keep out reporters. Mr. Cousins' comment is brief: "If the United States can find it within its means and its morality to send guns to Pakistan, it can also find it within its means and morality to send food and first aid."

Perhaps we have become so used to the horrors and atrocities of war that we no longer react to such crimes as decent human beings. This, indeed, is Dr. Marmor's point, or one of them. The genocide in Pakistan is only a side-effect of our military policy, doubtless "unfortunate," but hardly avoidable. Isn't that the way we are supposed to react? If it is, then Dr. Marmor is completely right in declaring that the time has come "to challenge the sacrosanct values implicit in such institutions as the free enterprise profit system, nationalism, and war." The task is this:

> If the organized killing and exploitation of men by other men is to be rendered obsolete, it is not enough to pay lip service to non-violence and non-abuse of others in terms of our religious and ethical teachings, when so many other aspects of our social fabric condone, reward, or even glorify such killing and exploitation. To be consistent, every element in the acculturation process that shapes our perceptions and our goals, beginning in early childhood and continuing throughout life, should reinforce the value systems of cooperation, social concern, and non-violence. Not only the toys and games of childhood, but our textbooks, our history books, our encyclopedias, and our mass media need to be oriented toward the ennoblement of man's peaceful and cooperative accomplishments rather than the glamorization of his battles or of his individualistic acquisitions of power. Our scientists, our educators, our humanitarians, and our creative artists, not our generals, nor our "robber barons," need to be the heroes of history.

While these are general ideas, they surely represent the core of the changes that will have to take place. Who, then, are the prophets of the new order Dr. Marmor has in mind? There might be minor differences of opinion about this, but there could not be many dissenters to the choice of Thoreau, Tolstoy, and Gandhi as a qualifying trio of such "heroes." And if we are going to follow the lead of these men, we had better begin thinking about a stateless world as well as a warless world, and how social relationships might be conceived and ordered and public responsibilities fulfilled in such a society.

Finally, there is the question of education. Not the question of schools, but of education. Schools are places, institutions, instruments, while education is cultural process and interchange. The central problem, in the light of Dr. Marmor's analysis, is how to handle the half-truths that are both needed and not needed. A half-truth is a truth of expedience. It is true only if and when you need it; kept in use beyond its time, it may become a thumping lie, like some of the justifications of free enterprise, and all the justifications of nationalism and war.

How do you teach a five- or ten-year-old so that you don't have to unteach him when he is fifteen or twenty? The fatal defect of institutions is that their half-truths never get untaught. Institutions have a longing for immortality in the flesh, which is a really wicked idea. Finite forms should never last forever, but always give way to new and better embodiments. Institutions ought never to have any "glory" attached to them.

How, it will be asked, can the young be brought up in self-confidence and self-reliance unless they are given unambiguous instruction in simple truths? Well, we have to learn how to do it—how to use the right simplicities. We have to learn how to avoid instilling allegiances which produce partisanship and war. It may never be necessary to teach a child "finality," to instruct him with "authority." If physics can be taught at Harvard without presenting students with "a *fait accompli* universe," and if philosophy could be taught by Plato by making Socrates ask questions, then it shouldn't be so difficult to bring up children without any indoctrination at all. We need practice at it, that's all. So far, we've hardly tried.

REVIEW
LOVERS OF THE LAND

A BOOK by former Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall opens up many paths of investigation for those who seek better understanding of man's relation to the land. It is called *The Quiet Crisis* and was published by Holt, Rinehart and Winston in 1963. Mr. Udall deals with human concern for the land of the United States from the days of Thomas Jefferson to the time of Aldo Leopold. He writes about very public men like Theodore Roosevelt and fugitives from civilization as varied as Daniel Boone and Henry David Thoreau. Apart from well-told history and the articulation of vision, Mr. Udall brings to his readers knowledge of forgotten men who served their country well. Your reviewer, for example, was delighted to find a sketch of the life of George Perkins Marsh, an extraordinary nineteenth-century diplomat for whom a career in the foreign service meant little more than an extended opportunity to gather material for his book, *Man and Nature,* first published in 1863. Since MANAS writers have several times made use of the expanded, later edition of this book, issued in 1875 as *The Earth as Modified by Human Action,* which is in the MANAS library, this background on Marsh was intensely interesting to them. Marsh could be called the first systematic ecologist, although this term had not been thought of when his book first appeared.

Mr. Udall's first chapter is on the hopeless struggle of the American Indians to preserve the land from the ever-increasing spread of the white settlers. The Indians, as we are now beginning to realize, have never understood "ownership" of the land. The land is for use, not owning. Even when they were beguiled into signing away great tracts to the newcomers, they did not know what they were doing. Mr. Udall concludes:

> After long years of peace, we now have an opportunity to measure the influence of the Indians and their culture on the American way of life. They have left with us much more than the magic of place names that identify our rivers and forests and cities and mountains. They have made a contribution to our agriculture and to a better understanding of how to live in harmony with the land.
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> It is ironical today that the conservation movement finds itself turning back to ancient Indian land ideas, to the Indian understanding that we are not outside of nature, but of it. From this wisdom we can learn how to conserve the best parts of our continent.
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> In recent decades we have slowly come back to some of the truths that the Indians knew from the beginning: that unborn generations have a claim on the land equal to our own; that men need to learn from nature, to keep an ear to the earth, and to replenish their spirits in frequent contact with animals and wild land. And most important of all, we are recovering a sense of reverence for the land.

There is a fascinating chapter on those whom Mr. Udall calls the "white Indians," the early woodsmen and mountain men. Boone's exploration of Kentucky, and our knowledge of it, due to the romantic ghostwriting of Boone's autobiography by John Filson, stirs the author to say:

> Filson's Kentucke was a halfway house between the Garden of Eden and the Big Rock Candy Mountain. The soil was richer, the climate was "more temperate and healthy than other settled parts of America", there were no marshes or swamps; wild game abounded; livestock could roam untended—and manna from heaven could be had for the asking. Filson's tales of Boone, like the legend of Paul Bunyan, helped to fill his fellow Americans with optimism that made a paradise of any land to the West. . . . There were other woodsmen whose achievements at least matched Daniel's—trail blazers like Ben Logan, Colonel James Knox, Simon Kenton, and Michael Stoner—but, thanks mainly to Filson, it was Boone who became the symbol of them all. . . .
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> Filson's Kentucke was, in reality, a moving magnet—a neck in the woods that moved a little farther west each year, always one step ahead of settlement. We will never know precisely what Boone saw when he peered down into the valleys of Kentucke from his lookout on the top of Big Hill, but we know full well that the Filson-Boone autobiography is one of the early manifestations of the Myth of

> Superabundance that later caused us to squander our natural resources.

Next there emerges a quite different breed of men—the naturalists and nature lovers. While Boone was doing his exploring, William Bartram, son of a botanist, walked thousands of miles of the New World, compiling a natural history which he published as his *Travels*, and which was much admired in Europe. Jefferson applied to Bartram for plants for Monticello. A few years later Audubon was hunting species for his *Birds of America*. Not quite the gentle soul we assume he must have been, Audubon shot most of the birds he painted in order to identify them, but he hated the ruthless slaughter of wildlife. Udall says:

> Audubon was a link between the mountain men and the naturalist-philosophers. Like the former, he was primarily a man of action rather than a prophet or profound thinker. Like the latter, he took delight in the systematic observation of wildlife and considered nature to be an object of study not of conquest. His work is a manifestation of the same bedazzled love of the American scene that turned up in John Filson's *Kentucke* and the works of William Bartram. Audubon did not merely record his creatures; he endowed them with his own enthusiasm. The best of his birds not only reflect their own beauty, but are alive with his excitement.

Francis Parkman has attention in this chapter, along with the note struck by Emerson and Whitman, and Udall notes that fifty years before a national park existed, Thoreau was pleading for "national preserves, in which the bear, and the panther, and some even of the hunter race may still exist, and not be civilized off the face of the earth—not for idle sport or food, but for inspiration and our own true recreation." Finally, Udall says:

> Men like Thoreau, Emerson, Parkman, Bartram, and Audubon were the idea makers, the essential forerunners of the conservation movement. They started new processes of thought; they began the development of an American land-consciousness and set in motion a salutary counter current of ideas against the raider spirit of their era. These men saw the cosmic in the commonplace, and sought to grasp the whole of existence by acquiring fresh insights into everyday life. Although some of their writings were long ignored, the twentieth century eventually rediscovered them.

The nineteenth century began the great raid on nature. In the South cotton and tobacco planters wore out the soil. Wherever there were forests lumbermen were busy, reducing the virgin forests of the continent to one-fifth of their original extent. In the West, the gold seekers used hydraulic mining to devastate the hills and banks, filling the streams with infertile debris and inundating towns along the waterways with muck, which also overflowed to cover rich bottomlands. On the prairies erosion got under way from overgrazing and the plowing of land that shouldn't be plowed. The buffalo were being killed off, for a time at the rate of a million a year; and the fur seals of the North Pacific disappeared as rapidly. There used to be about five billion passenger pigeons in the United States. But they were easy to kill and today these birds, which were once a third of the entire bird population of the country, are all gone. The last one died years ago in the Cincinnati zoo.

It was during this period that George Perkins Marsh, to whom Mr. Udall gives a chapter, did his writing. Marsh was a Vermonter, country-born. At twenty-five he was a successful lawyer in Burlington, but there was no leashing of his active mind. When he was thirty he knew twenty languages. Of a scientific bent, he saw land misuse on the Vermont hills and resolved to devote his life to correcting such abuses. Elected to Congress in 1842, he formed contacts with scientists and scholars in Washington and learned much about the general subject. He was profoundly influenced by the thinking of John Quincy Adams on the folly of the spoils system and the responsibility of the government as the conservator of natural resources. Zachary Taylor appointed Marsh Minister to Turkey in 1849. This was the beginning of a long diplomatic career in Europe which gave Marsh opportunity to meet many distinguished persons, such as Matthew Arnold, the Brownings, de Lesseps, Garibaldi, and

Kossuth. The extraordinary chapter on the Nile in his book grew in part out of a visit to Egypt. Lincoln made him ambassador to Italy, and he sorted out the material for *Man and Nature* in a quiet place on the Italian Riviera. His linguistic skills gave him ready access to all the European sources and his travels enabled him to make many first-hand observations. In his preface he said:

> The earth is fast becoming an unfit home for its noblest inhabitant, and another era of equal human crime and human improvidence . . . would reduce it to such a condition of impoverished productiveness, of shattered surface, of climatic excesses, as to threaten the depravation, barbarism, and perhaps even extinction of the species.

Marsh raised the basic questions of ecological inquiry and provided some of the answers. His omnicompetent work was filled with recommendations concerning forestry, range management, and hydrology, and he spoke of the need for basic respect for the land, for a land policy based on moral and scientific foundations. Mr. Udall suggests that he exercised a significant influence on the next generation of public-spirited men who were about to take the stage and begin the long struggle for conservation in the United States. One of these men was Carl Schurz, crusading senator from Wisconsin. Allied with Schurz was John Powell, the man who began mapping the far West and studying every aspect of the desert regions of the United States. He wrote magnificently intelligent reports on land and water use and rights in the West and at his urging the U.S. Geological Survey was established. He was mostly unsuccessful in his campaigns; this was the age of the Robber Barons; but he created a literature and it was passed on to others who took up the fight. The later chapters deal with the accomplishments of Gifford Pinchot, Theodore Roosevelt, and others of similar intent. Except for one on the TVA, the only remaining historical chapter is a rich review of the life and work of John Muir. Out of Muir's efforts to save the great redwoods from the lumbermen came the formation of the Sierra Club, just as, nearly forty years later, the Wilderness Society grew out of the work of Aldo Leopold in behalf of national forest primitive areas.

Thinking about the contents of this book, one may reflect that the insights and philosophy of individuals are behind all the social achievements. It is the fabric of thought woven by these rare and talented men which has provided the rich meaning of the conservation movement. Mr. Udall, quite naturally, gives much space to the attempt of men in public office to filter this insight through the narrow openings of the legislative process, and in consideration of the obstacles involved, the wonder is that so much has been accomplished, rather than so little. Yet, on the other side of the ledger, the limitations on government action are plain enough, today, and legislation and enforcement cannot be thought of as substitutes for those attitudes of mind from which all ideas of reform spring, and which are all too often so belatedly and inadequately reflected in the law. Conservation, which must begin and end with reverence for the land, is not a political problem, although it obviously has a political phase. Stewart Udall's book is a good one for finding a way into seminal thinking on the subject.

COMMENTARY
CARE OF THE EARTH

SOMETHING of the fascination of the book by George Perkins Marsh (see Review) is shown by a passage toward the end of this volume, where he tells about the lengths to which some men must go to obtain soil suitable for cultivation. The writers of today speak of the loss of arable land to pavement and by erosion, but seldom point out that for some of the inhabitants of the earth, even a small yard would seem great prosperity. As Marsh says:

> If man has, in some cases, broken up rock to reach productive ground beneath, he has, in many other instances covered bare ledges, and sometimes extensive surfaces of solid stone, with fruitful earth, brought from no inconsiderable distance. Not to speak of the Campo Santo at Pisa, filled, or at least coated, with earth from the Holy Land, for quite a different purpose, it is affirmed that the garden of the monastery of St. Catharine at Mount Sinai is composed of Nile mud transported on the backs of camels from the banks of that river. Parthey and older authors state that all the productive soil of the Island of Malta was brought over from Sicily. The accuracy of the information may be questioned in both cases but similar practices, on a smaller scale, are matters of daily observation in many parts of Southern Europe. Much of the wine of the Moselle is derived from grapes grown on earth carried high up the cliffs on the shoulders of men, and the steep terraced slopes of the Island of Teneriffe are covered with soil painfully scooped out from fissures in and between the rocks which have been laid bare by the destruction of the native forests. In China, too, rock has been artificially covered with earth to an extent which gives such operations real geographical importance. . . .
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> Tyndall has shown by optical tests that the proportion of solid matter suspended or floating in common air is very considerable, and there is abundant other evidence to the same purpose. Ehrenberg has found African and even American infusoria in dust transplanted by winds and let fall in Europe and Schliemann asserts that the quantity of dust brought by the scirocco from Africa is so great, that by cutting holes in the naked rocks of Malta enough of Libyan transported earth can be caught and retained, in the course of fourteen years, to form a soil fit for cultivation.

One man's contribution to these painful efforts to reconstruct the soil may seem negligible, but taken all together they gain "geographical importance." And as Marsh elsewhere suggests, this law also works the other way. The wasting ways of a single individual may seem harmless enough, but taken all together, the negligent habits of man become massively destructive. "We are never justified in assuming a force to be insignificant because its measure is unknown, or even because no physical effect can now be traced to its origin."

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
READING AND WRITING

HOOKED ON BOOKS by Daniel N. Fader and Elton B. McNeil is about an extreme situation—getting youngsters to read in a reform school for delinquent boys. Mr. Fader is a professor of English literature at the University of Michigan and Mr. McNeil is a psychologist who tested what was accomplished. Not very many teachers have a problem like that, but what was found out in solving it should be useful to everyone.

Mr. Fader was invited to take on the job of planning an English program for the W. J. Maxey Boys' Training School at Whitmore Lake, Mich., which was just getting started. He accepted because he was then working on what was wrong with the teaching of English in conventional high schools. He had discovered, for example, that few teachers cared about students who were not expected to go on to college. Neither in the schools in poor neighborhoods nor in those in better endowed middle-class areas was this responsibility being met. In a "Highly Recommended High School" he found that "the English classes not going on to college were travesties, mocking the very cause they were meant to serve," while in a "Poverty-Stricken High School," everything was fine but the *teaching*. Of the "Highly Recommended" school, he reports:

> It was shocking to see the apparent change in English teachers between the time they dismissed a class of academic students and convened a class of general students. Stevenson could have created Henry Jekyll and Edward Hyde from the schizophrenic model embodied in the average H.R.H.S. English teacher. Dr. Jekyll in the academic classroom changed to Mr. Hyde when dealing with the "other" students. Creative compelling teachers of students who were going on to college altered their countenances and personalities in a matter of minutes to become little better than jailers of children who could not respond so easily or so well to the language and literature their teachers valued. I had seen the same sorry scene enacted in a dozen schools.

So he took on the Maxey school. These boys would not go on to college, either! Researching the project a bit, he soon came to realize that there are at least two kinds of "delinquents"—those that plan to outgrow their "bad boy" phase when they get older and are no longer treated as children, and those that can look forward to being forever shut out of most of the opportunities the young long for. The kids in the reform school were not like Fader and his companions in their delinquent days:

> My kind of delinquent was the product of a hopeful society. No matter whom or what we hustled, bashed or lifted, we did not view the past as desperate or the future as hopeless. Shooting pool, gambling, fighting, staying out of school or breaking into it—all were temporary accommodations to a world that was going to be *much better when we grew up.*

At Maxey, it was quite different. Education could not be seen there as instrumental to a better life—or it was much harder for the boys to see it that way. In his visits to various other schools, Mr. Fader realized that what was taught in English classes had little meaning to most of the students. So he began questioning them:

> What's wrong with your English class, I asked, that causes you to turn it off the way you do? You're out to lunch during your English class, I said, and I want to know why. They told me why: They told me that it didn't make any difference about them. That the teacher didn't like them so they didn't like the teacher. She didn't talk about anything that mattered ("Sentence diagramming? Shoot! What do I care about that?") and she didn't talk like she *wanted* you to understand. And never nothing to read that was any good, even if you wanted to read. What difference does it make anyway?
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> What difference does it make? The words are repeated so often that they become part of the litany with which the burial service for school is conducted. For the student not going on to college, school is dying and the English class is dead.

That was the sort of English class Mr. Fader resolved not to reproduce at the Maxey school. He worked out an idea that had been in his mind for a long time. *Everybody*, not just English teachers, should teach English. It always works, when he can persuade the teachers to take it on. Another part of the program was to surround the boys with reading material—*saturate* them with it, and diffuse it throughout their lives. Along with this was the idea of teaching to "meet the practical needs of the students rather than the more abstract needs of the subject." This meant a radical revision of educational materials, and Fader wondered where he would get what he wanted.

He found a paperback distributor in Detroit who wanted to help and drove his Volkswagen sedan to the warehouse to pick up hundreds of paperbacks. (The distributor *gave* the books.) The idea was to get the boys reading. The books were everywhere; the boys couldn't get away from them. Fader has an amusing passage on how he found how successful the program was. A room check showed that the boys were *stealing* the books, which delighted the administrators.

Under this same plan, the reading room of another school became a laboratory of mind-changing. Mr. Fader relates:

> One who had changed his mind about "them kind of things" (said with unutterable disdain) is Robert, who last year was the student of a relatively new English teacher at Northwestern. Of all her students who first visited the Luddington [the paperback distributor, who assisted other schools] Reading Room, Robert was the only one who refused to select a book. When she asked what was holding him back, his retort to her question was a masterpiece of indirection: "I only ever read one a them things," he said, "it was call *Steel Shivs*. I know all about 'em now, and you better learn about 'em too if you wanna get along around here."
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> A few days later his journal contained the following statement: "Dear Miss , I believe you are the finest chick I ever seen." Following were pages of enamored description of his dear Miss_____. "See me," she wrote on the last page. When he came slouching up to her desk at the end of the day, she was still at a loss as to what to say to him. Suddenly, inspired, responding impulsively to his presence, she handed him the book lying in front of her on the desk. "Here," she said, "read this. Go see what you can find out about yourself. Maybe you can tell me why you write love letters to your English teacher in your journal." She didn't look up until she was sure he had left the room. The book was *Introduction to Freudian Psychology*.
>
> Sixteen hours later he returned the book. He had read it. "Well, what did you find out?" she asked, surprised at his speed and curious about his response. Looking bored beyond caring, he drawled, "It's all right, I guess. Did you ever see this part?" With that, he opened the book to a section on sublimation and she found herself reading about young women who go into teaching as a substitute for the husbands and children they want but don't have. She smiled and blushed in spite of herself; he grinned, and the crisis between them was permanently resolved. The reading room now stocks many paperbound books about psychology, and Robert was the first to read them all.

The good thing about all this is that the reading that is being done in schools and classes like these is done for its immediate value, not because it will get the reader some place he wants to be—like college. This education is for its own sake, and is therefore more real than anything that could happen on a status-ladder sort of enterprise.

This book is filled with ideas on how to get the young started reading. A staunch defender of the paperback, Mr. Fader says

> School librarians should take a useful lesson from the operators of paperbound bookstores, who have learned to let their merchandise sell itself by arranging their stores so that customers are surrounded by colorful and highly descriptive paper covers. But what of the expense of purchasing paper bound books to begin with, and of maintaining a steady supply to replace the easily tattered, broken and lost paperback? What of the expense? Two questions must be asked in return: What is more expensive than the waste of human intellect implied in a library of unread books? And what sort of destruction is more admirable than that of a book tattered and finally broken beyond repair in the hands of eager readers? We have had too little such destruction; the time has come for our school libraries to invite it.

When, at the beginning, in the hope of finding a source of books, Mr. Fader wrote a letter to Ivan Luddington of the Luddington News

Company, he got a phone call two days later with offers of real cooperation. "Since then, Mr. Luddington has been supplying the school for almost three years with all the paperbound books and magazines we request—absolutely free of any charge." The gifts amount to more than 10,000 paperbacks and 25,000 magazines.

What do the boys read? In one inner-city, all black school—

> Most popular among the paperbacks borrowed in one month was John Steinbeck's *The Pearl* and, in another month, Richard Wright's *Black Boy*. Consistently in the top ten have been George Orwell's *1984,* all the James Bond adventures, Griffin's *Black Like Me,* Lorraine Hansberry's *Raisin in the Sun,* Unger and Berman's *What Girls Want to Know about Boys,* Dick Gregory's *Nigger,* Judith Scott's *The Art of Being a Girl,* any book about *Dennis the Menace,* and William Barrett's *Lilies of the Field. . . .* Free to choose from a vast number of titles, the students select books which speak of problems as close to them as their own skins. Which is why, for instance, Othello can be such an effective bridge between sixteenth-century England and twentieth-century America.

Hooked on Books lists a thousand paperbacks that have worked well in Mr. Fader's program:

> The students who created this list of a thousand titles by the simplest and most direct procedure—reading the books—have demonstrated again and again that powerful ideas and swinging action can attract them even without the clothing of contemporary language. The language of some of the social action books is as awkward as a ghosted sports autobiography; the language of some of the adventure books, antiquated in its own time, is anachronistic in ours. But the readers plow on, making little distinction between such varied story tellers from other eras as Sax Rohmer, Jack London, Rudyard Kipling Herman Melville, Mark Twain and James Fenimore Cooper, and an equally varied contemporary group including Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall, Ernest Gann, John Hersey, Patrick O'Connor, James Michener and Robert Ruark.

We've said nothing about Mr. Fader's program for getting the boys to write. This has worked about as well as the efforts to get them to read. They write because they find they enjoy doing it.

FRONTIERS

"The Opportunities Are Endless"

HERBERT OTTO'S article on Communes in the *Saturday Review* for April 24 (noted in Frontiers for May 26) got its share of letters-to-the-editors criticism in the *SR* for May 29. One irritated correspondent declared that the communes described by Mr. Otto are dependent on "charity." Either that or the boys, he says, probably work out by the day and the girls wait table in the towns. He adds:

> I believe that no commune can survive without monetary transfusions from the capitalist society that the commune dwellers believe they have shed. Who, incidentally, has paid for the highways these people use to travel and to bring in supplies? Who but square, stodgy old capitalist taxpayers provide the hospitals that the commune dwellers will have to seek out sooner or later. Or do they think that their "median age" will forever be in the relatively sickness-free mid-twenties? Actually, sanitary conditions in these makeshift rural dwelling places are probably below the standards in settled communities, they are likely to be conducive to the outbreak of epidemics. If these people were more literate and aware of history, they would know that voluntary communes almost always fail; only constant policing and brainwashing—as in some of the communist nations—can keep them alive a few decades longer.

A California woman writes to answer the question of "Angelina," the mothering older woman in the commune Dr. Otto gave most attention to. She had asked why the parents of the young people flocking to communes aren't more willing to help their young. "We," the critical correspondent replied, "are in our homes raising families . . . using part of our incomes to support medical research, welfare programs, drug-abuse education, church programs, etc." She spoke of the uselessness of "running away," admitting that "maybe we don't appreciate people who provide a place for our children to run to."

Well, they leave with or without places to run to. As for the dependence of the communes on outside help—everyone recognizes this. As a matter of fact, practically every new social beginning requires subsidy and continuous help for a long time. Those sturdy, independent souls, the colonists who settled America, would nearly all have starved to death without regular shipments of food and other necessities from England for a number of years. Some of them did die off when the British ships didn't arrive. And the pioneers who made their way West—they weren't all Dan'l Boones who could live on the land. It took two or three generations in some parts of the West to work the soil up into productivity, so that a farmer could survive. The kind of social change that is going on now will probably require a great deal of help from the affluent but increasingly self-destructive status quo. Why not? Meanwhile, it is true enough that a great many of the young are careless about sanitation. Stream pollution in northern California proves this.

But we can't help but hope that these critics of Dr. Otto read the article by Nicholas Johnson, Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission, in the issue of *Saturday Review* in which their letters appear. He isn't advocating communes or "running away," but he makes very clear what the young who choose to live in communes are determined to leave behind. Mr. Johnson's job is to see that television programs are produced in the interests of the people. There is only one puzzling thing about Mr. Johnson, and that is why he keeps on trying to do this. The cleansing of the Augean stables would be a lot easier. Early in his article he says:

> Television tells us, hour after gruesome hour, that the primary measure of an individual's worth is his consumption of products, his sexuality, his measuring up to ideals found in packages mass-produced and distributed by corporate America. Commercialism for many products (and even some programs), but especially the drug commercials, sell the gospel that there are instant solutions to life's most pressing personal problems. You need not think about your own emotional maturity and development of individuality, your discipline, training, and education; your perception of the world; your

> willingness to cooperate and compromise and work with other people; or about your developing deep and meaningful human relationships and trying to keep them in repair. You pop a pill. "Better living through chemistry" is not just Du Pont's slogan. It is one of the commandments of consumerism.

Nearly all the first page of Mr. Johnson's article is taken up by extension of this disgusted and completely accurate diatribe:

> . . . what's true of the magic-chemical ads is true of commercials and programs generally. Look at the settings. Auto ads push clothes fashion and vacations. Furniture wax ads push wall-to-wall carpeting and draperies. Breakfast cereal ads push new stoves and refrigerators. . . . Eric Barnouw's three-volume history of broadcasting reveals that the disappearance of the early-1950s dramatists from television was due to advertisers' revulsion at the dramatist's message that happiness could be found by ordinary people in lower class settings.

Mr. Johnson's job is to change all that; at least, he thinks of it that way. At the beginning he says: "I feel some responsibility to examine the possible role of mass communications in our current malaise."

After he gets through with lambasting television he writes a really fine article on how a man of the twentieth century—not a dropout, not a commune-ist, not an alienated hater of the American way, but a very successful lawyer and bureau chief—can keep his sanity. What he recommends is very much like the suggestion of Wendell Berry in the portion of his book that appeared in the *Hudson Review* (see last week's Review). It is a sufficiently detailed discussion of how a man can simplify his life and of the importance of learning how to contribute to at least some part of his own life-support system. The reasons for doing this are even more important than how to do it. He found, for example, that purchased services were practically organizing his life for him:

> This was extraordinarily "efficient" in one sense; that is, I was working at perhaps 98 per cent of the level of professional production of which I am capable. But what I concluded was that it was bad for life for I was *living* only a small percentage of my ultimate capacity to live. . . . my conclusion is that you ought to try to do a *little bit* of all your life-support activities and a substantial amount of whichever one or two of them appeal to you and make the most practical sense for you. I have taken to tending a simple garden, preparing my own simple foods, doing some modest mending of clothes, and providing my own transportation by bicycle. Undoubtedly, other activities will fit better into your own life-pattern.
>
> If you start looking around for simplification, for ways to make you less possession-bound and give you more chance to participate in your life, the opportunities are endless. Start by searching your house or apartment for things you can throw away. Ask yourself, "If I were living in the woods, would I spend a day going to town to buy this aerosol can?" Look for simple substitutes.

In brief, Mr. Johnson is the open and avowed enemy of the "always more" theory of progress. He seems right on practically everything except his final thought: "I think television could—and should—help us to understand the alternatives to the conspicuous consumption, chemical, corporate life-style." Perhaps it *should*—but first it will have to die in order to be born again in the Jeffersonian world of which Mr. Johnson dreams.