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MORAL POWER

ANY approach to the question of moral power—whether or not it exists as an independent energy, and what may be its part in human affairs—seems inevitably to require consideration of the soul. One can, of course, talk about moral power without mentioning the soul, but then, that is all that will happen—it will be talked about. If it were possible to pursue an inquiry into moral power without reference to the soul, it might be well to do so. The soul is frequently a mystical catchall for the major puzzles of human life, and belief in it is too easily affirmed or denied, usually in terms which take their mood more from borrowed opinions than from patient reflection. Yet if the idea of moral power turns out to be meaningless without the idea of the soul, the latter can hardly be ignored.

Moral power, in this sense, suggests an energy that is wielded by human beings. It may be something like what we understand by *will*-power—will-power to which has been added the guidance of wisdom. The believer in moral power has to believe also in some scheme of moral dynamics, some pattern of reality which the exercise of moral power seeks to fulfill. If a man is able to say to himself, "Hatred ceaseth not by hatred, but only by love," he has to have the conviction that "love," in this case, means a tangible energy which communicates itself through some uniting medium among human beings—an energy strong enough to polarize opposing emotions and to create a rapport of feeling between those who learn to love one another.

A further necessary condition of the working of moral power would be that its aim is the fulfillment of justice, for morals have to do with the intricacies of human relationships. Justice might be defined as the ideal of moral equilibrium in human relationships, which would mean a fine balance among human differences rather than a difference-obliterating unity. A good teacher, for example, exercises moral power in seeking the potentials of cooperation among his pupils by using different means with various members of the class. The method will vary with the children, depending upon each one's interests and perceptive capacity. This sort of "justice" is probably much more important than the familiar conceptions of reward and punishment which we usually associate with the idea of justice, for it derives from the idea of human beings as *growing* individuals instead of as doers of good or evil. The teacher sees as good whatever contributes to growth, while evil is anything that stands in its way.

The real problem, however, is whether or not there is any expression of moral power in the world around us. Are men, as moral beings, a crew of alien "colonists" set down by the blind forces of Nature in a universe which has no moral purpose in itself? Is the currency of human aspiration only negotiable among human kind, and of non-existent or indifferent value to the cosmic whole, or is man, and are his hopes and strivings, part of some larger scheme of meaning?

These questions, although far from new, are of extreme importance for the reason that so many human decisions depend upon them. Men who have no sense of a general moral purpose in life carry around a great burden of futility. If justice is only a human invention, without a corresponding substratum in the natural order of things, then what is the use of contending for it against extraordinary odds? It might be better to settle upon some prudent compromise with the inequities of life—for are not these more "natural" than the ideals which dreamers pursue?

Among primitive peoples, the use of moral power was usually conceived of as some kind of magical operation. Prayer, which for most Christians is an act of humility and self-abasement, was once an invocation of invisible forces. As Gladys Reichard remarks in the *American Anthropologist* (January-March, 1949), to this day, "Instead of humiliating himself, the Navaho seeks through ceremonial to

identify himself with deity. He cannot understand the ideals sought through mortification or penance." The Navaho is "a person who, directly through his own knowledge or indirectly through the power of the medicine man who acts for him, may control the cosmos."

Alfred Wilson, a Cheyenne Indian who died in 1945, has described the Indian religion more or less as follows:

> The Indian . . . stresses the importance of "I am." . . . the individual is a manifestation of the breath or energy of God. He is earth, but the earth part is only that which makes him visible; the part which is his real life, which makes the "I am," is that which we call the breath of God. Man, because he partakes of this spiritual essence, has a mind reaching far beyond the conscious mind. it is that which flows into him from the deity and which is his to use during his lifetime. This mind, going beyond the conscious mind, is an active, thinking reality, and this active, thinking reality also makes or influences the conscious mind. (Quoted by John Collier in *The Indians of the Americas.)*

Plato, who with Pythagoras endeavored to transform early Greek religion into reasoned philosophy, taught that human beings might raise themselves to divinity by participating in the nature of the divine. Through discipline and search, the philosopher could grow into a life beyond the illusions of the senses, coming to know with certainty the transcendental realities of which the objects and circumstances of earthly life are but transitory reflections. After Plato, the Neoplatonists elaborated this teaching, developing a scheme of meaning for the cosmos and the beings in it which laid the foundation for all subsequent mysticism. The Platonists sought identification of the individual self with the Universal Self, or the Good, holding all other purposes in life subordinate to this one. This goal, however, was to be reached by acts which involved much more than undiscriminating religious emotion. Every major phase of human experience had to be understood, although the knowledge to be gained had to do with the nature of the soul and its various embodiments, and was not of the factual, descriptive sort that we recognize as knowledge today. Platonic knowledge dealt with the dynamics of soul-evolution.

Both the primitive and ancient worlds, then, were concerned with the processes of growth. They conceived the human being as having at least two forms of existence, a physical life and a moral or spiritual one. The physical life was not "evil" for the reason that it provided the conditions of growth, while the moral existence could become an earthly reality as a result of individual growth. In any event, the moral order was itself as real as the stars in the heavens; a man might defy it, but he would always have to pay the price of turning away from the law of his inner nature.

There are some remnants of this attitude in the modern world; indeed, such ideas seem to be basic intuitions of the human race. They are, however, without effective support from the prevailing culture in both its scientific and religious aspects. In the first place, with the advent of Christianity, Deity, instead of remaining the formless Spirit, took on the attributes of a human being. Belief in Jesus Christ replaced the moral order as the source of moral power—he became the personalized mediator between God and man. Instead of searching themselves and the inner life of nature all about them, men appealed to Jesus for the moral power they longed for. Doctrine, the "true" doctrine, was now more important than the practical processes of growth. With the Universal Spirit confined to a single Personage—"God"—and the means to spiritual advance localized in the "Son," both Nature and man lost moral stature, becoming merely the "creatures" of these external omnipotences. Not the slow sifting of experience to find and participate in the moral order, but loyal belief, was now the crucial element in human behavior. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," says the (probably corrupt) sixteenth verse of the sixteenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Mark.

Thus the men who were chiefly responsible for the rise of modern science inherited from the religion of their fathers a *de*-moralized Nature in which to carry on their researches. They restored to Nature the idea of power, but not *moral* power. After a

millennium and a half of association of the idea of moral power with the tyrannical God of the Church, the men of science were determined to have nothing to do with either one. Since the sixteenth century, the idea of natural forces and of scientific knowledge about them has grown up in complete cultural separation from the idea of a moral order. So far as the scientific conception of the laws of nature is concerned, a moral order simply does not exist.

Proceeding concurrently with this development, independent thinkers attempted to emancipate morals from the control of organized religion. But just as the Church had made ethical truth a matter of doctrine, the ethical philosophers made it a matter of speculation. No Western thinker, to date, has attempted to formulate the principles of a non-theological *moral psychology*, in which the impact of moral forces is dealt with as something "real." Our scientific psychologies, even the clinical branches, are mainly critical and amoral in content, for the reason that they have no basic premises as to the purpose of human life.

By the time that psychology began to be a science, the idea of the soul was already in extremely weakened condition. Salvation, according to the prevailing religious teaching, was the result of a passive act of belief, in which the soul, as the agency of the exercise of moral power, had no distinctive function. The soul could not "do" anything—it was merely "saved." just as the Newtonian theory of the world-machine separated cosmic processes from the idea of cosmic intelligence, so the Cartesian theory of human nature separated the practical activities of human beings from the idea of an inner, soul-intelligence. John Locke asserted that man has no "innate ideas"—that the mind of every infant at birth *is tabula rasa*, a smoothed tablet—without, that is, an inner sense of purpose. Scholars now say that Locke was primarily interested in opposing the fearful dogma of predestination, a kind of religious obsession. The dark destiny of eternal punishment seemed to him to be abolished by the logic of psychological materialism; that the same logic might also in time abolish all positive moral values associated with the idea of the soul probably never occurred to him. In Locke's day, the idea of the soul was more a tool of terrorization than anything else. David Hume completed the argument against the soul by saying that when he tried to think about it, he never found any trace of it, but only some fleeting sense impression chasing another sense impression through his mind. The soul, or self, he concluded, is a mere illusion. It was not enough to deny the soul powers of its own: after Hume, the soul began to be denied any existence at all.

For psychological science, this development gave complete freedom to speculate without reference to traditional beliefs about "morality"—morality meant anything that was involved in "saving" the soul—and it also enabled science to work out attempted explanations of natural forces and phenomena without even nominal attention to the God-idea. If there are no souls to be saved, no God is needed to supply the moral power, through his Son, to save them. Thus Nature at last regained the status of independent reality, without subjection to the creator's will or whim; beliefs lost all their importance for the scientific inquirer, who was now set free to master natural processes without threat or interference from theological authority.

On the foundation of assumptions of this sort have been erected numerous structures of scientific theory, in all the fields relating to the behavior of man. Specializing in every sort of power but moral power, these scientific studies form a great canopy of unbelief in soul, spirit, or moral reality. It is natural for the man who is awed by the positive achievements of science—science deals with tangible forces, not "beliefs"—to suppose that his vague feelings concerning moral power are no more than what social and psychological science tells him they are: mere impressions gained from his "cultural environment," a variety of well-intentioned but misleading illusions. And if he should give some critical attention to the history of religion, in particular to the psychology of belief as it seems to work in masses of people, the scientific explanation may seem entirely adequate to him.

The dreariness of this outlook on life was largely concealed during the centuries in which it spread throughout the Western world, for the reason that most men of positive mind and active energies

were busily engaged in enriching themselves through the applications of scientific knowledge. They felt themselves in no great need of a conception of moral power, and without thinking much about it they supposed that the churches would look after the people who wanted to have their souls saved. Meanwhile, the unfearing strong, who wouldn't want someone else to "save" them, anyhow, had other things to do.

Today, this strong man's world is breaking up, and we do not understand why. It is difficult to relate the familiar scientific scheme of things with any theory of a moral order for the reason that scientific explanations ignore moral problems entirely, while at the same time our scientific knowledge and control over natural energies have reached an over-all complexity that is itself a practical barrier to regulation according to some idea of a moral order, even supposing we had one. Religion is no help, for it is obviously impossible to merge a system of doctrinal beliefs with a dynamic system of power manipulations. The two have nothing in common.

It is this contradiction in terms between power as our civilization uses it and morality as we "believe" in it which demands an entirely new consideration of the meaning of *soul*. As the idea of the human soul has undoubtedly been the turning point of all ideas of moral power, it hardly seems necessary to apologize for discussing it seriously. Instead, if lack of attention to this idea can be explained as resulting from sheer prejudice, there is ample reason for intensive study of the implications of the soul for constructive human life. Philosophers who have loved and served their fellow man, from Socrates to Walt Whitman, have affirmed the reality of the soul in unmistakable terms. Reformers, from Buddha to Gandhi, have sought in soul the apparently inexhaustible moral energy of their lives. If moral creativity can be restored to human beings by closing the psychological gap between man and God, then what possible objection can there be to taking this step? Why not declare the supernatural a province of the natural, and man a spiritual as well as a physical being? Suppose that there actually are two worlds, a material one and a moral one; suppose, further, that man does not exactly live in either one, but in a compromise world of his own making, constructed of his half-true, half-false ideas of both. Would this not come very close to explaining the subtle and multifarious contradictions of human life?

If it be urged that man's true life is a life of soul, that no savior can save him, no devil damn him, except himself—that he is in reality a potential god—who can offer some other theory which is more in accord with all the facts of human experience? Much reason would support the claim that every other theory of human nature has been tried and has failed, miserably and completely. And this one, this idea of man with his inmost being secure in infinity, with his mind able to encompass the secrets of both the atoms and the stars, and his heart of such expandable dimensions as to enclose the whole of life—who is to say that these possibilities do not themselves constitute the only godhood that exists? What if the only way to begin to realize these possibilities is by granting them at the outset, and then acting *as if* they are certitudes of the moral law itself ?

Some will say that such proposals constitute a perilous traffic with the Unknown. It may be so; but no extensive argument is needed to show that in following this course a man can lose nothing that any great man has thought worth striving after.

Letter from South Africa

JOHANNESBURG.—The South African Parliament has just closed one of the most tense and dramatic sessions of its history. Of the many measures which have been fiercely contested, none has proved a more electric storm-center than the Citizenship Bill which was passed at the very end of the session at the price of a ruthless guillotine to debate, and which drew to the House an unprecedented number of indignant telegrams from all corners of the country. The history of the birth of this Bill into South African legislation provides a clear example of the trend of affairs and the philosophy which lies behind the policy of the present government.

The two leading political parties were agreed that new legislation with regard to qualification for citizenship was necessary, and there was at first no hint that the proposed measure would prove so contentious an issue. The significance of the Bill only slowly came to light, but when it did it raised a storm of indignation.

Previously immigrants from other Commonwealth countries have automatically acquired citizenship in two years. The period before which they can qualify for citizenship is now raised to five years without any exception to this rule for immigrants who have already taken up residence in the expectation of becoming Union Nationals in two years. It has consequently been felt by many that faith has been broken with these would-be South Africans. But the threat to democracy lies in the terms by which citizenship is, in future, to be obtained. No longer can it be automatically acquired. It is now only to be obtained by registration which can be given or withheld at the absolute discretion of the Minister of the Interior, "Who may, without assigning any reason, grant or refuse a certificate as he thinks most conducive to the public good, and no appeal shall lie from his decision." Here we see the authoritarian iron fist with the glove off! And when these powers are considered in the light of the restrictions already being placed on the liberty of South African citizens, such as the banning of a Communist M.P.'s visit to the Rand [an important gold-mining district in Transvaal], and the refusal to allow a Trades Union representative to proceed overseas, South Africans may indeed begin to wonder whether democracy in their country is not being slowly strangled to death.

There is, of course, a very practical reason why the government wanted to lengthen the period of domicile prior to the acquisition of citizenship and the Opposition were equally anxious to prevent it. In the general election of May 1948 the Nationalists gained 78 seats as against 60 held by the United Party, although the latter party actually polled five-ninths of the total votes. The government therefore holds its present majority with a near balance of power and through unequal representation. The incorporation of Southwest Africa into the Union has strengthened its position, but recent immigrants would be more likely to vote for the Opposition than for the Government, and the point of delaying their right to vote became one of political expediency. Who is to say that a greater sense of justice would have swayed any other political party? The incident merely illustrates the unfortunate fact that political expediency counts far more than justice. What really worries many people today is that the attempt to impose authoritarian rule at the expense of personal freedom in South Africa is coming from political leaders, many of whom are prepared to cite their policies as the will of God, and who are personally convinced that they are motivated by the demands of His service. It is the ideological outlook of those leaders and many like them which is of such profound importance in South Africa today, but it is not an outlook easily understood by others. It is founded on the rock of a narrow Calvinist faith and built into what can best be described as "a spiritual-cultural herrenvolk." A pamphlet published in 1946 by the Calvinist Study Circle and written by an influential Afrikaner on the message of Calvinism in the

sphere of politics and statesmanship provides a clue. The doctrine expressed here places God as "the sovereign legislator" with the "bearers of the spiritual-cultural heritage" as his prophets empowered to interpret by vote whether or not the Government is in accordance with the Law of God. It thus becomes clear that only the elect who measure up as "bearers of the spiritual-cultural heritage" by the acceptance of the interpretation of Calvinism which accords with the view of the Dutch Reformed Churches will ultimately be considered fit to govern or vote.

This doctrine would seem to explain the policies of the present political leaders, and if it can be taken as an indication of their motivating beliefs, then the principle which would make citizenship by test for would-be European citizens, is seen as the same principle that would disenfranchise the coloured peoples in the Cape, and remove all representation from the Bantu. The attitude of the Nationalists to other Europeans and to non-Europeans alike is based on their conception of the Boer Nation as holding a mandate from God Himself to interpret His will in the government of South Africa.

SOUTH AFRICAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
THE END OF THE NOVEL?

IT is fair to assume that a good writer—one who does his work with the conscience of an artist as well as the skill of a craftsman—is a person who is trying to communicate meaning to his readers. All writers, of course, are engaged in some sort of communication, the difference among them being largely determined by what they have to say and why they want to say it. The good writer, however, is concerned with the puzzles of human nature and human society: he wants to make clear something that seems obscure, to exhibit at least an aspect of the reality behind some set of confusing appearances. If he is himself confused, and honest about it, he may only give the sources of his confusion a sharp outline. John Steinbeck's *In Dubious Battle* is such a book. Mr. Steinbeck has no solution for the social struggle. He understands the motives, the emotions and the methods of the organizers of strikes; he sees the impersonal brutality of the system under which agricultural labor is employed in California's fertile valleys; he feels the anguish of mothers with families but no homes, of fathers with children but no jobs: all these things he knows about and can write about, but the over-all struggle itself, the strike, and whether it will bring what the strikers hope—this he does not know, and says so.

Probably most of the *honest* novels about our time are books which seek until they find some hard and merciless core of circumstances against which human beings are being crushed. For the fact is that human beings are being crushed, these days, and the novelist who ignores it is either a mere entertainer or a sectarian of some sort with special pleading to do. We do not mean to say that because honest novelists can find no way to break through the wall of their pessimism, no way exists. It is simply that such walls cannot be sundered by the tellers of tales. We have no doubt that there are ways to break out of the enclosing destiny of the twentieth century, but suspect that nothing short of a mighty opening of the human spirit—such as a Buddha or a Christ might invoke—can accomplish this liberation. To express such an opinion is different from sitting around waiting for miracles, for Buddha and Christ were no miraculous appearances, but facts of human history. As men, and *for* men, they communicated visions of meaning far beyond the novelist's power to explain. One is bound to wonder what they would say, today, to a world that seems committed to torturing itself to death. Buddha would probably say, as he said before, "Ye suffer from yourselves; none else compels. . . . " But how would he convince us of this truth? He would have to say something more. And Christ might tell us a second time, "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." In any event, both would call for a rejection of our present ways, and, one hopes, they would provide better reasons for doing so than their present followers.

But while a Christ can hope to establish a new cosmology and a new faith in the spirit of man, a novelist who lacks this vision and personal power is reduced to minor prophecy. The novelist takes man and the world as they are, or as he thinks they are, not as they might be. Perhaps it is a deep sympathy for the "average" person that makes the modern novelist, particularly the American novelist, deal with human beings as apparently helpless creatures who are moved like pawns by both external and internal forces—and who are conceived as man-in-the-mass rather than as individuals with independent destinies. In justice to the writers of such books, it might be supposed that they would rather explore the emptiness of the common existence than seek some sort of private salvation.

Last year's edition of *Twice a Year*, subtitled *Art and Action*, presented a discussion of John Dos Passos' trilogy, *U.S.A.*, in which a French critic, Claude Edmonde Magny, seems to penetrate to the "reality" behind not only the work of Dos Passos, but of numerous American writers. This translation of literary appraisal illustrates,

incidentally, the high quality of the material offered in *Twice a Year*. Magny writes:

> John Dos Passos' trilogy is a novel about people dispossessed of themselves. . . . The same might be said of the characters of other American novelists: those for example in John O'Hara's admirable *Appointment in Samara*. These writers communicate a very special malaise; the same malaise that we find in some of the magazine stories, that are so useful a study for anyone interested in the sociology and psychopathology of the United States; with their characters stuffed full of clichés, real social mannekins, dressed in platitudes and satisfied to be nothing else; all the more terrifying in that they lack even the relative existence which suffering gives to any consciousness however empty it may otherwise be. The profound truth to which this whole world of American fiction bears witness is that nothing in man belongs to him; considered in himself, he does not exist; he is reduced to a bundle of physiological and social determinisms. Whether Dos Passos' heroes succeed or fail, are happy or unhappy, satisfied or dissatisfied, the cause is never in themselves: it is due neither to their force of character, their ability nor their wisdom. Even determinants which are usually considered intrinsic, located in the depths of being, are represented by Dos Passos as fortuitous, adventitious, exterior. His characters are always moved by some outside determinism, usually economic. . . .
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> All their reality is outside them. Also (although purely incidentally) the portrait of these creatures without consistency constitutes the best possible indictment of the society which produced, one might say, secreted them—which gave them the fictive appearance of separate existence, the illusion of individuality—but is unable to endow them with real *being*. The painting of superficial, bi-dimensional beings, reduced to the most intrinsic determinisms, is in itself a satire, an indictment of the established order, even if the social demands remain unformulated (and they are sufficiently expressed in *U.S.A.*, though in the most objective way, through press clippings). The secret ambiguity of Dos Passos' work lies in the fact that its revolt against society is perhaps, as in Malraux and so many other writers, only the mask of a more found metaphysical revolt. Through the social order, he attacks the Order of Things; . . . From Dos Passos' work rises a mute protest not only (as he doubtless believes) against capitalism, but also against the condition of mankind, the world-as-it-is, and finally the structure of being. And if we define metaphysics as an effort to justify—or reject—Being, we shall see that the very technique of *U.S.A.*, like every good technique, is (as Sartre so profoundly said) big with a complete metaphysical attitude.

Dos Passos does not know how to make a new world, and it is his particular virtue that he does not pretend to know, but devotes his considerable talents to showing how very bad our present world is. He cannot, it seems, write about anything else, so that his work has the strength of his honesty and the strength of his protest against what Magny calls "the structure of being." Dos Passos has no theory of how the structure of being, as he sees it, became what it is; his resistance is in the form of a despairing and contemptuous admission of its absolute supremacy.

But this admission is fatal to literature. Great writing needs great alternatives for human decision, while Dos Passos writes about decisionless men in a world without choice. And this, perhaps, is the end of the road for the serious modern novel. If Dos Passos or some other writer could convince himself—as Tolstoy, for example, convinced himself—that the structure of being is man-made, and not a dark destiny written in the stars, then a new spirit in literature might be born. The idea of man as himself a creator, as essentially free, is, after all, the positive side of the protesting metaphysic of Dos Passos. Yet in order to write with conviction about man as a free being, it is necessary to *feel* free in some measure, to *see* choices, and to make them. These are some of the conditions which the creators of a new literature will have to meet, if they are to tear down the structure of being pictured by Dos Passos, and "remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire."

COMMENTARY
A SOVEREIGN PEOPLE

ACCORDING to the *Nation* for July 23, an appropriations bill before Congress, H.R. 5208 (now in conference), if passed in its original form, will have the effect of removing federal protection of the Navaho and Hopi Indians by placing them under state laws and the jurisdiction of state courts. We have before us a letter in which six Hopi chiefs protest to the President of the United States against measures of this sort, and go on record regarding several other matters. Among the latter are recent instructions to the Hopis by the U.S. Land Claims office to file on the lands they claim as theirs. They also say that it has been suggested to them—semi-officially—that unless they agree to lease some of their lands to oil companies for prospective drilling, the oil companies may lobby for laws that will permit the leasing of Indian land, regardless of the wishes of the Indians. Finally, the Hopi chiefs are disturbed by the implications of the Atlantic Pact, under which an attack on one signatory of the treaty is to be regarded as an attack on all. After some observations on the Hopi religion, the chiefs say:

> We are still a sovereign nation. Our flag still flies throughout our land (our ancient ruins). We have never abandoned our sovereignty to any foreign power or nation. We've been self-governing people long before any white man came to our shores. What Great Spirit made and planned no power on earth can change. . . .
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> We . . . will not file any claims . . . because we have never been consulted in regards to setting up these provisions. . . . we have already laid claim to this whole western hemisphere long before Columbus's great great grandmother was born. . . . We think that white people should be asking for a permit to build their homes on our land. Neither will we lease any part of our land for oil development at this time.... This is our sacred soil. . . .
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> We have been told that there is a $90,000,000 being appropriated for the Hopi and Navaho Indians. . . . We are still poor, even poorer because of the reduction of our land, stock, farms. [But] we do not need all that money and we do not ask for it. We are self-supporting people. We are not starving. . . . Maybe the Indian Bureau is starving. . . .
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> Now we have heard about the Atlantic security treaty. . . .We have no enemy. We will neither show our bows and arrows to anyone at this time. This is our only way to everlasting life and happiness. Our tradition and religious training forbid us to harm, kill and molest anyone. . . . What nation who has taken up arms ever brought peace and happiness to its people?

Obviously, the Hopis do not understand civilization at all.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

A SUBSCRIBER raises what seems to us a crucial problem. The fact that it may not be so regarded by many is quite possibly an indication that our traditions have not taught us to attach much importance to it. This subscriber writes that he "lacks courage" in "defying small community conventions." He sends his children to a local Sunday school and maintains a membership in that Church, although he is not himself in accord with its theological teachings. "I try to console myself," he says, "with the notion that when the children are old enough to do some thinking, I will guide them along less orthodox paths, but I would be much happier if they did not have to learn a lot of things they are some day going to have to unlearn."

What our friend, and most of anybody's friends, really mean when they describe this dilemma is that although something within them distrusts theological indoctrination, it still seems that the matter of choosing transcendental beliefs is of subsidiary importance. If a parent believed that his child was being instructed in the rationale of murder he would probably be quite willing to defy "small community conventions." The churches do not, of course, teach the rationale of murder; they preach a certain reverence for the example of Christ, who gave gentle love and the counsel of brotherhood to his disciples and to those throughout the centuries who have chosen to follow his example. In every Church, moreover, are men whose aspirations towards a better life are somehow identified in their minds with the doctrines of their religious group. But it seems to us that the question which educators must do intensive research upon is this: What are the preponderating psychological effects of the *forms* of orthodoxy which surround the Christ story and Christ example?

In our first column for MANAS, we spoke of three psychological incubi, Possessiveness, Fear and Sensualism, and we called for an examination of the possible relationship of the doctrines of Original Sin, Vicarious Atonement, and of Heaven and Hell to these potentially psychopathic tendencies. The doctrine of Heaven and Hell has become, in its traditional form, the inspirer of anxious desires for personal salvation. There is little to suggest that Jesus considered salvation in any other light than that conveyed by the pledge of Kwan Yin; "Never will I seek nor receive private, individual salvation; never will I enter into final peace alone; but forever, and everywhere, will I live and strive for the redemption of every creature throughout the world." But many of the "religiously minded" of Christendom seem to have participated in a highly competitive race to reach the gates of Heaven ahead of their fellows, at the same time manifesting a special interest in the sins of other people—possibly because they wished to have some assurance that they were at least better than *some* others. Understanding that they were to be "judged" by the Lord, they expected that their virtues would be recognized on a comparative basis.

Perhaps the deepening of fear in the orthodox heart often stems from the expectation that an unpredictable judgment may be pronounced from on high. This was certainly the case with Calvinists convinced of the doctrine of Predestination. If we could actually *know* the conditions of God's law, there would be nothing to fear. We would have certainty as to the moral quality of each thought and act. But the theological "law" is God's law, not ours, and we must accept the fate of being kept in suspense. *Our* sense of justice becomes of subordinate importance, so that it does not matter whether or not *we see* the justice of what happens to us.

Then, in the doctrine of Original Sin, we have the psychological impulsion for expecting ourselves, as well as all others, to sin at least occasionally—it is our "nature" to do so. Expecting to sin, and fearing the results of our inevitable sinning, we are not very likely to

become people "who fear no one and of whom no one is afraid." We think we are mostly our bodies, a bundle of passions and desires, while the "soul" belongs to God. We are never quite sure where the root of our consciousness is—in the soul or in the body—but we are sure that the body is full of Evil. When we think that the essential nature of our physical self is evil, we actually heighten the attractions of sensualism, and we do this because hate and fear, like love, are powerful attractive forces. We look for the worst in ourselves—and we can always find it. We tend to look for the worst in others, and we find this easily, too. And so, preoccupied with sin, we are easily led through the power of mind to *become* "sinners." From such complexes, we think, the tendency to "gross sensualism" can most easily arise. When we think we have a physical nature which is essentially evil and which we are powerless to change, we are driven to *use it,* as we are driven to use anything in our possession, in whatever way we can. Meanwhile, concentration upon sin makes us concentrate upon the weaknesses of others rather than upon their better qualities, and since it is impossible to build an ideal love when one's mind is thus preoccupied with expecting the worst or the least from others, we materialize love in a number of ways. Ergo, Possessiveness.

By this time, the reader may feel that all this "viewing with alarm" is hardly warranted by the simple question set up for discussion by our subscriber. Granted that our analysis is an abstract one, pursued to what seem the logical human responses to certain religious dogmas, without much attention to ameliorating factors. Granted, too, that these dogmas are often not taken very seriously, these days, so that their direct influence is somewhat abated. But when the hunger of the great mass of people for a deepening religious philosophy is taken into account, it seems that the weakness of bad dogmas can hardly be made into a good reason for going to church. There may be other compensating and redeeming features of denominational religion, but this discussion is not written for those who seek an apology for their present faith, but for those who want to probe their feelings of distrust for orthodox theology.

FRONTIERS
Labor-Employer Relations

IT is so easy to agree with the conclusions of Leo Wolman's *Industry-Wide Bargaining* (a pamphlet issued by the Foundation for Economic Education, Irving-on-Hudson, New York), that it seems obligatory to try to assemble some of the considerations which are omitted from his discussion. Soberly, and with supporting facts, Prof. Wolman argues that the labor movement is rapidly becoming an instrument of monopoly. A national union, exercising control of virtually the labor force of an entire industry, now has the power to establish a contract imposing the same conditions on all employers in the industry. The employers, in turn, are also united for bargaining purposes, with the result that the relationship between worker and employer is controlled by two powerful institutions, the union and the employer association. In time, says Prof. Wolman, the employers find that these new arrangements are "convenient." He continues:

> The responsibility for bargaining is placed in the hands of paid, professional negotiators. And they [the employers] are less worried about the concessions they are required to make since they are assured that all of their competitors are conceding the same things. By this time they have been won over to the policy of taking labor out of competition.

This seems to have been the pattern of the evolution of collective bargaining throughout the Western world. Employers find that they are able to pass along wage increases to the public in the form of higher prices because every employer, subjected to the same conditions, does it simultaneously. The result is that employers soon lose "much of the interest competing businesses have in keeping their costs and prices down." A "stable" monopoly is attained, and both labor and capital work to keep it undisturbed.

For specific examples, Prof. Wolman turns to recent developments in San Francisco, quoting from a study by Clark Kerr and Lloyd H. Fisher of joint employer bargaining in that city. These writers say:

> The effect of centralizing decisions, at least in San Francisco, generally seems to have turned collective bargaining, in a particularly pronounced way, into a political and legal institution, with formal procedures replacing informal ones and institutional relationships replacing personal relationships. Flexible personnel policies are supplanted by a legally defined system of rights and duties. Grievance procedure is vested in professional personnel. Differences of opinion are referred to the final authority of the contract, regardless of other considerations of equity. . .
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> There are distinctions between the employers' association and the constituent employers who compose it. The employers' association acquires an institutional character and an identity somewhat distinct from that of any of its member firms. It becomes interested in its own survival as an institution and must provide against internal conflicts which would threaten its dissolution.

One gets the impression from Prof. Wolman that the employers are being beguiled into monopolistic practices by the insidious collectivist tendencies of large-scale union organization and that, as a consequence, the time-honored principles of free enterprise are being betrayed. There is doubtless a sense in which everything that this Columbia labor economist says is accurate enough; his facts, at any rate, seem beyond dispute; but it still may be asked if what is needed for a better understanding of labor-employer relationships is simply another scholarly monograph confirming the pat judgment that "the unions may have served a purpose years ago, but now they are getting too powerful." Even though the judgment be flawlessly true, it contributes nothing constructive to the problem.

Prof. Wolman's chief complaint is that the public interest is increasingly ignored as industry-wide bargaining spreads its influence. He regards free competition among manufacturers as synonymous with the public interest, for the obvious reason that competition tends to reduce prices. But is price the sole matter of importance to be considered in connection with the public

interest? Take for example what happened in the transformation of the baking of bread into a mass production industry. Siegfried Giedion, in *Mechanization Takes Command,* after describing modern milling processes and the means by which bakers' flour is bleached with chlorine gas, notes that "the new methods arose in the demand for greater output, the human considerations having little voice in the matter." He comments:

> Mechanization of the milling process yielded a brilliant facade and a more or less artificial product. The oleaginous germ that formerly made the flour somewhat greasy to the touch, and which contains the most valuable elements, has been rigorously excluded. More recently, we have seen attempts to make good the values removed from the flour by vitamin reinforcements added to the yeast or the dough. The whiteness of the flour remains unspotted. But such measures remind one of a dentist who extracts good natural teeth, filling the void with a bright and handsome set of artificial ones.

Obviously, low price has been only a single result—and incidentally a coerced result—of the competitive system. Adulteration and perversion of the public taste are part of the system on a voluntary basis. This is not an argument against competition, but an argument against the blindly asserted view that free competition is in principle devoted to the public good. And it has nothing to do with the fact that monopoly practices, whether sponsored by the State or by unions and employers in combination, quite conceivably would be much worse.

In other words, the pretense that "free" industrial enterprise has by happy accident become both the defender of human freedom and the creator of unlimited prosperity is as tiresome as the claim that the labor movement will lead the way to the emancipation of the workingman everywhere in the world—more tiresome, in fact, for the labor movement was at least begun by men who gave themselves completely to the cause of the underdog. Today, the important conclusion concerning employer-labor relations seems to be that both sides are jockeying for power in terms of institutional controls and compromises with one another, and that, even as Prof. Wolman almost predicts, in all likelihood the Government, as the most powerful institution of them all, will eventually step in and become, not merely the arbiter of labor-employer disputes, but the absolute authority over all matters of price, wages and working conditions.

Neither labor nor capital wants this . . . exactly, but they do want material security and profits guaranteed to them by the economic system, and they are willing to argue that these objectives, so far as they are concerned, are the best and noblest goals in human life. And it is here, in this spurious "idealism," we think, that the betrayal is occurring—a betrayal, not of the working classes nor of free enterprise, but of the moral capacities of all the human beings who are involved.