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MAN AGAINST ORTHODOXIES

THERE is something about the modern view of history which is reminiscent of the medieval village where, every morning, all the inhabitants went to their doors to see if the dragon, said to live at the foot of the distant mountain, would that day come to devour them. History, once an innocent affair, a story or a romance about the past, has taken on a life of its own. It threatens the present and overshadows the future like a vast Freudian complex which has invested the outside world with unpredictable demonic powers. The ordinary person, of course, does not personify "history" in this way, but he lives in apprehension of dreaded events which, if they come, will be called the result of "historical forces," and considering the apparent impersonality of these events, it is difficult to think of a better name for them.

European intellectuals have evolved a phrase to cover this state of mind. They say that Man, instead of being the subject of history—the protagonist who initiates changes—has become the *object* of history, a being without influence who simply endures. For many millions of people, especially those in Europe, this seems to be the fact. The circumstances under which they live are obviously determined by forces far beyond their control: they may be pawns in the game of power politics played by foreign governments, or they may suffer the decisions of their own government, acting under the compulsion of fear. In any case, whatever is done is done without regard for their own purposes and interests, as they understand them.

But what, exactly, is happening, or has happened? It is easy enough to describe or to illustrate this loss of the initiative in human behavior—the most typical characteristic of our epoch of history—but very difficult to find its cause. Most attempts at explanation only repeat the obvious, and thus add nothing to an understanding of the problem. It seems to us that no explanation is really possible without seeking for causes outside of "history," or, at least, in those areas which historians usually neglect.

We have in mind the question of what man thinks of himself, and how it affects his circumstances and his behavior. Quite possibly, the inability of the Western nations to get together around a table and *make* a peace and stand by its conditions is the result of rigid taboos which restrict modern diplomats from "unthinkable" behavior. Books on anthropology describe primitive societies where certain things are simply "not done" by the natives, although a visitor without emotional subservience to these taboos will lightheartedly violate them all, and suffer no evil consequences, except, perhaps, from outraged witch doctors. Something of the latter sort happened recently in Paris, when a young American, a former bomber pilot, renounced his U.S. citizenship and declared himself a citizen of the World. In a world where individuals regard themselves as the objects of history, Garry Davis found a kind of freedom and initiative for himself. He seems to have chosen the psychological moment for this step, as Parisians have been flocking in thousands to Garry Davis meetings. What prevents millions from doing the same as Garry Davis? Their jobs, their investments, their homes in the country, their reluctance to do anything which they have not done before—a score or more reasons, perhaps, some of them doubtless excellent. The point, here, is not that Garry Davis may be a kind of political messiah, but that the *initiative* in human behavior belongs to the psychological order of reality. What he did simply illustrates the fact that circumstances do not bind us to impotence unless we are convinced that they do. Not a change of circumstances, but

initiative, is what men need in order to be free. But initiative requires a belief in its own possibilities.

Always, of course, there have been individuals who believed so strongly in their own freedom that they were incapable of a merely imitative act. But, in this question of the bondage of a planet to the "forces" of history, to point to a few moral geniuses offers only an abstract solution. It is true that if one man can be free, then, theoretically, all men can be free, too; but not all men can be free unless they will to be free and to understand what freedom is. This, then, is the problem—to examine the sense of impotence felt by the great majority, to recognize and to reject the cultural taboos which condemn men to fear and to psychological slavery.

What men think of themselves, across centuries, seems to result from great waves of mental and emotional influence. World religions play a large part in this, along with movements like the rise of modern science. In some periods, an established orthodoxy rules the minds of nearly everyone, and dissenters are ostracized or persecuted. At other times, the uniformity gives way to ideological conflict, often producing wars and ending in oppressions. Then, after a turbulent interlude, the affairs of men settle down under the control of some dominant authority which continues until new conflicts arise.

In practice, an "order" of society means some kind of definition of a human being which is accepted by the great majority. A religious or theocratic despotism, for example, will define men as "sinners" whose salvation depends upon their obedience and their docility. A political despotism makes the same demands in the name of nationalist objectives. It should be evident that rulers with a low opinion of human beings will promote one set of virtues among their people, while leaders who believe in the dignity of man will value very different qualities. Regardless of what rulers or leaders *say* they believe in, their actual estimate of mankind will determine what they demand in terms of human behavior.

This applies in other fields besides that of government. In medicine, for example, some doctors fear to tell their patients anything of importance about what is the matter with them. The same sort of doctors will want legislation to "protect" the public from "quacks." They will be exceedingly jealous of their professional authority and regard with suspicion the innovators in the healing arts. All the professions, in fact, exhibit to some degree this trait of authoritarianism. Lawyers speak and write in a jargon undecipherable by the average person—not the unusual men in the legal profession, who want to be understood, but the majority who take refuge in their specialties, like priests in their clerical garb.

We are getting to the point of this article, which is that the modern world suffers from a cultural delusion—the delusion that the unspecialized human being, that man as man, is impotent to save or to serve himself. We should like to see a history written of this delusion.

Here, we can contribute only some fragmentary notes. Starting, then, in the nineteenth century, there is value in considering the complex of ideas which were then dominant, or becoming dominant, concerning the nature of man. The nineteenth century was above all a period of transition in human thought. During its early years, writers were busy assimilating the impact of the revolutionary eighteenth century. The shaping forces of the time derived from the great rationalists of France and the political thinkers of England. It was a cycle of progressive emancipation from religious authority and of the vigorous development of scientific materialism. It is worth noting, in connection with such far-reaching changes from one pole of thought to another—in this case, from theological to scientific authority—that the greatest freedom of mind always occurs during the interval between the two extremes. This swing of the pendulum

seems also to afford opportunity for new ideas to take root, with the result that the new orthodoxy, after it develops, is at least supplemented by acquisitions of independent thinking and is something more than a mechanical reaction to the past. But even these contributions of the "free" interval lose their creative aspect in being assimilated and "accepted" by the culture as a whole. Somehow, orthodoxy always manages to maintain the *appearance* of progress, while killing its essence.

For example, there is the work and teaching of Franz Anton Mesmer, who lived at the end of the eighteenth century and into the next. Those unacquainted with Mesmer's life would do well to read Margaret Goldsmith's excellent biography, published by Doubleday in 1934. Here, we shall not "argue" the case for and against Mesmer, but simply state as an indisputable fact that Mesmer declared for great—almost divine—potentialities in all human beings. His extraordinary cures and philanthropic career make a fascinating tale, but we are primarily interested in the meaning of his doctrines and demonstrations for the idea of the nature of man. Mesmerism, as a "philosophy," was neither a developed religion nor a developed science, but involved something of both. It rested upon the idea of a vital principle in every human being, called "animal magnetism," which possessed healing potency and whose activity was closely related to man's psychological powers. The great German thinker, Schopenhauer, saw the implications of Anton Mesmer's work, saying: "Mesmerism was from the philosophical standpoint the most pregnant of all discoveries, even though for the moment it propounded more riddles than it solved."

Only half a century after Mesmer's brilliant European career, a relatively complete philosophy of man and nature had been worked out by his ardent disciples and followers in many fields. The names of Ennemoser and Hecker in Germany, of Colquehoun and Howitt in England, are unknown today, but at the mid-point of the nineteenth century they stood for a comprehensive re-interpretation of human history, according to Mesmer's doctrines. Ennemoser wrote a *History of Magic* which brought the entire range of Psychical phenomena within the scope of mesmeric explanation. This remarkable work was published in English by Bohn's Scientific Library in 1854. Modern readers are impressed by the compilations of the eccentric, Charles Fort, in his *Book of the Damned*—the facts damned and rejected by the scientific orthodoxy—but in Ennemoser they would find a continuous record of human wonders—presented, not as curiosities, but as the foundation for a new appreciation of the potencies of man. These volumes deal with the subterranean forces of human nature—forces for good as well as for evil—and they chart the springs where these energies have welled up and disclosed their power throughout the centuries of Europe's past. The reader of these books enters a new universe and encounters human dynamics which modern historians have neglected almost entirely.

Hecker wrote a history of the *Epidemics of the Middle Ages* (English translation, 1846) from the viewpoint of Mesmerism. Colquehoun, in England, compiled a study *of Magic, Witchcraft and Animal Magnetism* (1851), using Mesmer's key to bring order to the confused chronicles and anecdotes of wonder-working. Colquehoun shows how Braid, today the respected "discoverer" of hypnotism, successfully isolated one effect in the mesmeric process from its larger meaning and so tailored his doctrines into a form that would ultimately gain scientific acceptance. In this "achievement" of Braid, we have an instance of the denaturing of a great discovery concerning the potentialities of man.

William Howitt, Ennemoser's translator, in 1863 published his own *History of the Supernatural,* in which Mesmerism is related to the history of the great religions of the world and the phenomena of prophecy and clairvoyance. Like Ennemoser, he attempted to form

explanations of the strange abilities of seers like Swedenborg, and of hearers like Gassner and Greatrakes, and his serious and scholarly approach to these problems is in striking contrast to the denials of a later generation.

Whatever else we may say of these followers of Mesmer in the nineteenth century, they dealt with certain realities in human nature, and they were champions of Man, not deprecators of human possibility. The impetus of the current they represented was largely absorbed by the Spiritualistic movement, which began in 1848, and as politics and the labor movement took the center of the stage in the epoch of rising industrialism, Mesmerism was largely forgotten. But read, now, in a recent volume by an eminent modern authority, Dr. Arturo Castiglioni, what has happened to the idea of magic. In *Adventures of the Mind* (Knopf, 1946), he writes:

> Modern science has partially or wholly inherited the magic idea, has admitted it under new forms, justified it, directed it according to the results of experience, classified and catalogued it, and successfully substituted faith in science for superstitions and magic beliefs. . . .
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> The sciences of today—chemistry, physics, biology, medicine, and lastly psychoanalysis—are slowly assuming a vitalistic trend, admitting, that is, the existence of a still imperfectly known vital force. Ancient theories, which seemed magic, concerning the influence of meteorological factors on the human body, the mixture of humours or the secretions of the different glands, the results of unsuspected chemical combinations taking place in the animal organism, are reappearing under new forms and with scientific justifications.

While it is true, as Dr. Castiglioni says, that the "naturalization" by science of the idea of magic has weeded it of superstitious beliefs, there is a further effect which he does not mention at all—the divorce of these powers from the conception of human potentiality. This idea of human powers was Mesmer's great contribution, and it is this which all forms of orthodoxy, religious, medical or political, invariably find intolerable. Orthodoxy can maintain itself only by rule and formula.

It wants clear and precise definitions and hates the unique and the unpredictable. That is why, we think, that genius of any sort usually meets with condemnation from the classifiers of mankind; and why, too, specialists in the scientific disciplines are so quick to brand as "superstition" any theory of man or doctrine of healing which depends upon the will and intelligence of the individual rather than upon what scientists glibly refer to as "public truth." The public truth is the truth that can be catalogued—and it is never of the same importance as the truth which cannot.

So, to return to the original problem, we live in a civilization beset by irrational intrusions from without, and undermined by an extraordinary feeling of impotence from within, for the reason that ours is a civilization which deprecates the human being and his innate capacities. We have the habit of defining totalitarianism in the terms of political ideology, and our definitions only give form to dilemmas which we cannot solve. Perhaps we should seek out a more fundamental ground of understanding in the moral psychology of what man has thought of man. Doing so, we might discover that the contempt displayed by organized authority for the free and self-reliant individual is the deadliest superstition of them all.

Letter from CENTRAL EUROPE

VIENNA.—A well-known Austrian judge used to say that he would not regard the state and governmental order as finally organized until a woman cook would suffice to perform all necessary duties. We have not developed in this direction, having arrived, in fact, at the opposite extreme.

An earlier generation developed the conception of a *Staatsraison*—the idea that the human being must be "controlled." Today, we are virtually "spied upon" by an observing State from our first toddling step, on through life, until we break down and quit this world of errors and faults. And it does not really matter to the inventors of bureaucracy whether or not certain regulations originated from the necessities of war. They keep on applying them and add others as well.

Whatever a human being produces, it must be registered. Whatever he eats, is rationed. What he plans to achieve, will be counted. He may not travel wherever he wants to, without filling out endless papers and forms.

He cannot even show goodness when and to whom he wishes—prescribed organizations and parties tell him whom he may love and whom not. "Life is dangerous," the voice of the State seems to whisper. "We have taken into public service many people to help you and pull you through . . . *you are protected*. . . ."

Misfortune is sure to overtake anyone who declares that he does not want to be protected, and that he feels sufficient unto himself—that he prefers to go on foot and live in a free world rather than be carried about in a lorry and feel as a slave. The man of free spirit is regarded as an outsider, he is somebody who does not obey and who does not groan as the others groan. Soon he is watched by thousand-eyed suspicion. He is surrounded by a wall of permit-papers; clouds of documents needing official signatures descend upon him; he is projected through the tubes of investigation and examination, until, finally, he is gasping for breath.

Some of the regulations retain their original sense, but many of them, from the hour of their first development, were without any practical value. And even the sensible regulations are frequently applied in a way that neglects their primary intention.

The "protection" is by no means cheap, of course. At the end of World War II, nearly every Austrian citizen looked with satisfaction at his banking-account. (The U.S. citizen probably did the same.) He worked honestly, and, as there had been little chance to buy anything, his earnings had been saved. Then Father State appeared. He declared that the Austrian economy could not be stabilized unless each citizen sacrificed part of his savings. Before the end of 1945, the poor man had no more of his savings at his disposal than 12 per cent. A decision about the remainder, it was explained, would be issued later.

During 1946 and 1947, prices went up and up. The Austrian citizen sighed and smiled at the same time. He sighed because he was disgusted by the endlessness of the economic insecurity; and he smiled because he was still able to save a little. He would rather keep a nest-egg of his earnings than buy anything besides absolute necessities at the prevailing fantastic costs. But just before Christmas of 1947, Father State appeared again, cashing in two thirds of the new savings and breaking the news that only a small proportion of the savings accumulated since 1945 would be recognized—and this under certain conditions.

The Austrian citizen pays weekly, monthly and yearly numerous kinds of taxes and revenues, among which some were meant for wartime only, but are still collected. Although shivering (he possesses only a small amount of fuel), and always a little hungry (the rations embrace only insignificant amounts of fats and meat), he pays and pays.

But you will find him even more "kind-hearted" when I tell you that he maintains not only his own "Father State," but four more Step-Fathers as well—the Allied Powers which still occupy this tiny country and exercise administrative and other rights. He also pays for their administrations. No wonder he gets depressed.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
BOOKS AND OTHER NOTES

ALTHOUGH it is a novel, and not history, *The Unterrified,* by Constance Robertson (Henry Holt, 1946) , seems an authentic picture of the struggle over the first draft act imposed by the United States upon its citizens, during the Civil War. The bibliography of Mrs. Robertson's sources fills seventeen pages, and her telling of the story shows that she really absorbed these materials, and did not list them simply to impress the reader. It is a tale of conflicting loyalties and the way in which the honest desire of Northern "Peace Democrats" to end the war was used by Confederate agents to obstruct the policies of Abraham Lincoln.

The Civil War was the first great American Tragedy. A study of the idealism and the forces of prejudice which caused it brings into focus all the essential ingredients of American life, and we do not see how there can be any real understanding of American history without such study. Avery Craven's *The Coming of the Civil War* (Scribner's, 1942) deals with the period from 1820 to 1860, during which the opposition between the North and the South slowly acquired the uncompromising rigidity which made the war inevitable. The psychological factor in this development was undoubtedly the emotional self-righteousness which came to characterize both sides. The military defeat of the Confederacy, while it "settled" the issue in a mechanical and a political sense, could not, in the nature of things, change the sense of violated personal integrity felt in the South. Nor, on the other hand, could "victory" bring to the North the moral strength to act generously and to repair the break in the Union at the level of human feelings. Lincoln's views were symbolic of what the waror rather the idealism of some who were engaged in the war—might have accomplished, but the years of "Reconstruction" which followed after were a revelation of the actual spirit which the war produced. It had, as Thorstein Veblen pointed out in his *Theory of the Leisure Class,* a coarsening and vulgarizing effect which spread itself across the entire continent and gave crude sanction to the acquisitiveness of the "robber barons" who dominated the closing years of the century.

Against this larger background of cause and effect, the story of *The Unterrified* presents the problems of immediate moral decision. The Peace Democrats and Copperheads who contested Lincoln's policies employed arguments familiar to present-day pacifists and liberals opposed to conscription, yet the purer idealism seems to lie with the boys in blue and the men who led and supported them. In a paper unequivocally opposed to draft laws and military training, this sentiment may seem a kind of heresy, and yet, we think, it is not. A sense of history must enter into all such judgments, and the war party in the North, during the Civil War, was possessed of the greater moral vision, to our way of thinking. But the Civil War was also a conflict from which much concerning the futility of war might have been learned, so that the question of war and peace for the United States, at any time thereafter, was morally never quite the same.

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Maurice Evans and company recently presented Bernard Shaw's *Man and Superman* in Los Angeles—an event which arouses other and now almost "historical" questions—the questions concerning Mr. Shaw, his art, and his relative "greatness." It is possible to gain great pleasure from a Shaw play—to revel in his barbed jibes at conventionality and to enjoy his extraordinary craft as a playwright—but after it is over it is still pertinent to ask whether or not the play is really a drama, or only the appearance of a drama which has served as a mask for a long monologue by Mr. Shaw. This impression is probably related to the feeling which results from reading the Shaw-Terry correspondence—that Miss Terry is generous and warm-hearted, altogether a human being, while Mr. Shaw, although amazingly clever, is not.

The basic criticism, it seems to us, is that Mr. Shaw's characters are "types," instead of being responsible human beings who withstand stress and grow, or crumple and fall. One could say, of course, that *Man and Superman* was intended for light-hearted comedy, without lugging in heavy morals. If this is so, then there is a lack of fitness about the theme of the play. One has the feeling that if Mr. Shaw had lived in the Middle Ages, knowledge of him would have come down to us in the form of a legend about a brilliant and roguish king's jester who permitted himself to tempt the anger of his master to the limit of personal safety, but never beyond it. Mr. Shaw's genius, in other words, is on some sort of leash. This is not to accuse him of mere "prudence," nor to hint at a lack of integrity, but rather to suggest that there has never been, in his case, a complete giving of himself to some great ideal.

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The Dutch Consul in this area is distributing a little leaflet called *Questions and Answers about Indonesia*, the purpose of which, apparently, is to convey the impression that the Royal Netherlands Government waits impatiently for the impulsive Indonesians to settle down under some "stable" form of self-government so that the Dutch can transfer full authority to them. There is, for example, this question and answer:

> Q. Why doesn't Holland follow the U.S. and British examples in the Philippines and India , and immediately give Indonesia independence?
>
> A. That's exactly what Holland is trying to do. When the Philippines and India achieved independence they had fully established, *national* governments and controlled their *national* armies. But the Republican Army refused to be absorbed by a national Indonesian army, and prevented its government from joining a federal union with other Indonesian states. When an all-Indonesian government is formed, then Indonesia can function as a sovereign state.

Why must Indonesia be well organized, nationally, before the Dutch withdraw? The threat of communism, it is explained. Why is Holland so interested in maintaining "close" relations with Indonesia? There are enormous Dutch investments in Indonesia—a billion guilders for reconstruction alone.

We found the mood of long-suffering patience displayed in this leaflet something less than plausible, and turned for further facts to three articles which appeared in the *Christian Century* during the past two years. In the *Century* for Aug, 13, 1947, Garland Hopkins wrote:

> There has been no will on the part of the Hollanders to make a success of any agreement which did not leave them in virtual control of Indonesia. The so-called Republic of Indonesia was to be a republic only in the sense that any one of the forty-eight states might be called a republic. It was to be merely a constituent state in the United States of Indonesia, a union to be composed of the "republic" and, at least, two other Dutch-dominated states. Under this plan the Indonesians would have fallen far short of the independence and self-control exercised by British dominions.

A few months later, Mr. Hopkins reported the indifference of the UN Security Council to the Indonesians' right to be free. It became evident that the American program of reconstruction in Europe was not to be disturbed by "untoward" developments in Holland's colonial empire. One American spokesman urged that Holland's "continued existence depends upon the resources of the Indies." The Indonesians themselves take the view that the Dutch government would never have launched the war in the colonies without the tacit permission of the United States. "This conviction," Mr. Hopkins notes, "was strengthened by the fact that while the Hollanders' aggression was at its height the United States continued to lend them money." He adds:

> Indonesians have been bombed by planes made in America, shot and shelled by tanks, artillery and rifles made in America, and burned by flame-throwers made in America. The death and devastation which have come upon the land were made possible by American money and American

arms in the hands of the Dutch. *(Christian Century*, Feb. 18, 1948.)

On the question of the "communist threat," it should be remembered that three months after the defeat of Japan, Indonesia had a functioning independent government which later suppressed a communist uprising and fought off the Dutch and British armies and made a peace with Holland. It was the double-dealing of the imperialist powers which created the danger of communist penetration in Indonesia. Last year a prominent Indonesian patriot and former premier announced his disgust with the policies of the Christian West, saying, "I am still a left-wing socialist, not a communist. But I do not think the Americans have any intention of supporting a solution. The Russians are our only hope." Last October Mr. Hopkins declared that Holland actually hoped for a communist defeat of the Indonesian republic, "thereby giving the Dutch long-sought grounds for military conquest of republican areas."

Against the background of these facts, the "information" leaflet of the Dutch government, circulated in this country, is only one more illustration of the studied hypocrisy of imperialist powers, practiced, in this case, with the collaboration of the United States in the betrayal of 76 million Indonesians who want to be free.

COMMENTARY
READER WRITES

THE letters received by the editors from MANAS readers are almost always both interesting and useful, and frequently contain suggestions which, sooner or later, are used in the preparation of material for the magazine. Occasionally a letter provides the sort of observant commentary that should be shared. This was the case with one recent communication from a subscriber on the subject of medicine, which, with slight emendations, we print below.

* * *

The errors inherent in religious authoritarianism have not gone unnoticed in MANAS, any more than have the errors in national authoritarianism. But there is always one more authoritarianism, no matter how many have been scotched, weaving its fences across the public domain of individual integrity, helping to "form the psychological web of reaction, the smug mood and the dislike of questioning which stifles honest thinking—which helps to prevent revolt against tradition from being anything but angry, personal, and merely rebellious." This time the offender is medical authoritarianism, which was overlooked in the roll call of a recent MANAS article.

According to a Congressional Quarterly which lists the expenditures reported to Congress by lobbying organizations:

> High spender for 1948 so far is the National Physicians Committee for the Extension of Medical Services with total expenses of $353,990. The committee protested filing, saying it does not lobby.

That last sentence ought to appear in italics! This effort at indoctrination of legislators is not confined to the national level, but is to be found in every state capital, while the avenues of public information are deluged with medically slanted publicity. Allopathic medicine, having attained to organic union by the simple process of eradicating homeopathy and eclecticism, and by exorcising the various cults, is now conducting a militant campaign that religious authoritarianism might well envy.

There is no problem of instruction on school time. Medical indoctrination begins with the kindergarten. Medical apostasy, medical heterodoxy and Christian Science offer only token resistance. . . . It is all too true that "children will not know the other side of any story unless parents and teachers learn to know it first."

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

DR. ROBERT M. HUTCHINS of the University of Chicago has for many years insisted that the most effective education must be "revolutionary." There is no doubt whatever that Dr. Hutchins practices what he preaches, for numerous drastic changes of procedure at the University have followed each other in rapid succession since he became president some twelve years ago.

Most of Hutchins' new departures raised storms of opposition. First, he successfully pushed through a ruling which banned intercollegiate competition in athletics at Chicago. No more heavy expenditures to subsidize football teams, and no more dependence upon the gate receipts of athletic contests—receipts which, according to Dr. Hutchins, allowed the athletic department to assume an importance far out of proportion to its true function in an "institution of learning." At another time he proposed that a democratic form of "communism" be adopted by the faculty. He suggested that professors and instructors should receive compensation from the University in accordance with their needs, without regard for their professional reputations. He further argued that all outside earnings of the professors should be turned over to the University of Chicago itself, not so that they would stop contributing to popular magazines and making well-paid lecture appearances, but in order that the writing and speaking which these men might do would also be good for them and good for the University.

Dr. Hutchins also succeeded in removing himself from the administrative details of the presidency by creating a new office and getting himself appointed to fill it. He is now "Chancellor," which means that instead of being a slave to routines of organization, he can visit and help teach the classes and engage in the highly important correlative work of inspiring a desire in the community for adult education.

In 1942-43, Hutchins' proposal to give the B.A. degree to University students at the end of their sophomore year met with a cold reception. *In Education for Freedom* (Louisiana State University Press, 1943), he summed up the response to this proposal:

> The University of Chicago [he said] has lately been condemned by almost all the academic potentates in sight. This is the first time that full-dress assemblages of principalities and powers have publicly, officially, and formally deplored the University's conduct. This marks an all time high in education deploring.

As Hutchins patiently explained, he wished to provide the men who wanted a degree with the object of their desire in two years and to clear the boards for the few who had come to the University with the purpose of actually realizing the objectives of "higher learning." The extent of the opposition to Hutchins at this and at other times has revealed that our formal academic atmosphere is heavily surcharged with status quo-ism and reaction. If Hutchins' arguments were allowed to gain too much ground, the administrators of many of the country-club type of colleges would be forced to reorganize their schools. Popular support for the idea of earning a B.A. degree in half the usual time might make it necessary to change the curriculum.

We have described at some length the maneuverings of this educational revolutionary, Dr. Hutchins, because we feel that any genuine educator, be he parent, kindergarten or high school teacher, must be inclined to be *for* and not *against* alteration in accepted procedures. Education, in Hutchins' view, and in our own, is not primarily a work of preservation—it is a work of creation.

While any established procedure may conceivably be the best possible for any given time or circumstance, it is also conceivable that it should serve as a stepping stone to some more effective and enlightened method. Hutchins, apparently, has recognized that it is very easy for an institution of learning to become as moribund

as most churches. And institutions of secular learning have not the excuse which can be given by the guardians of religious traditions. Institutions of secular learning are supposed to encourage the development of questioning, analytical minds. Yet, the history of American Universities indicates that many of our irrational social and racial prejudices are at home on the campus. The man who belongs to a fraternity which outlaws all men of "Semitic" origin will have a strong tendency to believe in the rule of social cleavages rather than in the principle of democracy. If he becomes a teacher in one of our high schools, he will reflect this bias, and his students will be affected by his views.

Dr. Hutchins' central thesis, which has yearly become more acceptable, is contained in his statement: "Nothing short of an intellectual, spiritual and moral revolution can save us." He encourages the impartial investigation of all religious, scientific and political claims, and he hopes that his University can help its students to acquire the tools that are necessary for such evaluation. While many educators have joined with Dr. Hutchins in urging that we must "do more thinking," he is one man who has proceeded to do it for himself—even when the proposals which grew from the motions of his mind threatened his social and financial position. Members of the Chicago faculty tried to oust Hutchins from the presidency following his suggestion that all outside earnings be turned over to the University treasury. But Hutchins won the battle by receiving a warm vote of confidence from the Trustees, partially because he has exemplified in his career the conviction that Truth is more important than having everyone like you, and because most of us, quite rightly, admire such a man.

While Dr. Hutchins may have his faults, we feet that he should be placed in our collection of saints and heroes, because we think he has a message for everyone. It may not be supremely important for you to send your children to the University of Chicago, but it is important that Hutchins' spirit and attitude as well as his hardheaded sagacity on behalf of educational reform be given parental thought, especially at a time when all educational institutions face the danger of being regimented, not only by stereotyped academic opinion, but by the encroachments of the military. Dr. Hutchins' endeavors to break the molds of academic minds are illustrated by his attack upon the examination system. He sought to convince both faculty and students at the University of Chicago that the average examination reveals little of fitness in any given field. If a student religiously attends every class and regularly repeats back to his professors their own "slants," he will, of course, graduate in due time. Following the same procedure, he may emerge eventually as a Ph.D. But Hutchins is not interested in multiplying Ph.D.'s—he is interested in how much constructive thinking a teacher can contribute to the community. He sometimes employs as teachers men who are without the degrees usually required—another thorn in the side of all "University reactionaries." So we may say that Robert Hutchins is always doing more than upsetting the faculty of the University of Chicago—he is disseminating a basic philosophy of education throughout the world. His arguments are applicable at all levels of learning.

FRONTIERS

The Press Supports "Religion"

LAST year (MANAS, June 2), this Department took note of the series on the beliefs of eminent scientists concerning "God" which was then appearing in the Hearst Sunday supplement, *The American Weekly*. The point of our comment at that time was that the series was obviously intended to fortify the claims of established religious organizations, regardless of whether or not the views of the scientists who contributed articles or were quoted by other writers were actually in support of the doctrines of conventional belief. "Nobel prize winners from Einstein to Millikan," an editorial note in the *American Weekly* declared, have shown that the statement, "Science proves there is no God," is a "blasphemous lie."

The fact that the God-concepts of the various scientists represented in the series differed widely, in some cases to the point of absolute philosophical contradiction, seems to have made no impression on the *American Weekly* editors. They were striking a blow for religion, and philosophic clarity—not to say intellectual honesty—hardly needed consideration. Journalistic campaigns on behalf of religion deal in emotional stereotypes, and for this purpose, any original or independent thinking at all is the worst sort of journalistic heresy.

The interest of the *American Weekly* in religion is apparently continuing. The Dec. 26, 1948, issue contained a one-page article entitled "Atheists' Child," devoted to the personal habits and temperament of Terry McCollum, the son of Mrs. Vashti McCollum, of Champaign, Ill. Readers will recall that Mrs. McCollum instituted the now celebrated suit against the Champaign School Board to end the released-time program of religious instruction which was carried on under public school auspices. In March, 1948, the Supreme Court ruled that the Champaign released-time program was unconstitutional, falling "squarely under the ban of the First Amendment," to use the words of justice Black's majority opinion.

The aggrieved voices of the sects have been raised in complaint ever since. Some spokesmen have gone so far as to hint that the Supreme Court decision amounts to a betrayal of the "real" intentions of the Founding Fathers. Justice Jackson's dissenting opinion has been quoted times without number to indicate the terrible portents of the decision, as, for example, the removal of "In God We Trust" from the American dollar.

The American Weekly article on the McCollum family is just about the nastiest piece of journalism we have ever seen. It sets out to destroy respect for Mr. and Mrs. McCollum and to earn contempt for their child, Terry, and, according to conventional standards, it very nearly succeeds. Terry is portrayed as a petulant, spoiled boy, unable to "get along" with other "normal" children; his parents, or at least the father, appear as persons who are undismayed when their small children use profane epithets—"gutter expressions," the chaste *American Weekly* calls them, inserting dashes in quoted dialogue to assist the reader in imagining the worst.

The article is obviously directed at that part of Mrs. McCollum's complaint against the Champaign School Board in which she said that Terry had suffered ostracism by his schoolmates because he attended no released-time class in religion. It is written in a tone of offended self-righteousness, the conclusion being that the right to religious education of 10,000,000 American children has been threatened "because of tales brought home by one maladjusted boy."

But even if Terry had learned his expletives and epithets in the city room of a metropolitan newspaper, instead of in a medium-sized city of the Middle West, his personal manners and supposed weakness of character have nothing to do with the principles affirmed in the decision of

the Supreme Court. It is true that the article quotes justice Black's opinion, but as every writer or observant reader knows, the *effect* of a discussion of this sort lies with its appeal to the feelings, the rest being seldom more than verbiage. The effect of this article—one could almost say the *intended* effect—has been to obscure principle and to encourage bigotry.

Terry McCollum may be a spoiled, maladjusted child—we do not know about that. The language of his eight-year-old brother, Errol, may leave much to be desired. We do not know about that, either. But we do know that a courageous disregard of short-sighted prejudice characterizes Mrs. Vashti McCollum, the mother of these children, who pressed this suit to the Supreme Court and won a victory for religious freedom in the United States. (She had the assistance of the American Civil Liberties Union and the Chicago Action Committee—organizations gracelessly referred to by the *American Weekly* as "various interests" allied with Mrs. McCollum.) Here was the real "feature" story for the American public to consider—an account of the determination of an American mother to stand on principle, and a thorough elucidation of the background in American history and political philosophy which supports the position she took. But the *American Weekly* reported that "Mrs. McCollum drove religion from the schools," adding the claim that Terry was no happier in a private school in Rochester, New York, than he had been at Champaign.

It may seem like carrying coals to Newcastle to accuse *the American Weekly* of public irresponsibility coupled with extreme bad taste, but that the Hearst paper with a Sunday edition in Los Angeles—and probably those in other cities—was proud of this article and advertised it in advance to all the churches is a fact which calls for special comment. The supposition that the churches would regard this article with favor, as a "defense" of religion, is perhaps the most insulting thing that could happen to a religious group with any moral perceptions at all. And yet, the church advertising columns of the paper through which the *American Weekly* is distributed have not noticeably diminished since the article appeared. The churches, in other words, continue to nourish journalism of this sort, apparently indifferent to the moral level of the *American Weekly's* endorsement of their mission, or because they have adopted that curious "tolerance," so common these days, which accepts and even embraces vulgarity and moral confusion for the reason that it is everywhere about.