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TAOISM FOR OUR TIME

LAST month we printed here an article concerned with the differences between materialists and idealists ("A Psychological Sea around Us," MANAS, July 17), in which it was suggested that the best of the idealists and the best of the materialists are both contending for the same values—principally Freedom. The materialist wants freedom from supernatural dictatorship and no constraint in scientific research. The idealist wants an admission from scientists that there is a "free agent" in man, that—some of the time, at least—the feeling of making a decision is authentic evidence that we *do* make decisions. Having said this, the article continued: "On this view, the argument between the materialists and the idealists is not a scientific question at all, but an ideological question, and the value defended by both is *Freedom."*

This sentence brought the following comment from a friendly critic:

> I do not think. . . that you need to say that the difference between the materialists and the idealists does not involve a scientific question. It is true that it has not generally been presented as a scientific question, but isn't that the trouble? Is it not a simple question of fact as to whether or not there may exist in nature, especially in human nature, something not comprehensible through the laws of matter?
>
> Some of us in parapsychology have justified our serious operations by the logic that this argument, as you describe it, can *only* be resolved through dragging it through the Laboratory, and if we had some little success, it could, I think, only mean that we have to this extent succeeded in removing a problem from philosophy and registering it with science.

The point, here, is this: If, as our correspondent suggests, it can be demonstrated by experiment that some superphysical reality operates through man,—that man, while variously "conditioned," is also a causal agent,—will not science have provided "proof" of the Idealist case? And is the issue not, therefore, a "scientific" question?

The justice in this claim is manifest, yet there is another way of looking at the question. The difficulty of this "other way" is that it has almost no recognition in an age of science and of specialization.

Let us suppose, for example, that a super-laboratory were set up in which veritable scientific geniuses proceeded to perform demonstrations of all the major "idealist" contentions. Suppose they proved beyond doubt that highly developed human beings could "see" around corners, across continents, and read one another's minds so easily that no one could deny their achievement. Suppose they showed how it is possible to walk on the water, to levitate, to leave the body at will, and to maintain a conscious existence "in spirit" after death.

The prospect is positively horrifying. Even if all these things were not only possibilities, but facts in nature, demonstrations of this sort would probably be the worst thing that could happen to mankind, for they would lead people into thinking that this is a proper way for knowledge to be acquired—by *others* who are "specialists," in behalf of all the rest. This is precisely what is wrong with "revealed" religion.

But, it may be argued, these things would be *true* if they were demonstrated in the laboratory, while "revelations" are fanciful inventions and theological impositions upon human ignorance and gullibility!

We are obliged to argue right back, *How do you know?* Were you there when Jesus instructed his disciples, or Buddha his Arhats? Do you really know what such men intended, or are you judging

by what people *say* was Buddha's or Jesus' "revelation"?

In other words, what we are contending is that a "demonstration" is not much good unless it is an *assimilable* demonstration, and we are contending, further, that the demonstrations of "experts" are only to a small degree assimilable by the common run of mankind.

Will anyone seriously maintain that the demonstrations of the experts in other fields—in atomic physics, for example—have been successfully assimilated by the generality of mankind? Not even the scientists, the experts themselves, can assimilate the implications, and therefore control the consequences, of atomic fission, as witness the argument on fall-out.

Is this another one of those somewhat childish demands for a "moratorium" on science? Not in the least. It is simply a critique of what might be called the "scientific theory of knowledge." It is the assertion that, whatever science discovers, it is not really knowledge unless it serves the good of man. Knowledge, in this sense, is a pragmatic affair. Mankind has to be *equal* to its constructive use for it to be and remain knowledge.

Now this view of knowledge, while it has some practical application in matters of physics and technology, applies *absolutely* concerning subjective considerations. You could live next door to Gotama Buddha all your life and not acquire even the least of his knowledge, unless you made a personal effort to do so.

It was, we suspect, to avoid contributing to the delusion that knowledge of a spiritual or "ideal" sort can be handed by one man to another that Buddha refused to answer questions concerning the immortality of the soul. He didn't want any slogans echoing down the centuries, in his name.

What, then, of the experiments in parapsychology, now going on in various universities? If obliged to give an evaluation, we should say that they are to be compared with the experiments of the medieval alchemists, who sought to transmute base metals into gold, adding that the alchemists, as Carl Jung has pointed out, were also philosophers who believed that the real alchemy was an inner transmutation, and that their outward acts had an inductive relation to this hidden process.

Experiments which have for their essential subject-matter facts relating to the nature of man are valuable in that they draw attention to the importance of inward search. They have the further value of suggesting, by their results, the potentialities of all men. But if they ever become a substitute for self-search—as they easily might—then they will serve no higher purpose than to become the basis of the theologies of the twenty-first century!

Experiments in parapsychology are "tracts for the times" which are doubtless necessary to an age that is fascinated by the scientific method. They are calculated to move men, not to truth, but to wondering about the truth. This is their proper role. It seems reasonable to express a little anxiety lest that role be misconceived.

Now there may, of course, be a science appropriate for dealing with forces and phenomena which, as our correspondent puts it, are "not comprehensible through the laws of matter." Is Parapsychology such a science? Candidly, we do not know if Parapsychology is such a science, or can become one. What seems the case is that Parapsychology has erected some observation towers from which the gross effects of superphysical activity may be measured and tabulated. On the other hand, the practitioner of authentic "psychic" science would mean the presence among us of an actual "magician"! A man, that is, who could do at will the things which parapsychology is trying to prove happen at all, whether at random, by accidental *rapport*, or through some sort of abnormality.

Now it is also a possibility—more, a clear probability—that the work being done by

parapsychologists will contribute to the slow development of another and better theory of knowledge than the current scientific conception. A mind which can see around corners and abolish certain of the limitations of time and space is a mind capable of knowing in ways not commonly acknowledged by present-day science. But the critical step in this direction must be taken by each man for himself: that is, he must ask himself, "Am I such a mind?" This is a philosophical question. In these terms, Parapsychology will have removed the question from Philosophy only to cleanse it of theological cobwebs and scientific logic-chopping and in order to return it to Philosophy in more intelligible form.

What we need to beware of in all such transactions is the claim to special knowledge by self-styled "experts" who tell us that by their special "parapsychological" skill they have opened windows into the infinite and are able to repeat to eager listeners what they see. The scientific parapsychologists will not like such activities, any more than the atomic scientists have liked the way in which politicians have taken over control of the use of H-bombs, but so long as you have people who are submissive to and rely upon experts, and so long as people believe that experts can do very much toward solving the problems of the world, such things will continue to happen, and there is no way to stop them from happening.

The upshot of this discussion is a plea for Socratic "ignorance" and Taoist unpretentiousness. There is too much sound and fury in our time for any of us to think very well. We may need, and have to have, scientific methods, ideologies, metaphysics, political systems, and godknowswhat, but let us admit at the same time that all these things are no more than a fancy kind of bat-swinging, and that we haven't yet begun to hit the ball.

Why not stop pretending we know so much? It is no accident that the greatest men among us have always been men haunted by grave and frustrating doubts. Tolstoy, as Isaiah Berlin makes plain, was never *sure* that he had knowledge; Amiel, whose perceptiveness has seldom been equalled, thought of himself as a simple, wondering man; the artist finds his genius in reaching for the light, but he knows he never touches the flame.

It is the heavy political pieties which lead us off to war, and our aggrieved self-righteousness which enables us to botch the peace. All of us modern men tend to be specialists of one sort or another, with the petty egotisms of our various callings, and this makes us lead double and triple lives, lives of outward assurance and inward agony and defeat.

Just what might happen to our highly organized technological culture from an accession of Taoist quietude and yielding is difficult to say, but it might be worth trying. We have tried everything else.

Letter from INDIA

NEW DELHI.—The year 1957 was expected to be a crucial year in Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan (Land-Gift) movement, for it was during this year that Vinoba had hoped for the land collection to reach a total of 5 crore (50 million) acres of land, so that at least one crore (10 million) families would have a plot of Bhoodan land. Even before the year dawned, Bhoodan workers were singing about "Fifty-seven." (It was just a hundred years ago, in 1857, that Indians rebelled against the British on a large scale, and 1957 is being celebrated as the Centenary of that rising. There are dark and superstitious forebodings that before the year is out, *something* will happen.) Last year Vinoba decided to disband the organized Bhoodan workers and their district and Provincial Councils, only allowing each district to maintain direct contact with him to carry on the work. At the same time he decided not to accept any financial help for Bhoodan work from Gandhi Smarak Nidhi (Gandhi Memorial Fund) for maintaining Bhoodan workers. The Nidhi has a fund of Rs 12 crores (approximately 25 million dollars) to keep the memory and work of Gandhi alive. So before 1957 began the whole Bhoodan movement was in the melting pot.

It was during his Orissa tour that Vinoba first saw the fulfillment of his Gramdan idea, getting nearly 800 villages before he left Orissa, and, during his tour of Andhra, Madras, and Kerala he laid greater stress on Gramdan. What is Gramdan? The idea of Bhoodan was easily understood, but Gramdan is not so clear. What is the sense in a village giving land to its people—land which they already have? The main idea of Gramdan is "giving up individual possession." According to Vinoba, land should be "free," like air, sunlight and water. Gramdan means that each land-owner gives his land to the village, no longer possessing any proprietary rights over land to sell or mortgage. He can only till the land. The land becomes the property of the village, to be distributed to each family according to its size and need, with a common plot to be cultivated jointly by all, its produce to be used for development of the village and for providing social amenities. The Gramdan idea, both in theory and practice, is still in its formative stage, and its full implications are not yet plain. Pandit Nehru thinks that Gramdan villages should take up cooperative farming, while, so far, farming is done by individual families, except for the plot to be tilled jointly.

It was in this questioning atmosphere that the Sarvodaya Conference met in May at Kaldy in Kerala, while Vinoba was travelling in that newly constituted State, now ruled by a constitutional Communist Government. The Conference got good support from the local government, which looked after its water-supply and sanitation. The Conference lasted three days; a further Camp for workers had to be cut short because the bamboo matted shelters could not withstand the first showers of the monsoon. Many people were disappointed by the proceedings of the Conference, for they expected something spectacular in "Fifty-seven." They wanted Vinoba to start a "Satyagraha." Nearly 10,000 from all over India attended the Conference, which a half-fare concession by the railway made possible. The main resolution was that henceforth Gramdan would become the main plank of the movement, while Bhoodan work was relegated to a second place. No Bhoodan land gifts will be asked, only whole villages will be the targets, although Bhoodan land will still be accepted.

Now that Gramdan has become the chief platform of Bhoodan, it is of interest to look at its actual working. The largest number of Gramdan villages (about 1400) were received in Orissa in Koraput. How is the movement to be developed? In Orissa an organisation is being set up to work among the tribal people, who mainly inhabit those parts, and a trusted follower of Gandhiji, Sri A. W. Sahasrabudhé, popularly known as "Annasaheb," has been asked to head this group.

So far, about 400 villages have been covered by the Organisation, in a district of about 9,875 square miles, with about 150 workers. Small irrigation and land conservation programs have been started in a number of villages, with better implements, seeds and bullocks distributed and model farms organised to give the tribal people an idea of better agriculture. It is also proposed to start co-operative buying and selling stores, so that the tribal people can get out of the clutches of moneylenders and trades-people, who exploit their ignorance and simplicity. Some local industries are also to be started to give subsidiary occupation.

The chief weakness of Gramdan work—as it appeared to me—is that it has not so far been able to attract really devoted and capable workers, barring a few exceptions like Annasaheb. At present the atmosphere in India is none too good to inspire one to self-sacrificing work, and most of the younger people seek highly paid Government jobs or the unemployment dump. The real spirit of Sarvodaya seems to have penetrated a few only and by even ordinary standards of courtesy and human fellowship, many workers appear to be below the average. Annasaheb does his best to inspire, but the atmosphere in Koraput is none too attractive and the climate of the place is highly malarial. It is to be hoped that despite these drawbacks, Annasaheb will succeed, for Gramdan has not only great practical import, but at the same time points to a New Way of Life.

INDIAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
HIGH PLATEAU

ONCE or twice in a generation a man appears who speaks to his time and sometimes to a particular audience within his time with such vision and energy that he marks a point of fundamental change in attitude. Alexis Carrel made an impact of this sort with his *Man the Unknown.* Carrel shaped a new orientation for medical men, becoming the prophet of the psychosomatic approach to health and disease, now well established. Dwight Macdonald's *The Root Is Man* is another such book. No one who has read this volume and understood it can ever become the captive of political ideologies. Then, more recently, Ira Progoff contributed *The Death and Rebirth of Psychology,* which, while perhaps not so important as the books by Carrel and Macdonald, in that it describes a change rather than accomplishes it, wrote "finis" to the materialistic phase of modern psychological science and medicine.

We now have another such book, Richard B. Gregg's *A Compass for Civilization,* published in India by Navajivan (Ahmedabad), and issued in the United States by Lippincott in slightly abridged form, under the title, *The Self Beyond Yourself.* (The title of the Indian edition seems more appealing, probably because of the "self-help" flavor of the American title, but both titles intimate the contents.)

Mr. Gregg's book is the fruit of a lifetime of reflection. It bears the impress of the deep thinking of an intelligent and serious man. Many books are skillful intellectual productions, bearing some value to the reader. But Gregg, you come to realize, is a man who writes with the responsibility of one who believes that thought should lead to action. This gives even his simplest statements an inner strength.

While of interest to everyone, this book is fundamentally addressed to Christians. The author might be characterized by saying that he now stands outside the region of thought dominated by conventional Christian assumptions, yet believes that he has retained what is vital and true in Christianity. Gregg makes his own position plain in a footnote:

> If any reader thinks that here or elsewhere in this book I am anti-Christian, let me say that I believe that Christ was an incarnation or *avatar* of the divine spirit, and that his teachings and life are full of wisdom and profound spiritual truth and should be followed. But I think that St. Paul and, following him, the churches have greatly warped the original teachings. This was a series of mistakes which I regret. Christ said, "Judge not that ye be not judged," but he also told us to seek truth and reality and the Kingdom of God. This book is part of my attempt to do so.

There is tremendous leverage in this book to persuade Christians to get *outside* of the traditional theological assumptions of Christianity and to examine their primary convictions in the light of impartial reason. Because of this intent, the book also acquires leverage for the man of agnostic or scientific background, since the spirit of Gregg's enterprise of quest is basically consistent with all that is good in the scientific method.

A large part of Gregg's persuasiveness lies in his unpretentious honesty. Religion, for Gregg, is questing rather than revealing. He is willing to stand with those who want to know, but are skeptical of resounding claims. For the West, this is a new and inviting conception of religion. Further, for Gregg there is not much difference between religion and philosophy, unless it be a difference in mood. In short, the rules of philosophy apply for religion, too. Gregg has gone to those rules, studied them, found them important, and now repeats them to Christians. This is a completely disarming procedure—disarming, that is, for all who are not fearful of the light of rational inquiry, who are not terrified at the prospect of having to think their way to the truth.

Gregg begins by pointing out that every man lives by basic assumptions and that these need to

be examined. Some assumptions are better than others. If a man does not understand his assumptions, or see where they lead him, his life is out of control. What he thinks about "God" affects what he thinks about his "self." One may differ with Mr. Gregg about the value of the assumption that God has "personality," but this is a conclusion, and he is not so much interested in the conclusions as he is in the search. The conclusions are a private affair. Choosing one's assumptions deliberately is an act of maturity. This is the maturity the West needs, and has not got:

> In school and college, outside of mathematical studies we are never taught that we all make assumptions about life and ourselves. We are never told how powerful our assumptions are. We are never taught how important it is for us to become aware of our assumptions and their relative rank. We are never told how important it is that our assumptions should be mutually consistent or else we will get into very hot water and not understand why. I consider this great oversight a very grave fault and failure of modern education.
>
> In my opinion this failure to recognize and study our assumptions is one of the main reasons for the dreadful sense of helplessness which besets modern Western men. We now blindly feel the power of our unconscious assumptions far more than did men of previous centuries, partly because modern communication and transport have tied the world together so closely, and partly because the assumptions which European man adopted at the Renaissance have now worked out their implications so fully. Those three factors were operating, also, though less powerfully, during the despair of the days when the Roman Empire was collapsing. They did not recognize their assumptions. But we can recognize ours. If we will do so we can perhaps regain self-control of our civilization.

What are the barriers to such recognition? First, there is the difficulty of what may be called "general" or philosophical thinking. It is not easy to think abstractly, yet clarity concerning assumptions requires abstract thinking. Lack of experience in abstract thinking makes many men suppose that general thoughts have no "reality." This is a very great mistake. Then there is the fear of leaving the harboring shores of institutional assumptions. You have to think *by yourself* to be a philosopher. There is no such thing as *group* thinking. The real thinking of a man is thinking that will enable him to stand against the entire world in his opinions. He will probably never have to stand against the entire world, but he has to be able to. In a sense, Mr. Gregg is saying that there is no "salvation" for Christians or anyone else without this kind of thinking. This is Promethean doctrine; it is also the teaching of Christ, however obscurely, as Dostoevsky made clear.

But man is not a naked and separate particle in the Universe. There are deeps in him which reach to the heart of life. There is that in every man which can help him to become a Prometheus or a Christ. The transaction is an exchange of identities—the lesser for the larger self.

In the chapters on theology, Mr. Gregg practically identifies theology and metaphysics, allowing theology to acquire all the virtues of metaphysics. This is permissible for a reformed theology—for a theology which opens *its* first principles or assumptions to critical examination—but not very much theology answers to this description. We would say that theology differs from metaphysics in holding certain primary principles or dogmas sacrosanct, which places all subsequent reasoning on a leash. The man who embraces metaphysics as a guide is compelled to think through to his own first principles. He may draw on all the philosophies and theologies which exist, but the beginning intuitions and the final synthesis are and must be entirely his own.

Mr. Gregg is ready to advocate this self-reliant sort of philosophy and religion. He says, for example:

> The insistence on the importance of the historicity of Jesus seems to me contrary to Jesus' statement, "My kingdom is not of this world." And according to Jesus, his gospel (Good News) was not the history of his life but that "The Kingdom of God is within you." "Christianity," wrote Sir James Baillie, "does not depend for its truth or its value on

> any historical events that have occurred or ever will occur. Its value lies just in the experience it makes possible of the union of man's spirit with the eternal Spirit as an abiding and ever-lasting Presence through all the changes of time and in spite of all the changes of history." . . . .
>
> I would say that *any* statement of spiritual or metaphysical truths in story form is valid, whether it seems only symbolic or purports to be historical. All these I would call myths. I include the story of Christ's life and works as a myth, on an equal footing with the stories of Buddha, Krishna, Lao Tsu, the classic Greek Gods, the Celtic mythology, the Norse sagas and a good many fairy stories and Polynesian and African folk-lore. I am not saying that Christ or Buddha were not actual historical persons; I am saying that their lives have symbolic as well as historic meaning. They illustrate spiritual truths and principles.

This is religion emancipated from its strait jacket of a single Revelation and resuscitated from its shroud of dogma and conventional assumption. So far as we can see, Mr. Gregg has wholly abandoned the doctrine of the Vicarious Atonement—the teaching that we do not have to save ourselves, but that it will be done for us—and has restored to Christianity the meaning of the ancient Mystery Religions: That truth, knowledge, and spirituality flow from individual discovery, that every man, in a very real sense, is "on his own," and that this being on one's own is precisely what it means to be a man.

Mr. Gregg has the respect of many Christians. He is the author of *The Power of Non-Violence*, the first book to introduce to American readers the theory and practice of M. K. Gandhi, known in India as *Satyagraha*. In 1925, he went to India to study Gandhi's methods at first hand, and spent seven months of the four years he stayed in India with Gandhi at his ashram. The influence of Oriental philosophy and religion is very plain in A *Compass for Civilization*, although this influence is thoroughly assimilated. Here, in a very real sense, is a "meeting of East and West" that can be reported with enthusiasm and admiration. This book will join others which invite Christians to deepen their understanding of the spirit which underlies *all* the great religions of the world, and thus hasten the end of sectarianism in the West.

In consideration of the general role of this volume, such criticisms as we might offer are slight. Mr. Gregg, for example, feels that first principles or philosophical assumptions cannot be "proved." This may be technically correct, but the logical and practical consequences of ideas are open to philosophical and historical examination. "Axioms" cannot be proved, but they have the validity which grows out of the systems of mathematics based upon them. So with philosophical assumptions: even if we cannot "prove" them, we can certainly *test* them. This applies to the idea of a personal God and to all other general notions.

Then, in respect to what may be done, practically, by the individual, Mr. Gregg suggests "meditation." We wonder about this. He *means* intensive thinking, but too often the "practices" associated with this term develop into a source of psychic intoxication which may be mistaken for "religious experience." If thinking can be separated from religiosity, well and good, but both Eastern and Western religions have produced mires of passivity from the pursuit of such practices without enough hard thinking to supply guidance. India is a good place to study the traps into which Yoga practices can lead devotees of emotional tendency and perhaps Mr. Gregg will have some warnings to offer in a subsequent work. Christians have need of such warning, since for Westerners the world of inner psychological experience is for the most part an uncharted sea.

But *A Compass for Civilization*—in the United States, *The Self Beyond Yourself*—is a book which brings Western Christian thinking to a new philosophical plateau, releasing it from bonds of traditional belief, very nearly from Christianity itself!

COMMENTARY
THE THREAT TO INDEPENDENT JOURNALISM

WHILE the "economy" of MANAS is a modest affair, in comparison to the budgets of the general liberal press, its publishers have experienced and are experiencing the sort of difficulties which afflict all "liberal" magazines, and so can somewhat personally take to heart the vicissitudes suffered by the *Nation,* the *New Republic,* and the *Progressive.*

According to a report in the August *Independent,* these three papers have serious circulation and financial problems. The *Nation,* this report states, has been losing readers and is now obliged to raise its subscription rate from seven to eight dollars a year. The *Nation's* annual deficit, the *Independent* estimates, runs in excess of $50,000. The *New Republic* has not been able to get new subscribers by means of direct-mail promotions, and may have to drop such expensive efforts to grow. Both the *Nation* and the *New Republic,* says the *Independent,* depend for their survival on gifts from persons of wealth.

These two papers are weeklies. The *Progressive,* which went from weekly to monthly about ten years ago, comes closer to paying its own way. "It has no wealthy angel," says the *Independent,* "and depends on an annual grass roots appeal for funds to keep it going." Even so, a few thousand dollars more must be found somewhere each year to meet the *Progressive's* publishing costs.

There is talk of merging two or three of these papers, to reduce costs and to produce a magazine which would have an aggregate circulation of either fifty or seventy-five thousand. But this, while perhaps sound publishing economics, is hardly a welcome solution. What this country needs is not less, but more, independent magazines.

While the *Nation,* the *New Republic,* the *Progressive* have in common the fact that they are not published for profit, but for the expression of ideas, there is a singularity of emphasis in each paper which ought to be preserved. These magazines should *all* be kept going, and readers should voluntarily recognize, without being preached at, that there are few more worthy causes in the United States at the present time. For these magazines, almost single-handed, are keeping alive in the United States the very idea of Worthy Causes. And the monthly *Independent* deserves similar attention. How often do you come across a paper which shows concern for the problems of its "competitors"?

You don't have to "give" money to these magazines. Just buy a subscription.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

THE JOYS OF PARTICIPATION

ONE of the peculiarities of our time is the urge to reduce both the area of inter-personal relationship and the sphere of child care to a series of "problems." After we have isolated a problem, we institute a research project, asking the help of experts to provide recommendations. But while this approach may be well enough if one is concerned with some aspect of the economic system, there are distinct disadvantages in forever reducing human relations to problems. Marriage, relations between the sexes generally, relations between parents and children and children and teachers are dreary topics if we study them mainly to discover pitfalls. Above all, the companionship we enjoy with our children will be the least meaningful when we are trying to "solve a problem" by the things we do or say when we are with them. Perhaps this problem complex underlies much of our inability to participate happily in our children's lives.

The best participation seems to flow from some adult interest in the child's world which also affords creative scope for the adult. How many parents, after reading A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh,* envy that ingenious author's obvious enjoyment in writing such books? Milne did not, we may remember, intend to write children's books at all. What he did do was to find a way of delighting both himself and his children with stories of imaginative characters drawn from the playroom. *Winnie the Pooh* is a best seller in many lands today because of Milne's sense of participation in his little boy's realm of thought. Milne's sense of participation, in other words, was so complete that he found himself joyfully creating a medium for the play of delicious humor between other parents and children.

Milne, of course, has natural gifts. He can write a mystery story (his first fascinating attempt, coming long after his establishment as a "children's book author," is still circulating). But the principle illustrated by *Winnie the Pooh* is one which every parent may apply to some degree. An acquaintance recently let us look at some stories he had written for his grandchildren. They would offer neither Milne nor E. B. White competition, but the spirit was there, and so *they won the attention of the children for whom he wrote the stories.* For these children, at least for a while, they were the best stories in the world; they were created for *them,* and with the knowledge of their interests and propensities for adventure. Thousands of non-literary fathers, mothers and grandfathers could do the same thing—provided they remain young enough, in some portion of their minds, to derive enjoyment from the attempt.

Did you ever assist a small child in making up a song? If you have, and if some odd combination of lyrics and notes resulted in the child's pleasure, you will have introduced him to music by way of the front door. Instead of learning an instrument, or "voice" as a subject somewhere "out there," you and he have stumbled upon the way in which the great music of the world has been created; the folk tunes, later to become symphonic themes at the hands of a great composer, originated in the same way. The man or child who creates a melody, however inept, is forever more appreciative of all other melodies, and will be in no sense jealous of those which outclass his by way of natural selection and test of time, and so it is with writing. Help your child to think and write a story, and try writing some of your own. Both of you will be a step closer to great literature.

The connection between parent-child participation and successful discipline should be so obvious as to need no comment. There are circumstances, however, which militate against the Westerner's being able to perceive the organic connection between the two. He is still influenced by the rigidities of old-time "Christian" indoctrination; discipline is still thought of as the system of exhortations and punishments which restrains a child from undesirable activity. (The basic premise of any religion founded on the conception of "original sin" is that most of the moral man's energies should be directed towards restraining "lower" inclinations.) Then, the means of livelihood for the average family is apt to eliminate any "natural" chores which once contributed so largely to the maintenance of the home. The few who retire to rural communities, attempting to wrestle a living from the land, with willing sacrifice of greater rewards left behind in the city, are often moved by the belief that their children will be happier if they understand the work which supports family living. In India, the success of Gandhi's "Basic Education" program was due in no

small part to the fact that most Indian children work *with* their parents in the fields or hand-craft shops. Consequently, when Gandhi's Basic Education teachers assumed the responsibility for a "class," both teachers and pupils conceived of the work of that class as something done by teachers and pupils together, for mutual benefit. One of the strongest points in the "new education" similarly rests on the realization that mutual participation in learning and building activities may provide *natural* discipline.

But of course, the *sense* of participation is far more important than anything else in the formation of constructive disciplines of thought and behavior. Anyone who reads Milne's introduction to *Winnie the Pooh* recognizes that that magic book, and the others which followed, were really joint constructions—that Milne's little boy, and later his other children, supplied basic ingredients. It might even be said that Milne, much of the time, may have simply filled in and extended the imaginative explorations of the child.

Some years ago, "Children . . . and Ourselves" reprinted portions of some essays by Carl Ewald, entitled *My Little Boy*. Each of Ewald's anecdotal yet philosophical recitals illustrated his "sense of participation." Perhaps it is time to reprint another one or two. Ewald, it may be remembered, was not beyond collaboration in activity generally regarded as too "childish" for adults, as, for instance:

> My little boy confides to me that he would like a pear.
>
> Now pears fall within his mother's province and I am sure that he has had as many as he is entitled to. And so we are at once agreed that what he wants is a wholly irrelevant, uncalled-for, delightful extra pear.
>
> Unfortunately, it also appeals that the request has already been laid before Mamma and met with a positive refusal.
>
> The situation is serious, but not hopeless. For I am a man who knows how mean is the supply of pears to us poor wretched children of men and how wonderful an extra pear tastes.
>
> And I am glad that my little boy did not give up all hope of the pear at the first obstacle. I can see by the longing in his green eyes how big the pear is and I reflect with lawful paternal pride that he will win his girl and his position in life when their time comes.
>
> We now discuss the matter carefully.
>
> First comes the prospect of stomach-ache.
>
> "Never mind about that," says he.
>
> I quite agree with his view.
>
> Then perhaps Mother will be angry.
>
> No, Mother is never angry. She is sorry; and that is not nice. But then we must see and make it up to her in another way.
>
> So we slink in and steal the pear.
>
> I put it to him whether, perhaps—when we have eaten the pear—we ought to tell Mother. But that does not appeal to him.
>
> "Then I shan't get one this evening,." he says.
>
> And when I suggest that, possibly, Mother might be impressed with such audacious candour, he shakes his head decisively:
>
> "You don't know Mother," he says.
>
> So I, of course, have nothing to say.
>
> Shortly after this, the mother of my little boy and I are standing at the window laughing at the story.
>
> We catch sight of him below, in the courtyard.
>
> We want to make life green and pleasant for our little boy, to make his eyes open wide to see it, his hands strong to grasp it. But we feel powerless in the face of all the contentment and patience and resignation that are preached from cellar to garret, in church and in school, all those second-rate virtues, which may lighten an old man's last few steps as he stumbles on towards the grave, but which are only so many shabby lies for the young.

FRONTIERS

Supreme Court to the Rescue

CALIFORNIA liberals are taking pardonable pride, these days, in noting that Chief Justice Earl Warren seems to be doing his best to undermine the activities of the Un-American Activities Committee. Commenting on the vague wording of the charter of the Committee (established in 1938), Justice Warren has expressed the view that the Committee actually had no constitutional right to ask many of the questions it has asked, adding that "it would be difficult to imagine a less explicit authorizing resolution." Who, the Chief Justice asked, can define the meaning of "Un-American"?

Four major Supreme Court decisions, all tending to affirm the right of a free citizen to withhold testimony which will incriminate others where no actual crime has been committed, are reviewed in *Newsweek* for July 1. One of these was the recent reversal of the conviction of labor leader John T. Watkins, and it is expected that this reversal will upset, in turn, the conviction of Arthur Miller. The Supreme Court delivered a 6-to-1 opinion that Watkins should be freed, holding that his rights under the First Amendment had been violated. The conviction of fourteen California Communists under the Smith Act in 1952 was similarly reversed by a 6-to-1 opinion. And the prognosis seems to be that the Smith Act may become a dead issue if the major convictions gained under its provisions can be systematically upset.

Commenting on this surprising trend, *Newsweek* explains:

> What the High Court did was to draw a fine line between teaching overthrow of the government as a theory and urging overthrow of the government as a course of action. It also construed the word "organize"—in connection with Communist organizing—as meaning the formation of the party itself as distinct from a continuing process of organizing new cells and clubs, recruiting, and the like. It was this latter definition that might well affect the long-established laws governing the "organizing" of monopolies.
>
> Then there was the ruling that diplomat John Stewart Service had been wrongfully dismissed by the State Department in 1951. The dismissal had been recommended by a Civil Service Commission loyalty board, though State Department loyalty boards had cleared Service. The Court held that Secretary of State Dean Acheson had no right to disregard his own department's findings.

Despite steaming protests from senators who have clamored for rigorous "internal investigation," there were cheers for the Court from other quarters. Senator Wayne Morse remarked that "the Watkins decision is a historical monument in a glorious record of Supreme Court decisions protecting individual liberty."

But consternation spreads beyond the Senate to the Department of Justice:

> As for the Department of Justice, the prevailing mood was sheer bafflement. That department had not yet recovered from the Jencks case ruling when it was hit over the head by last week's Smith Act decree. Said one haggard Justice lawyer: "Never but never has the government taken so many shellackings from the Supreme Court in one period."

So, if anyone has to run the country by making such decisions, we are quite happy to let the Supreme Court do it at the present time. At least, results of the "four major decisions" will probably change the requirements of successful prosecution for supposed Un-American leanings. And it is significant, also, that these decisions, more than any other development in American national affairs, have brought favorable reactions from abroad. The *Manchester Guardian Weekly*, for instance, has followed the crucial "four cases" for some time and in a June 20 editorial hints that the United States is finally catching up with Great Britain in its respect for the rights of individuals:

> The Supreme Court is doing memorable service to the Constitution and liberties of the United States. In judgment after judgment it is barring the ways which of late years both Congress and the Administration have taken to harass people for their opinions. The three rulings which the Court handed down on Monday are not the first to set limits on the loyalty chase. Earlier this month the Court ruled that the Federal Bureau of Investigation must disclose the

information on which its agents base their testimony. Now it has dealt with three weapons in the armoury which Congress and the Administration have used on Communists and their alleged helpers, and has blunted them all. First comes the Congressional investigation that assumes the right to look into any matter, whether relevant to its purpose or not, and to make people parade their obedience by answering ritualistic rather than pertinent questions. Then there is the prosecution of Communists under the Smith Act for advocating the overthrow of the Government. Finally, the Court has tackled the power of the Government to dismiss those of its servants whom, for one reason or another, it thinks untrustworthy. In none of these cases has the Court delivered a sweeping ruling affecting all other cases of the kind; the nearest it comes to this is in its warning to Congressional committees not to abuse their powers of compulsion. The cases turned on specific points of law; the weapons are blunted, not removed. Congress, if it was so minded, could still sharpen them again and start up the whole legal process once more. But, just as the Court has taken its time to speak, so Congress is likely to think twice before it tries to breast the current. The complicated workings of American law do not alone explain why the Court should only now decide cases that began six years ago. The court has its own "deliberate speed." The public feeling that bore up McCarthy is on the wane; the Court now moves in decisively to bury it.

Alistair Cooke, American correspondent for the *Guardian*, devotes his entire column to the decisions:

> The word "historic" is much overused in a country which has never lost faith in its capacity to spawn new marvels every day. But it is the word to describe the Supreme Court's judgment yesterday in three cases of civil liberties. It was in effect a burial service for McCarthyism in which few good words were spoken of the dead.
>
> Chief Justice Warren, an Eisenhower Republican who seemed, when he was appointed, to be the most respectable front whom the Republicans could put up to sanctify the era of white-collar McCarthyism, has turned into the liberals' hero. He it was who wrote the great majority decision of 1954 on integrating the nation's schools. And he it was who yesterday condemned in stinging language the abuses of Congressional committees.
>
> "There is no Congressional power," he wrote, "to expose for the sake of exposure." And while the Congress had the right to learn how the Government and American society work in practice, yet "that [right] cannot be inflated into a general power to expose where the predominant result can only be an invasion of the private right of individuals."

It sometimes surprises Americans to find that the British consider themselves to have far surpassed American conceptions of civil liberty—we still think of England as a society composed of definite "classes," with the little man always getting the short end. But there is a valid distinction between economic or educational privileges and the rights of the individual before a legislative or judiciary body. Though the bombs were falling all over populous England during World War II, treatment of conscientious objectors showed a respect for private opinion never accorded by the administrators of the U.S. Selective Service Act. So, the British liberal press is still a good place to find perspective on United States policy, both domestic and foreign!