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ART AND TRANSCENDENCE

A MAN can learn from a work of art to give up his harsh impatience with human limitation. It isn't that limitation becomes acceptable, or something you are content with, but that good art illustrates the uses and necessities of limitation, and in the exquisite balances which the artist achieves, mirroring them in his work, there is fundamental instruction in the relative fulfillments of human growth. These fulfillments do not reach a final ideal, but neither do they violate it. Perhaps one could say that they exhaust the possibilities within a given limit.

This is a hard lesson to learn in relation to ethical idealism—the need to stop dividing the human race up into categories of good and evil men, according to external measures of achievement. The sectarians have never learned it. They seem persuaded that if they fail to require perfection of others, they will betray or abandon their ideals, but in a world so demandingly ordered there would be no place for children; and this, as a matter of fact, is illustrated in the incredibly unfeeling requirements imposed by the Puritans on the young; to say nothing of the egotism their narrow absolutes fostered in their relations with people of different religious persuasions. Austin Warren, in *The New England Conscience* (University of Michigan Press, 1966), deals perceptively with this misapplication of ethical abstractions:

> Much of the falsity of the Protestant ethics lies in just what—whether in its popular or its philosophic form—it has prided itself on: its concern with self and subjectivity. Concern with *my* motives, *my* intentions, *my* conscience is always in danger of becoming more concerned with me than with God and my neighbor, with that whole vast other world. Egoism—refined subjectivity—is morally more dangerous partly because more subtle, than plain frank egotism or selfishness. . . .
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> One of the most penetrating comments ever made on rigorism in general, Mrs. Stowe makes on the Edwardean [Jonathan Edwards] variety: "There is a ladder to heaven whose base God has placed in human affections, tender instincts, symbolic feelings, sacraments of love. . . ." The highest step of the ladder "but few selectest spirits ever on earth attain-—this Ultima Thule of virtue had been seized upon by our sage as the all of religion. He knocked out every rung of the ladder but the highest, and then, pointing to its hopeless splendor said to the world, 'Get up thither and be saved'."
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> Mrs. Stowe expresses, in her ladder figure, primarily—and consciously, doubtless—the ladder between Heaven and earth which Jacob saw in his dream at Bethel. But she expressed also the spirit of Diotima's discourse in Plato's *Symposium*. . . .

There are endless examples of this severe perfectionist temper which demands so much of others, and which, when these demands are institutionalized, reveal both the Procrustean narrowness of the ideal and, in time, its corruption or moral emptiness. Contrast for example the humanist qualities of some of the old Bolsheviki with their dogmatic shell in the heresy-hunting of the Stalinist inquisitor described by Koestler in *Darkness at Noon.* Think of the hopeless search of the radical right for final definition of political virtue in an epoch of social change—something which can never be achieved except momentarily in ridiculous, self-contradictory terms. The resulting absolutes overlook plain facts in the daily lives of even their formulators. These arguments never have rational coherence; their unity is always in the emotional polarity of being "right." And any tolerance of differing opinions would lead them into a morass of "error" where their own virtue—subsisting almost entirely on condemnation of others—would surely be lost.

From a psychological viewpoint, the matter of where these phenomena of sectarianism appear—whether in politics, religion, or ordinary

daily life is not of much importance. What matters is the habit of mind which fails to distinguish between righteousness and growth. Tolstoy's denunciation of the Western idea of Progress is really a denunciation of the failure to make this distinction. Impatience with the needs of human growth pervades our entire culture. This becomes clear in the practical inability of the American parent to appreciate the art of children. The average American has a stereotype of "art"—a vague notion of the finish and completeness a work of art is supposed to achieve. Not knowing how the heights of art are reached, he adopts a conventional and often withering notion of what in fact is art. This is the inevitable issue of his ignorance of growth. He becomes literally *unable* to recognize the wonderful meanings which may have been captured by what he is confident is formally imperfect or incompleted work. He has never tried to understand the art of children because he is mainly interested in hurrying them along to finished adulthood—which turns out to be a very distorted condition of being, as we are now beginning to discover. Only a sick stereotype of maturity is possible for people who do not understand how, and therefore what, they have become.

In a discussion of the difference between art done by Japanese children and that done by American children, Daniel M. Mendelowitz (in *Art and the Child,* Stanford, 1963) writes first of the American child's environment:

> The child's imaginative life reflects the values of the adult community, and if the community at large admires the athlete, the daredevil driver, and the glib salesman, the child will hesitate to project himself into the role of the patient craftsman or reflective artist. Even the child who loves to paint and draw, particularly as he comes to adolescence, may suffer acute ambivalence, for he knows that the world around him, whose admiration he seeks, places little value on what he loves.
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> When one sees the art work of Japanese children, one is inevitably impressed by the sustained interest reflected in the paintings and drawings. In contrast to former methods, Japanese children are today encouraged to paint in a spontaneous manner similar to that employed in American and progressive European schools, but their work frequently reflects a complexity and attention to detail in striking contrast to the hurried and relatively undeveloped quality that characterizes much of the painting of American school children. Many factors contribute to this difference, but one is the traditional reverence in which the Japanese hold the arts and crafts. The Japanese child can throw himself whole-heartedly into the act of painting, undisturbed by the feeling that what he is doing is considered unimportant by the community at large.

While this passage considers broadly the question of children's art, it is at least clear that in America the work of *children,* as such, is hardly understood as capable of being good in itself—if only as a vital way station in the development of the perceptive and expressive powers of human beings. The parent's idea is that the child must rush on to a *destination,* get ready for a *job,* or exhibit a really *professional* capacity before his work can be worthy of friendly or serious attention. Additional confinements come from the preoccupation with intellectual formulations, scientific abstractions, and the intense desire—brought forward, no doubt, from the days of fierce creedal certainties in religion—of the American people to be *right.* Robert Jay Wolff, writing on the importance of visual intelligence in general education, gives some idea of the distortions which result from this preoccupation:

> Any college student with the gift of swift verbal comprehension, a retentive memory and a strong concern for personal status, may statistically earn the title of "superior." Yet, insofar as the quantitative scope of his achievement may cover the absence of qualitative depth, to call him superior could indeed be less than the whole truth. When this swift young mind is held back by the slower pace of his "average" classmates, a new half-truth appears in the form of a specially accelerated study program for his benefit. The hope here is that superiority, vastly accelerated, will lead to higher and more advanced levels of superiority. But what is often accelerated is not superiority of mind and spirit but rather tidy, academic superficialities. More critical is the fact that the independent, courageously exploratory mind is sometimes slow in its growth, and its slowness in

> the presence of the agile standard is downgraded to an inferior if not hopeless status.
>
> Is it possible that the superficiality, the dependent conformity and inaction that has been found so typical of young people today, is a condition partly created by education itself and then misunderstood by it?

Or, as Benjamin DeMott put it (in the Summer *American Scholar*), speaking of the general failure to understand the role of the imagination in education:

> The nation feeds itself on rhetoric about "individual rates of progress"—and yet possesses little knowledge, if any, of the steps by which the human being becomes itself, the acts of the imagination on which the achievement of personhood depends.

We said at the beginning that a work of art may teach a man to become patient with the process of growth, having in mind two recent novels, both concerned with the practice of religion. In both stories the religion is a sectarian establishment, subject to and deserving all the criticisms which may be made of a separative religious community. But these books consider the life in these communities *from the inside,* looking through the minds of the believers instead of *at* them. One of these books, *The Dean's Watch,* by Elizabeth Goudge, is a delicately compassionate tale of a crusty old Dean, and of his growth as a man, and the growth of others, in the over-arching framework of his faith. Reading this story, one tends to set aside for a time the severe criticism that a more ideal conception of religion must surely bring to bear on the Church of England through the centuries. There is for example its mind-betraying fidelity to the Thirty-nine Articles, so thoroughly exposed in liberal analyses such as are found in the *Hibbert Journal.* Closer to home, and more intolerable because matters of *practice,* are the educational policies of Anglican politicians in Canada, defeating the hopes of Canadian reformers who work for an intellectually free system of public education in Canada. (See "Children" for Aug. 28.) Miss Goudge's shyly heroic Anglican Dean does not alter these criticisms, but he illustrates, you might say, how much of a man an Anglican Dean could nonetheless become. This portrayal seems entirely legitimate in a work of art, which conveys the wonder of a particular passage of human becoming, and is not an inquiry into the furthest reaches of human possibility—the unavoidable business of philosophy. Yet there is a sense in which the work of art must also have an occasional glint of philosophy in its development, as when a man proves himself better than his creed, or any creed, and nobler in mind than the intellectually fettering dogmas from which he draws inspiration.

Neither account of Anglican religion invalidates the other, since one is an analysis of its limitations, defects, and anti-human historical influence, while the other is a tribute to a man who, according to his lights, makes steppingstones of those limitations. (Actually, Miss Goudge's book is not about Anglican religion at all; it only seems to be.) Such books are not much help in pointing the way to religious reform, but they may have a humanizing effect on all efforts toward reform, since the improvement of men, and then, afterward, of systems of belief, is what we are after.

The other book we have in mind is the best-seller, *The Chosen,* by Chaim Potok. This book is an extraordinary study of the tensions which develop in human life when the yearning after truth and goodness has to find its way along a tortuous route mapped by age-old canons of righteous exclusiveness. It becomes clear that sectarian certainty transforms righteousness into self-righteousness, and that this brings in turn endless occasions for mutual distrust and rivalry in the pursuit of truth. And yet, despite the isolations of these intra-community struggles in a Jewish neighborhood in Brooklyn, there remains—"on high," so to speak—an impersonal forum in which impartial excellence is demonstrated and recognized, regardless of sectarian division. The arena of this

transcendence is the study of the Talmud. The exercise of the mind and the display of its prowess in the solution of moral and religious questions had an internal momentum toward dissolving the barriers which custom and tradition had placed between the members of the various Jewish groups. The story develops around the lives of two fathers and two sons. One father is a *tzaddik*, hereditary leader and teacher of a Hasidic group to whom something of the charisma of a messiah attaches. The other is a learned Jew who is a teacher in a private college, but a man who has opened his mind to the scholarship of the Western world. The sons of these two men are brilliant students; they become friends in boyhood through the incident of a baseball game which, instead of being an event of athletic competition, is turned by the Hasidic community's team into a theological demonstration. The Hasidic boys must win because the faith of their fathers is at stake, and they do win, not by skill but by proud will. These themes of competitiveness and self-righteousness haunt the book from beginning to end, yet they have the wonderful leaven of commitment and devotion. The gentile world hardly intrudes at all, save as an outside, alien presence, a secular environment which is merely there, of little moral reality except for its vulgar temptations. Mr. Potok enables the reader to feel from the inside the traditional justifications felt by the Jewish community for its isolation, and as the story unfolds this fundamental conflict is seen as the struggle of the broadening and universalizing tendency of awakening minds—an awakening brought mainly by the discipline of Talmudic interpretation—to break through the very focus of that discipline, itself created in part by the sharp limitations of the Jewish community.

Much of the book is devoted to contrasting methods of exegesis in Talmudic studies. True excitement comes when a young Talmud scholar, having exhausted the conventional methods of resolving a difficulty, dares to question the *text*. He suggests that an error has been made in translation or rendition, and defends this view by what might be called a pure humanistic critique. For the teacher this is both a wonderful and a terrible thing. Such freedom from tradition brings great risks. In the story, when the boy dares such a critique privately in a conversation with his teacher, the teacher accepts the analysis but warns his pupil never to use this method before the class. He does not explain the prohibition, but the point is clear: such purity of thought would threaten the cohesive power of the Jewish community. Yet the teacher recognizes that *this* boy is able to handle his freedom of mind without losing balance, and the teacher is too good a man to wish to try to confine him. Yet the unity of the community must not be threatened.

There are several such wonderful moments in this book—instances of cultural transcendence. They embody the meaning of the story. Sometimes they come in dialogue between the two boys, or between a father and his own son, or with the other boy, but always the climactic element has to do with the daring of a mind to be free and the need to balance its loyalty to the instrument of its awakening with the emancipating discoveries that come as a result.

The reader is made to feel the intensity of differences of conviction between the two fathers, as in the case of the Hasidic rabbi's total opposition to the Zionist movement, which for him means the compromise of a religious ideal with corrupting political considerations, while the other father throws himself into the Zionist movement with all his heart. This separates the two families for years, during which the boys, between whom there is deep affection, cannot even speak to each other. But despite deep contradictions and conflicts of opinion, the loyalties of these people are not violated, but remain true, although obscured, and the pain of the separation is simply endured.

The high point of the book comes at the end, when the old Hasidic rabbi, the *tzaddik* responsible for keeping pure and transmitting the faith of his community, explains to the two boys

why, since the early childhood of his son, he has never spoken to him except about the Talmud. This deliberate restraint—an unnatural suppression—of fatherly affection is a harsh cruelty which pervades the whole story, becoming, finally, a symbol of the pain suffered by all. Yet the old man's explanation has a transfiguring effect. It comes when he tells the two boys that he knows his son will not succeed him as *tzaddik* and releases him from that traditional obligation. He is free to go to the university to study psychology, as he longs to do. Both boys, now young men, are present, but the *tzaddik* speaks only to his son's friend, letting the other "overhear":

> "You think I am cruel? Yes, I see from your eyes that you think I was cruel to my Daniel. Perhaps. But he has learned. Let my Daniel become a psychologist. I know he wishes to become a psychologist. I do not see his books? I did not see the letters from the universities? I do not see his eyes? I do not hear his soul crying? Of course I know. For a long time I have known. Let my Daniel become a psychologist. I have no more fear now. All his life he will be a tzaddik. He will be a tzaddik for the world. And the world needs a tzaddik."

This is his explanation of his years of silence:

> How could I teach my son the way I was taught by my father and not drive him away from Torah? Because this is America, Reuven. This is not Europe. It is an open world here. Here there are libraries and books and schools. Here there are great universities that do not concern themselves with how many Jewish students they have. I did not want to drive my son away from God, but I did not want him to grow up a mind without a soul. I knew already when he was a boy I could not prevent his mind from going to the world for knowledge. I knew in my heart it might prevent him from taking my place. . . . Ah, what a price to pay. . . . 'Why do you cry, Father?' he asked me once under the talks. 'Because people are suffering,' I told him. He could not understand. Ah, what it is to be a mind without a soul. . . . And when he was older, the years I drew myself away from him. . . . 'Why have you stopped answering my questions, Father?' he asked me once. 'You are old enough to look into your own soul for the answers,' I told him. He laughed once and said, 'That man is an ignoramus, Father.' I was angry. 'Look into his soul,' I said. 'Stand inside his soul and see the world through his eyes. You will know the pain he feels because of his ignorance, and you will not laugh.' He was bewildered and hurt. The nightmares he began to have . . . . But he learned to find answers for himself. He suffered and learned to listen to the sufferings of others. In the silence between us, he began to hear the world crying."

Yet in the end he said to his own son:

> "Daniel," he said brokenly. "Forgive me . . . for everything . . . I have done. A—a wiser father . . . may have done differently. . . . I am not ... wise."

Few books light up the polar roles of cultural limitation as this story does. There is no "justification" of sectarianism and self-righteousness. Indeed, the dispelling of these dark shadows is the book's Promethean strength. But patience tempers the overcoming, and a hovering love assuages its pain.

There is no hint of an "argument" in this book. The content is existential. It is a story of growth which interiorizes for the reader many matters which he may have seen only from the outside, and concerning which he felt only puzzled withdrawal or shrugging distaste. And so it is that a man can learn from a work of art to give up his harsh impatience with limitation, and yet, at the same time work ardently to remove its cause.

REVIEW
IDEALS AND "FEASIBILITIES"

IN an article in the Summer 1968 issue of *The Public Interest*, a journal of sociology, Amitai Etzioni gives expression to the world-weariness that a serious investigator of social problems is bound to feel if he looks at the contemporary scene from a strictly "objective" point of view. His title is " 'Shortcuts' to Social Change?" His purpose is to show that "shortcuts," while often ineffectual, are about all that modern society is capable of in the way of reforms. So, he thinks, we had better settle for shortcuts. Dr. Etzioni doesn't really admire mere palliatives, but he thinks some of them are better than others, and he is doubtless right about this.

What does he mean by "shortcuts," as contrasted with genuine remedies? Well, "gun control" is one constructive shortcut that he thinks ought to be applied, since we don't seem to be able to redirect the energies now expressed in a homicidal direction. Dr. Etzioni makes this common-sense argument:

> While motives and modes of crime vary, most murders are not carried out in cold blood but by highly agitated persons. . . . Obviously, if deadly weapons were harder to come by, the chances of these quarrels being "cooled out," or a third party intervening, would have been much higher and most fatalities would have been averted.
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> . . . a policeman can learn to defend himself from most assaults without having to use a firearm. Most policemen who are killed on duty are killed by guns; all but one of the fifty-three killed in the United States in 1965, according to official statistics. Hence if the population is disarmed, the fatalities resulting from arming the police can also be saved. Here, as in considering other devices, one must think in terms of multi-factor models and probabilities. No one device, such as a gun-control law, can *solve* the problem. But each additional device may well reduce the probability that a violent act will cause a fatality. This is a "shortcut" in the right direction—even if it doesn't lead you all the way home. Not because I don't want to go all the way at once; but because such trips are often not available.

But has sociology nothing to say about what we ought to do at the other end—from the long-term point of view? Should we not be busy working, also, on a basic solution? Apparently, this is not a serious concern of modern sociology. Sociologists compose no utopian programs, offer no Platonic dreams of an ideal education for the public good. They tell us only how things are; and Dr. Etzioni, in this burst of candor, reveals that except for occasional shortcut palliatives, they are likely to stay that way, or get worse.

The candor comes because he is tired of hearing from his colleagues that shortcut solutions are gimmicky, that they treat only symptoms. He says:

> Until a few years ago I shared these views. But I was confronted with the following situation: The resources needed to transform the "basic conditions" in contemporary America are unavailable and unlikely to be available in the near future. So far as dollars and cents are concerned, Mayor John V. Lindsay testified before Congress that he needed $100 billion to rebuild New York's slums; at the present rate, it would take forty years before such an amount would be available to eliminate *all* American slums. And that is housing alone! With regard to all needs, a study by the National Planning Association calculated that if the United States sought, by 1985, to realize the modest goals specified by the Eisenhower Commission on National Goals, it would (assuming even a 4 per cent growth rate in GNP) be at least $150 billion a year short.
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> But even if the economic resources were available, and the political will to use them for social improvement were present, we would still face other severe shortages, principally professional manpower. In the United States in 1966 there were an estimated four to five million alcoholics, 556,000 patients in mental hospitals, and 501,000 out-patients in mental health clinics. To serve them there were about 1,100 psychoanalysts and 7,000 certified psychotherapists. If each therapist could treat fifty patients intensively, a staggering figure by present standards, this would still leave most alcoholic and mental patients without effective treatment. Today most of those in mental hospitals are not treated at all: only 2 per cent of the hospital staffs in 1964 were psychiatrists, only 10 per cent were professionals of *any* sort; most of the staff are "attendants," more than half of whom have not

completed high school and only 8 per cent of whom have had any relevant training.

The ground of Dr. Etzioni's pessimism and disillusionment is his careful inspection of the status quo. The problems are so great, and the public inclination to deal with them in terms of fundamental and characterological change so slight—another conclusion drawn from a study of the status quo—that there is nothing left but the "shortcuts"—the manipulation of symptoms—for him to recommend.

Much of his article is a review of various shortcuts that are being or might be applied to social problems. He speaks, for example, of the "chemical" control by tranquillizers of the symptoms of mental illness, showing that while the drugs "obviously do not change personalities or social conditions," they at least reduce the cost of treatment from a daily cost of about seven dollars a day (maintenance in a state mental hospital) to about fifteen cents (cost of the drug). An honest evaluation of this "shortcut" brings the conclusion:

> Patients, to put it bluntly, are often so drugged that they doze on their couches at home rather than being locked up in a mental hospital or wandering in the streets. . . . obviously, heavily drugged people are not effective members of society or happy human beings. Still, a device or procedure which offers a reduction of costs on one dimension (societal or personal) without *increasing* the costs on others, despite the fact that it does not "solve" the problem, is truly useful---almost by definition.

By this reasoning, Dr. Etzioni reaches the value judgment on which his entire discussion is based:

> It may be argued that by "taking society off the hook" [with "shortcuts"] we deflect its attention from the deeper causes of the malaise, in this case of mental illness. But this, in turn may be countered by stating that because these causes lie so deep, and because their removal requires such basic transformations, basic remedial action is unlikely to be undertaken. *Often our society seems to be "choosing" not between symptomatic* (*superficial*) *treatment and "cause"* (*full*) *treatment, but between treatment of symptoms and no treatment at all.* Hence, in the examination of the values of many shortcuts, the ultimate question must be: is the society ready or able to provide full-scale treatment of the problem at hand? If no fundamental change is in sight, most people would favor having at least ameliorations and, hence, shortcuts. Moreover, the underlying assumption that amelioration deflects attention may be questioned: studies of radical social change show that it is often preceded by "piecemeal" reforms which, though not originally aimed at the roots of the problem, create a new setting, or spur the mobilization for further action.

Dr. Etzioni also points out that shortcuts sometimes work fairly well when their application is intelligently limited. An illustration is the use of teaching machines to take the place of teachers. The problem is not whether machines are a proper substitute for human beings, but what sort of instruction a machine can do fairly well. It has been found, he says, that they are useful in helping people to learn mechanical skills like driving a car or typing. They also serve as a sort of "animated" books.

But the value of this article is not so much in such sensible minor conclusions as in its general perspective on the present-day practice of social science. There is, first, open admission of defeat at the level of fundamental change or reform. Second, there is a "settling" for half-measures, palliatives, and ingenious easing of the burdens of society. This shows us where we are, and how little is to be expected of social science. And it makes it pertinent to look searchingly for other ways of thinking about remedies for social problems.

For example, there is, first, the proposal by Henry Anderson in (MANAS for Jan. 17, 1968) of a "third force" sort of sociology, which challenges the "status quo" criterion of what is normative or "real." Second, a serious investigation of the Synanon approach to all such problems—briefly referred to by Dr. Etzioni—is certainly in order. Synanon represents the method of the therapeutic community. After detailing the ineffectuality of the "problem-solving" approach to the endless malfunctions of people close to

breaking down under the strains of modern society, Charles E. Dederich, Synanon's founder, says:

> Synanon's method will be completely different. It would not administrate such a situation. It would absorb it. It would take in such a family and introduce it to a completely new style of life. . . .

Third, there is the investigation pursued by Plato in the *Republic*, an inquiry into social and educational ideals in a totally uncompromising spirit—which was, as Werner Jaeger has observed, "only another way of expressing the historical fact that morality had finally separated itself from politics and from the laws or customs of the historical state; and that henceforth the independent conscience of the individual is the supreme court even for public questions."

There is considerable evidence, and not only from Dr. Etzioni's paper, that the present is a similar period of history, making similar theoretical studies of ideal social situations very much in order. Looking at ideals instead of "feasibilities" is something that modern sociology totally neglects. A paralysis of the moral imagination seems to be the direct result, in social science, of the cult of "objectivity."

COMMENTARY
SCIENTISTS WORTH READING

A QUESTION that begins to haunt the reader of Dr. Etzioni's paper advocating "shortcut" social remedies (see Review) is whether the "basic" things that ought to be done, but don't get done because of public indifference, would really work. That is, do the experts "know" what to do, or do they just talk as if they know? For example, when Dr. Etzioni explains that the reason why we can't carry out the recommendations of the Eisenhower Commission on National Goals is that we don't have enough money, is he assuming that the Eisenhower Commission really got at the root of our troubles? And does Mayor Lindsay have the true solution for transforming the "basic conditions" in New York City when he tells Congress that he would need $100 billion to do it?

Is human welfare in the long-term view really a function of an impossible money-raising program?

Where does the paralysis lie? Is it in the masses of people, or is it built into the theories of quantitative social analysis?

And is it really the case that if we had enough psychotherapists, we could solve the enormous problems of mental and emotional disorder Dr. Etzioni describes?

Scientists with the courage to engage in utopian reflections don't think so. In his *Eupsychian Management* (Richard Irwin, Homewood, Ill., 1965), a study of the possibilities of turning the world of economic activities into a "school for living," Dr. A. H. Maslow writes:

> I gave up long ago the possibility of improving the world or the whole human species via individual psychotherapy. This is impracticable. As a matter of fact it is impossible quantitatively. (Especially in view of the fact that so many people are not suited for individual psychotherapy.) Then I turned for my utopian purpose (eupsychian) to education as a way of reaching the whole human species. I then thought of the lessons from individual psychotherapy as essentially research data, the most important usefulness of which was application to the eupsychian improvement of educational institutions so that they could make people better en masse. Only recently it has dawned on me that as important as education, perhaps more important, is the work life of the individual, since everybody works. If the lessons of psychology, of individual psychotherapy, of social psychology, etc., can be applied to man's economic life, then my hope is that this too can be given a eupsychian direction, thereby tending to influence in principle all human beings.

Eupsychian Management spells out what Dr. Maslow regards as possible, and why. The point is that he is a man with hope. The critical abstractions about business may be true, but they are only *partly* true. Good things can happen in the work environment, and they happen more frequently when they are encouraged to happen. And this is about all that can be expected of any human situation.

A good utopian writer is a man who seeks out the validity in hope and champions it to people who have been hearing nothing but hopelessness. If he is intelligent and critical as well as affirmative and aspiring, he becomes a sort of scientist—his field is the field of *becoming.* The way things are (see Dr. Etzioni), no other sort of scientist is worth reading, these days.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

OVERCOMING LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES

DEVELOPMENTAL LANGUAGE DISABILITY by Margaret Rawson (Johns Hopkins Press, 1968, $5.50) is a study of fifty-six boys who attended the School in Rose Valley, Moylan, Pennsylvania, between 1935 and 1947. Of these fifty-six, twenty were diagnosed as dyslexic—that is, affected by language difficulties which could not be assigned to brain damage or some other organic defect. The purpose of the study is to show that these difficulties can be largely overcome through remedial teaching. The book is subtitled "Adult Accomplishments of Dyslexic Boys," the point being that these boys went on to have successful careers, in spite of their early language troubles. In her introduction, the author says:

> If this work generates the optimism which it seems to justify, then clinicians, teachers, parents, and especially the present-day young dyslexic patients or students should feel both more hopeful and more eager to tackle the problems of specific language difficulty. It is for their use especially that the writer is happy to present this report.

"Dyslexia" is still something of a mystery and the word itself is formidable. It means impaired speech, or the inadequate relation of a child to any usage of words. As a ten-year-old said: "What's *wrong* is my *words.* I forget them." A formal synonym is "low language learning facility." One of the puzzles is that it affects boys more than girls—about four to one. In the case of this group of fifty-six boys, the incidence of dyslexia seems high. But some of the boys were brought to the school because of the special language program carried on by Mrs. Rawson; in addition, there was very careful screening of each child, since the School's policy is to give close attention to individual needs. So, the high rate of dyslexia may not be remarkable.

Awareness of the general meanings now covered by the term *dyslexia* came first from ophthalmologists, whose observations "led eventually to the recognition that the difficulty lay not in the eyes but in the functioning of the language areas of the brain." The educational approach followed by Mrs. Rawson was developed by Dr. Samuel T. Orton, a psychiatrist who decided to find out why children are referred to mental health facilities. This investigation led him to seek an explanation for "the occurrence of specific language disability in many otherwise normal children who showed no evidence of organic pathology, and to devise the beginning of procedures for the amelioration of the difficulties they experienced." Dr. Orton's term for dyslexia is *strephosymbolia* ("twisted symbols"). His estimate of his own work is of interest:

> "Whether or not our theory is right I do not know, but I do know that the methods of retraining which we have derived from that viewpoint have worked. I do not claim them to be a panacea for reading troubles of all sorts, but I do feel that we understand the blockade which occurs so frequently in children with good minds and which results in the characteristic reading disability of the strephosymbolic type of child

The exciting thing about this book is that Mrs. Rawson has been able to keep track of all the boys and find out how they were doing years after getting help in school. The general conclusion is that the dyslexic boys in the group "have made at least as good records as their nondyslexic fellows." This reverses the former clinical judgment that dyslexic children have poorer prospects for "success in later educational and occupational achievement" than nondyslexic students. In the reports of interviews with these men of forty-odd, their healthy-minded independence of a childhood limitation peeps through the sober text. These minor manifestations of a "Dibs" spirit delight the reader and he wishes for more of them.

It is this study of the *lives* of persons who were once dyslexic children which makes Mrs.

Rawson's book especially valuable. It is the "longitudinal" sort of research which educators long for but seldom get. While the book does not focus on *how* the School in Rose Valley helped the twenty boys through problems of language learning, nor amplify the understanding of dyslexia itself (hardly a finished task from any point of view), these important subjects are treated in other books listed in the bibliography, and the author's main purpose is to demonstrate how much can be done by educational means for such children.

The population of the fifty-six children studied was uniquely homogeneous, described as "a group of intellectually gifted, culturally advantaged children from which those with language-learning problems had not been excluded by processes of selection." This offered a unique opportunity:

> First, to study a kind of population seldom examined but worth consideration because of its high potential; secondly to examine the language disability children in such a group when they remained with their peers while receiving special teaching for their disabilities; and thirdly, to take advantage of a continuous acquaintance of an investigator with a group of subjects spanning a full generation's time.

Can such a group, it might be asked, serve as a model for work with other groups in which there is widely variable intelligence, parental influence, and inner drive, such that the unification of these factors for a high potential of growth and achievement is much less likely? The question has some point, but the impact of a study made under "ideal conditions" lies in its demonstration of far-reaching possibilities when conditions *are* right. This cannot help but be a challenge to parents and educators to create environments where comparable results may be obtained.

This book also confirms by experience the importance of early detection of language difficulties, enabling teachers to prevent the psychological disasters of childhood failure:

> The problem of low self-concept was more prevalent and persistent among the boys who were diagnosed and given help *after* they had experienced failure, for then it was hard for them to believe they were as capable and as likely to succeed as the accumulating evidence of their competence indicated. Low self-concept was, rather surprisingly, something of a general problem in this school, however. Bright children are vulnerable, especially in a school like Rose Valley where internalizing of goals, standards, and discipline is expected, and particularly if their language learning ability is at variance with their intelligence, for no one needs to point out their inadequacies: they are usually their own harshest judges.

There are these intimations of the general remedial approach:

> These children had problems in one or more of the modalities used in language behavior—visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. . . . If, therefore, the training made use of the student's simultaneous seeing, hearing, and awareness of muscular action while he made sounds and letters and their carefully blended sequences, there should result a solid foundation of skills on which to base language competence. The content of this training could not be randomly chosen nor casually taught; it had to be sequential and cumulative for each child if it was to be fully effective.

To move toward self-actualization, the self must attempt to fulfill the possibilities it perceives, coming from home, school, and social influences. Perhaps what is lacking in "under-achievers" (regardless of apparent cause) is awareness of acceptable models, goals, and possibilities:

> The potentialities of intelligence for symbolic thinking generalizing, and problem-solving have been recognized, but the depths have never been plumbed nor ways devised whereby these potentials might be used to overcome verbal deficiencies and the limitations of automatic processes—such as rote memory and stimulus-response learning.

Skinnerian methods of behavior modification are not designed to awaken the inner springs of creativity and will. Margaret Rawson's closing statements are a valuable contribution in relation to this aspect of growth:

> Their [the boys'] persistence and their parents' support were vital ingredients in their achievements. It may be that one of the school's most valuable

contributions was to the self-concept of the dyslexic boys, a persistent faith in their intelligence and capacity to achieve, transmitted to the boys directly and indirectly. Important as encouragement was, however, it would probably not have been adequate in itself. It was necessary to work toward eventually transcending their self-doubts by convincing them with demonstrations of their progress toward competence. Convincing the boys of their progress was not always quick or easy, even when the evidence was clearly before them.

FRONTIERS

Where the Wild Thyme Grows

MEDICAL specialists, Jung notes in one of his books, do not make good nurses. They are adept in the formulation of theory about disease entities and in the elaboration of techniques, but when it comes to dealing compassionately with sick human beings—well, you had better get somebody else.

Something similar, it seems, can be said of nature-lovers and naturalists. They don't make obedient theorists, possibly for the reason that they are fond of living things and don't see any reason for insisting that they conform their behavior to strait-jackets of scientific hypothesis. Take for example the book, *Seeds of Life* (Devin-Adair, 1955), by John Langdon-Davies, which has in it some wonderful tales about nonconformists to the "laws" of evolution. One of these concerns a species of butterfly found in parts of England, called Large Blue. The Large Blue lays its eggs on the wild thyme of grassy meadows, and these hatch into little caterpillars which look like woodlice and which eat the thyme flowers and also each other. This cannibalistic tendency is a curious "survival" device but only a mild anomaly when compared to the rest of the life-cycle of the Large Blue. The grub eventually gets fiddle-footed and climbs down the thyme stem, going straight in the same direction—however it happens to land—through the grass. Then it meets an ant. This is crucial. It must meet an ant. The ant, having instructions from primeval instinct, strokes the grub in a way that causes it eventually to secrete a drop of thyme honeydew. This is consumed with pleasure by the ant, and by other ants who have gathered around in the meantime. When the caterpillar runs dry the others disperse, but the original ant has further duties to perform. Controlled by organic memories, he waits for the right moment, which comes when the forepart of the caterpillar swells up. The ant then gets astride of the grub, grabs it in its jaws, and drags it off to an ant nursery beneath the ground where the caterpillar is carefully fed on the excess population of baby ants. Thus nourished, the grub produces more honeydew, which is milked and consumed by the ants.

In time, the grub grows up and becomes a butterfly, except that, being underground in the ant dungeon, its wings lie clotted and useless on its back. Now it starts a trek to the light, through the long corridors of the ant world. The preparation of its wings for flight seems to need the interval of this journey. Finally it surfaces, crawls up a stem of grass, and then, after a bit, its wings are ready and it flies around, finds a mate, lays its eggs on a wild thyme plant, and dies.

A very interesting illustration of Darwinian evolution! As the author says:

> There are eminent scientists who find no difficulty whatever in believing that this remarkable behavior of one out of many closely related Blue butterflies can be explained in terms of natural selection and the survival of the fittest. It all happened by chance, they say; somehow some Large Blue butterflies inherited, for example, a new habit of going off on walks at a certain age. On their walk by chance an ant met them, and quite by chance happened to stroke them and found that this pleasing honeydew was the result. Then, by chance, since ants cannot think to themselves that this would be a good present for the boys at home, an ant dragged a grub off to its nest, and so on and so on, all by chance.
>
> The ants and the Large Blue butterflies to whom all these chances occurred, inherited a changed nature which led them to take advantage of them. As they were successful in surviving, they passed on their new habit to their offspring, and now the habit is common to all Large Blues, since those who did not get wanderlust—did not find ant grubs appetizing, did not know by freshly acquired instinct how to get out of an ant's nest, etc., etc.—died without offspring.

"Well," says Mr. Langdon-Davies, "it may be so, and it is a matter which cannot be gone into here." You sort of know what he thinks, but he does not openly challenge Biological City Hall.

Another book with similar tidbits in it is *Plant Ecology* by W. B. McDougall (Philadelphia: Lea

& Ferbiger, 1931). The following saga of "chance" appears under the glamorous heading of "Nutritive Disjunctive Symbiosis":

> Perhaps the most interesting of all cases of pollination by moths is that of the yucca which are pollinated by small moths belonging to the genus *Pronuba*. The flowers of the yuccas are pendulous and the style hangs down farther than the stamens but it is impossible for the pollen to fall from the anthers to the stigma because the stigma is cup-shaped and the stigmatic portion is on the inner surface only. [See!] The female moths begin work soon after sundown. Each one collects some pollen from the anthers and holds it in her specially constructed mouth parts. She then usually flies to another flower, pierces the ovary with her ovipositor, and, after laying one or more eggs, creeps down the style and stuffs a ball of pollen into the stigma. It is difficult to imagine what would cause a moth to stuff pollen into a stigma for one hesitates to believe that she knows what the result will be. Yet this symbiotic relation is obligate for both the yucca and the moth, since in the absence of the moth the yucca produces no seed, while without the yucca the moth cannot complete its life cycle, and if the moths should fail to pollinate the yuccas the result would ultimately be the extinction of both plant and insect. The yucca produces a large number of ovules. Part of these are eaten by the moth larvae and the remainder mature into seeds.

This can't possibly work out in life—the laws of probability prevent it—but you see an awful lot of yucca on the hills of Southern California, in the spring.

In a foreword to Major R. W. G. Hingston's *Instinct and Intelligence* (MacMillan, 1929)—about the most fascinating "nature" book we know—Bertrand Russell gives short shrift to Hingston's theory that all instincts begin as reasoned acts. You do wonder what the Major meant and how he thought this happened—and yet, his theory doesn't outrage common sense half so much as the confident "chance" explanation. . . . We leave for some other time the story of the pollination of the fig by the fig wasp (*Blastophaga*), which is still more complicated, making even the conservative Mr. McDougall say at the end that "the course of evolution that has brought about so strange a relationship can scarcely even be imagined."