VOLUME IX, NO. 13
MARCH 28, 1956

THE NEW MEN

THE vision of the eighteenth century has lasted until the present, and may, with a renewal and deepening of inspiration, reach far into the future. The depressed and even *com*pressed individual of the 1950's cannot help but be moved to new hopes by the enthusiasm of great eighteenth-century thinkers who saw so much and understood so well of what was going on about them. Thomas Paine, the man who, more than any other individual, was the maker of the American Revolution, said before the conflict broke out that he saw "a new order of things opening in the affairs of America." In 1782, he wrote to the Abbe Raynal, "Our style and manner of thinking have undergone a revolution, more extraordinary than the political revolution of the country. . . . We can look back upon our prejudices, as if they had been prejudices of other people." Richard Price, writing in England on the importance of the American Revolution, felt that this event "opens up a new prospect in human affairs, and begins a new era in the history of mankind." Price saw in the new country an opportunity for extraordinary progress for mankind, through an ideal educational system for the United States, which he conceived in this way:

> The end of education is to direct the powers of the mind in unfolding themselves; and to assist in gaining their just bent and force. And, in order to do this, its business should be to teach *how* to think, rather than *what* to think; or lead into the best way of searching for truth, rather than to instruct in truth itself.

Many minds united in formulating this vision. Most heart-warming, perhaps, was the contribution of a Frenchman who lived in America for many years, and wrote as a gentleman farmer of New York. Crévecœur 's great question, often quoted from his *Letters from an American Farmer,* was, "What then is the American, this new man?" His answer, given through many pages, has a leading place in all efforts to understand the history of the American people. Something of an economic determinist, Crévecœur saw the great transformation worked in the men who had come to the New World as a result of the new conditions of life. It was the poor, he said, who came to America. Driven by need, by severe laws and class oppressions, they combined daring with personal necessity and sailed across the Atlantic. In America—

> Every thing tended to regenerate them; new laws, a new mode of living, a new social system; here they are become men: in Europe they were as so many useless plants, wanting vegetable mould, and refreshing showers; they withered and were mowed down by want, hunger, and war: but now by the power of transplantation, like all other plants, they have taken root and flourished!

The farmer's knowledge of the French thinker lends a rustic eloquence to his prose:

> An European, when he first arrives, seems limited in his intentions, as well as in his views; but he very suddenly alters his scale. . . he no sooner breathes our air than he forms new schemes, and embarks in designs he never would have thought of in his own country. There the plenitude of society confines many useful ideas, and often extinguishes the most laudable schemes which here ripen into maturity.
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> He begins to feel the effects of a sort of resurrection; hitherto he had not lived, but simply vegetated; he now feels himself a man, because he is treated as such; the laws of his own country had overlooked him in his insignificancy; the laws of this cover him with their mantle. Judge what an alteration there must arise in the mind and thoughts of this man; he begins to forget his former servitude and dependence, his heart involuntarily swells and grows; this first swell inspires him with those new thoughts which constitute an American. . . . From nothing to start into being, to become a free man, invested with lands, to which every municipal blessing is annexed! What a change indeed! It is in

consequence of that change that he becomes an American.

> *He* is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater*. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world.

Schooled in the conviction that the Natural Law is higher than any man-made ordinance, and nurtured on frontiers which stretched far beyond the controls of civil authority, the Americans gained the reputation of being an independent, lawless breed. In an essay devoted to Crévecœur's question, Arthur M. Schlesinger tells how "the settlers oftentimes set up their own unofficial tribunals, which adjudicated land titles and punished offenders against the public peace. In other instances they resorted to the swifter retribution of individual gunplay or of mob action and lynch law. To use a familiar American expression, they 'took the law in their own hands,' thus fostering a habit of violence which survived the circumstances and has continued to condition the national mentality to the present time." Even so, the break with established authority was not an unmixed evil. Schlesinger points out:

> As a result, Americans tend to act on the principle that men should be equal in breaking the law as well as in making it, that they should enjoy freedom *from* government as well as freedom *under* government. Thoreau, the great philosopher of individualism, knew of no reason why a citizen should "ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator." He declared, "I think we should be men first, and subjects afterward." A similar conviction undoubtedly inspired William H. Seward's flaming declaration to the proslavery Senators in 1850 that "there is a higher law than the Constitution . . . ," just as it actuated thousands of churchgoing Northerners who secretly banded together to defeat the Fugitive Slave Act. . . .

From these roots, then, have sprung the people of a great modern nation, and while the memories of the hardy pioneer days may be growing faint, and the spirit of individualism represented by Thoreau become faint-hearted, from a variety of causes and pressures, the ennobling dream of the future envisioned by these eighteenth-century spirits is far from dead. Last week, the MANAS article, "The Responsibilities of Scientists," quoted from Harlow Shapley the statement that "Our American scientists and technologists at the present time have been derived from the adventurous pioneering stock of practically all the nations of the world"—leading Dr. Shapley to urge that American scientists should, "as rapidly as possible," think of themselves as citizens of the world, and not of any one country. Distinguished spokesmen for America have not forgotten the high dreams of the Founding Fathers, nor their ideal of an America which would hold out a beacon light of freedom and progress to the rest of the world.

One may argue, however, from the same grounds as those upon which Crévecœur based his explanation of the qualities of the "new man, the American," that circumstances have changed, and that the open world of a new continent, without hampering traditions and a close-knit social system, no longer invites to an expansive free life. The "frontier" has passed, melting into the watery battlefields of the Pacific, while the "individualism" of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has been confined by the superstructures of modern technology and regulated by the complex mechanisms of a social order which combines features of both the Welfare and the Garrison State. The oppressions of the twentieth century cannot be listed with a fine fervor on the few pages of a Declaration of Independence. They are impersonal and apparently inescapable, being the product of modern industrialism as much as they result from the ideological differences of the modern world. It might be said that Americans are a nation of eager extroverts who are now afflicted by the ills of their neglected psyches, and can no longer take off for parts unknown to work their troubles off in a struggle for survival in a wilderness of prairies,

and mountains. The virtues of the "new men" of the eighteenth century have had their full expression and are now souring for lack of exercise. Where, then, shall the new dreams come from? Who are today's pioneers, who will become the "new men" of tomorrow?

The worst mistake, perhaps, that we could make in seeking an answer to this question would be to assume that the "new men" of the present are bound to be Americans. If we permit ourselves to think that the eighteenth-century American Dream has not been a failure—that its realization is in some sense an accomplished fact—then its successor can not be a peculiarly "American" vision, but will belong to all the world.

A part of the new vision is surely foretold in the difficulty with which scientists think in "nationalist" terms. "I have always had the feeling," said Senator Fulbright in 1945, that scientists "are not so conscious of national sovereignty as lawyers or politicians or others." There are many more such people than just scientists. One may suspect that an increasing portion of each generation tends to feel without thinking much about it that national barriers and distinctions are unreal divisions, that armed conflicts between the nations are atavistic practices which mankind should long ago have outgrown.

One curious cultural synthesis which came out of the second world war was the alliance between young socialists and young religious pacifists. More than ten years ago, a writer in a small pacifist periodical, *Pacifica Views*, called attention to the new kind of "radical" that was emerging from the war resistance movement:

> In this synthesis of extremes, we witness the birth of a New Minority. Its members are destined to remain an enigma to the public for some years to come, and they will probably be a source of confusion to both Peace Church pacifists and old line radicals. It is certain that the American Legion will not understand them at all!
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> What is he, this New Minority Man? Is he a new breed of radical who uses the language of politics, yet scorns its conventional grooves? Is he the exponent of a revolutionary religion, some bizarre sectarian product of the war's hysteria?
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> No, he is none of these things. And when the Majority finds out who he really is, he will not be popular. For he is working for objectives which are both moral and practical—an impossible synthesis, the Majority will exclaim. His ends will be easily identifiable as revolutionary, but his reasons for working toward them will unite moral content with critical penetration; in short, he will be "dangerous." He will make spokesmen for the Majority uneasy. They will not be able to laugh off the finger of moral judgments he wags in front of their noses, because he will have a definite program tied to it. But if they listen a while, they will learn that he is not trying to take away their kingdom, that he is offering to help them gain a better one—better for all. He is the New Revolutionary who does not conform at all to the popular idea of what a revolutionary ought to be.
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> The political radical is commonly ignored as one who cannot adjust to "society" and who, therefore, is trying to adjust society to himself. He is, in the popular mind, a have-not saying "Gimme." His violent demands enable the majority to overlook the *moral* implications of his cry for a change. Morals, on the other hand, are held to be the province of religion—a nice thing, but impractical. Pacifists are "nice" religious people, and *very* "impractical." The pacifist is not supposed to want anything except personal exemption from war. His refusal to fight is taken as *prima facie* evidence of his ignorance of all social and political matters. He is, in short, believed to be the exact opposite of the radical. How surprising and how fine it is, then, for the pacifist to be discovered working alongside of the radical who talks of specific revolutionary changes; and how fine a thing it is, also, that those "radicals" who were supposed to care nothing for "moral values" are now revealed in company with pacifists, all laboring together to end war, oppression and inequality.
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> This New Minority must grow!

Who are the men whose ideas are having a great deal to do with the formulation of the new ideals and dreams of the twentieth century? The heredity of an idea is practically inexhaustible, but starting with approximately the present, we should have to name first men like Gandhi, Einstein, and

Schweitzer, as among the most famous and influential. Then another line of influence comes from the psychotherapists, beginning, perhaps, with Freud and Jung, and including an illustrious group of psychologists such as Karen Horney, Bruno Bettelheim, and Erich Fromm. In the field of politics, the only vital thinking that we know of during recent years has been done by Dwight Macdonald, publisher of the wartime *Politics* and author of the epoch-making critique of Marxism, *The Root Is Man.* In the area of health, soil conservation and nutrition, a number of less known men have started new currents of reflection that may ultimately work far-reaching reforms in both agriculture and diet. Two thrilling events, one literary, the other social, have come out of France. Simone Weil's book, *The Need for Roots,* is almost a work of genius, combining ancient philosophical wisdom with modern social intelligence in a way that most people would not have believed possible. The Communities of Work which have sprung up in France since the war are a manifestation of the same spirit, showing that the European workers—some of them, at least—have a capacity for practical brotherhood and voluntary sharing with few parallels in modern times. Also of French origin is the Existentialist movement which, for all its extremes and overtones of despair, represents an authentic assertion of the human spirit and a rejection of pretense and false standards of "respectability."

In the Orient, the rebirth of the American Dream as a World Dream of free, independent democratic societies—in India, Indonesia, Burma, to name but three—represents an extraordinary demonstration of the moral validity in the ideas of men like Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, and Abraham Lincoln. These contributors to the American Dream have now become world figures, just as Gandhi and Schweitzer and Einstein will be world figures of the future, whose origins will some day be forgotten. Athens was glorified by Socrates, but humbled in his death—so also with Bruno and Gandhi, who can never be contained by a single nation or race. There is a far stronger fellowship of mind and spirit uniting the thoughtful and courageous men of the world than has ever prevailed before. A web of friendly and sympathetic correspondence between Europeans and Americans, Americans and Indians, and Indians and Europeans is slowly working a magic which no amount of saber-rattling on the part of political leaders can affect. The new men of tomorrow will belong to the world.

Much has been said in these pages of the new mood of young American novelists, of their disillusionment, their insistence upon honesty and integrity, and their laying aside of 'isms and propaganda "lines" in literature. Writers are sensitive barometers of human feeling. As Milton long ago declared, they hold a mirror up to their times, reflecting the attitudes and feelings of many more than just those who put words on paper. The tellers of stories reveal the hungers of the human heart, and what are now hungers may, in the passage of decades, become demands.

Is all this, like the dramatic emergence of the hardy American pioneers, no more than a response to a change in environment? One hesitates to think that it can be only this. Rather, the present seems to be an interval of subjective and moral discovery, and a girding of inner resources to meet and overcome difficulties created over centuries by the energies of men. There is dawning recognition that we must learn to discipline and order, not the rampant forces of external nature, but the improvident excesses and abuses of human nature. The world, we begin to sense, is truly our own creation, its evil as well as its good. Men have long talked about this, and moralists have preached it, but now, perhaps, we shall begin to deal with it as fact. This, indeed, may be the great achievement of the New Men, with whom lies the hope of the future.

Letter from ENGLAND

LONDON.—A few days ago the House of Commons, after a conscience vote, that is, a vote free of Party bias, decided that the time has come for the public hangman to be permanently retired from business. The Government, whose Home Secretary, Major Lloyd George, is a stalwart supporter of hanging, was taken by surprise. The Press ran banners: No more hangings. The victory had every appearance of having been won. But the Government found itself in a somewhat difficult position. Its policy has been the retention of capital punishment: could it, then, following the free vote against the known policy, introduce a Bill to abolish capital punishment? Constitutionally, it might be said that that was its plain duty. But the Government, headed by the Home Secretary, implacable and not to be gainsaid, declined to introduce legislation. A private Member, Mr. Sidney Silverman, a barrister, had a Bill down for hearing before the free vote. The Government now said, in effect, go ahead with the private Bill, we won't do anything. But much has been done since the free vote. The whole Tory Press, that is, the bulk of the national and provincial press, has been mobilized to impress both M.P.'s and public with the terrible consequences that will ensue upon abolition. So, at the moment of writing, it seems just possible that the Silverman Bill may not get passed. It may be rejected by the Commons, or deferred by the Lords—for the Lords' power in this matter now has a time limit set upon it. Among other odd arguments which the advocates of capital punishment are advancing is the position of the police—will they have to be armed? Again, what about treason, the firing of ships in dockyards, or (they forget this one) the violation of the Queen? All are capital offences. Why, it may well be asked, is the Home Secretary—for it is he who takes the lead for the Government—so bent upon detention? Your correspondent can offer no explanation.

Not long ago, a woman of twenty-eight, of the night club sort, shot her lover in the street. He had knocked her about and had left her for another woman. He had left her pregnant and she had been aborted. One might say that hers was such a case for clemency: and a monster petition was lodged at the Home Office. But, no, the Home Secretary stood adamant and the woman was hanged. The London correspondent of a Paris newspaper had this to say: "The English understand only two passions—sport and gambling." The gibe was merited. Now, today, a book is published which sums up against capital punishment with objective fairness. It comes from—of all authors—a very distinguished retired Civil Servant, Sir Ernest Gowers. That book may counteract the present drive of the Tory government to keep the hangman busy (the average is one hanging a month). Many, like your correspondent, hope that this may be so. But, and here is the real horror: three men under sentence of death may be executed. The Home Secretary has stated that he will treat them in the ordinary way, since, technically, he cannot anticipate coming legislation. Of such is Britain's Tory government.

While the public mind has been engaged upon this issue, another has passed without much notice. The facts are simple. A butcher claimed the right to handle his own meat at the great London market, Smithfield. He was told he must employ a bummeree, that is, a porter. Smithfield operates under City of London bylaws. The butcher appealed to the Lord Mayor's Court. The judge found in his favour. He went off to Smithfield. But he was not allowed to handle his meat. Said the Union boss: "The judge said he could. He said he would. We said he couldn't. He didn't." At that point, one would have thought a government would have consulted the Law Officers of the Crown, for what had transpired? A trade union had set up a competing authority against the Queen's Court. The Rule of the Law had not prevailed. Yet, such is the power of great Unions, that the case has been slurred over. No arrests, no civil action, has been taken against the truculent Union. Where does it lead when the Rule of Law is abrogated? It leads, in any state, to ultimate Anarchy. In Britain the first step in that direction has been taken: but nobody appears to realize it. No, that is not true. Every lawyer understands, for here is elementary Constitutional Law. A court whose decisions can be negatived by any other authority in the state ceases to signify as the instrument of civic order.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
WHAT IS OBSCENITY?

THE Pocket Books are now too solidly entrenched for their publishers to stand in mortal fear of "moral" criticism from religious groups—and this may be a good thing. At least, one is disposed to think in this vein after reading an article by James Rorty in the Winter *Antioch Review*, "The Harassed Pocket-Book Publishers." For Mr. Rorty is worried about the ultimate cultural effects of censorship, and interested in philosophical analysis of obscenity—the word most frequently hurled at the P.B.'s by censorship groups.

"The harassed Publishers" is part of a larger work, a projected book involving investigation of federal security regulations and censorship in general, providing some excellent factual and historical material as background for examination of just what "corruption" in literature constitutes. Among other things, it is Mr. Rorty's intent to inform the public as to the manner in which the Catholic-sponsored National Organization for Decent Literature has instituted "a creeping extralegal censorship threatening to bowdlerize" pocketbooks.

The production of pocket books is, as everyone knows, enormous, having swelled to "a torrent of over 300,000,000 volumes and 1,200 titles per year. As for the present controversy on "obscenity":

> Carried along on this flood is a percentage of salacious bilge, much of it written to order for a few fly-by-night publishers who exploit the sex obsessions of adolescents and adult psychotics and the loopholes in the laws against obscenity and pornography. The percentage of this pollution is small, however. The vast majority of pocket books sold in this country are either reprints of classics and of contemporary best sellers both fiction and non-fiction; or they are equally reputable originals, including novels, westerns, mysteries, anthologies of poetry and prose, and service handbooks.
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> Unfortunately the censors, in applying their vague, shifting, and highly subjective canons of "obscenity"—a concept which the courts are still struggling to make objective and measurable—take little or no account of a writer's motive and intent, or of the total effect of his work.

NODL'S effective agencies are community organizations, instructed by the "parent" group. While tastes and standards of "morality" differ widely in various areas, a list of the books "banned" in different parts of the country indicates a stereotyped basis of evaluation. Writers such as Edmund Wilson, William Faulkner, Lillian Smith, Arthur Koestler, and James Jones are consistently banned by the NODL's offshoots, nor do minor classics by Zola, Flaubert, and John Dos Passos manage to get on the shelves in "pure" communities. James A. Michener's *Tales of the South Pacific* and Christopher Morley's *Kitty Foyle* are frequently disapproved, along with Irwin Shaw's *The Young Lions* and John Masters' *Nightrunners of Bengal.* The attitude of most of the censors is expressed by a chairman, a minister of the Gospel, who declared, "I don't discriminate between nude women, whether or not they are art. It's all lustful to me." How could such a man perceive distinctions between, let us say, James A. Michener, Edmund Wilson, and Mickey Spillane?

Mr. Rorty's account of how the censorship groups operate is interesting:

> Members of the censoring panel are not required to meet any established qualifications of education or experience. An instruction sheet advises the mothers that "probably in most cases it will not be necessary to read the whole book." In practice the volunteer censors, whose work load is heavy, do little more than mark the passages they consider objectionable, without attempting to appraise the motive of the author the literary quality of his work, or its total effect upon the reader. The October, 1954 list of "Publications Disapproved" included James T. Farrell's *A World I Never Made, Father and Son,* and *My Days of Anger;* Arthur Koestler's *The Age of Longing;* Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* and *God's Little Acre;* and James Jones' *From Here to Eternity.* At one time or another during the past five years, over I50 titles published by the New American Library of World Literature, one of the oldest and most reputable of the pocket-book reprint houses, have been in trouble with one or more of the

multiplying groups of local community censors, most of which utilize the NODL lists.

Although Catholic laymen and lay women, especially the National Council of Catholic Women, have frequently taken the initiative in forming the community organizations which bring pressure on pocket-book dealers and distributors, the NODL's policy has been to involve religious organizations of all faiths, civic groups, parent teacher associations, trade unions, and representatives of the local drugstore and newsstand distributors.

In Youngstown, Ohio, the Chief of Police was prevailed upon to "influence" the pocket-book distributors to withdraw titles. Publishers, however, combined forces to secure an injunction against the Chief, and the U.S. District Court said he was "exceeding lawful powers" in threatening arrest if the books mentioned were not withdrawn from circulation. The court affirmed that literature must be judged by those who have the background and training to evaluate it, and that the citation of isolated words or passages may reveal nothing of either the intent or the effect of the book in question.

Supporting the "harassed" publishers in their struggle for a free press are several current sociological studies which indicate that youths seldom find precocious "sex knowledge" in novels. For one thing, there are much easier and quicker ways of finding such information, while a number of comic books and salacious magazines are frankly edited to exploit adolescent interest in sex. As Rorty reports, "it has never been established that the printed word plays anything more than a minor role, if any, in causing juvenile delinquency." He continues:

In one study of 13,528 adolescent boys and girls only four percent of those interviewed named books as their source of sex information. As for juvenile delinquents, a ten-year study by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck showed that on the average they read very, very little; it is significant that the Gluecks, in their exhaustive search for the causes of juvenile delinquency, considered books and reading in general to be of so little importance as not to be worth investigating. Before and after the advent of the pocket books there has been a long history of prosecution of books and publishers for obscenity. Yet, as Ernst and Lindley point out in *The Censor Marches On*, "no one has even been able to point out a specific person who has admitted being, or who can be proved to have been, injured by the publication in question."

Mr. Rorty's summation is, we think, a good one. He remarks that "to surrender by instituting the kind of stultifying self-censorship that has so largely sterilized the cultural potential of the movies, the radio and television, would probably satisfy both the official and unofficial censors and the distributors who have become increasingly their pliant collaborators. It would also be disastrous, for the inexpensive book, more than other modern instruments of mass communication, is today an outpost of freedom in our democratic culture."

To all of this we should like to add, with what we hope is common sense, that both criminal insanity and saintliness are attitudes of mind—qualities which cannot be identified merely by a vocabulary, any more than by raiment. Words and situations involving common forms of human experience have an infinitude of shades of influence, stemming from the intent, and, finally, from the total philosophy, of the author. A proper sermon was preached to the censors by Gautama Buddha, a long time ago: "Those who see evil where there is no evil, tend on the downward path."

True literature, it can safely be said, is never obscene, because it has point, purpose and drama, and because these transcend any attending indelicacies of verbiage. Genuine obscenity, on the other hand, has only itself as its object. Let us, then, at least employ university professors to compose our "censorship lists"—if we must have them at all.

COMMENTARY
CULTURE IN FLUX

THE articles in this week's issue illustrate in various ways the ferment of standards and values which is slowly changing the modern world. The lead article deals with the impending transition in social and political thought, due, on the one hand, to the exhaustion of eighteenth-century ideals in the complexities of twentieth-century industrialism, and, on the other, to the imperatives of atomic war. Every modern nation is pulled in opposite directions by the compulsions of the age—the military compulsions, which demand immeasurable destructive power in behalf of national security, are set against the moral compulsions, which easily show that submission to military logic will soon submerge and suffocate the moral qualities of civilization.

There is a like exhaustion of the promise of physical science. No one questions the capacity of scientists to continue to make revolutionary discoveries, but every thoughtful man questions the capacity of human beings to control the march of scientific progress and to direct it in paths that lead to the common good. Science, as the growing tip of technology, acknowledges no principle of self-control. The moral balance of science can be no better than the moral balance of society at large, while the present decisions of the nations give little evidence of being in any sense "scientific," springing rather from the passions of the hour and the irrational fears of great masses of men.

It is natural that, in times like these, people should seek for new conceptions of "reality," and eagerly respond to any suggestion which lends an air of solid fact to strange and wonderful happenings, such as the clairvoyance of Gerard Croiset (see Frontiers), or the promise of past and future lives for all, as found in reincarnation literature.

The ferment is particularly noticeable in popular religion. It is evident that much of the current "boom" in religion is an attempt to turn religion into a kind of magic. "There is a tendency," one clergyman has said, "to seek to use God as one of a number of resources to get what we want and enjoy life as we would." This tendency is evident at various levels—with Norman Vincent Peale at one end of the scale, and Oral Roberts (television faith healer) at the other.

But underneath all this froth and disturbance is a basic questioning, and a hunger that no "old-time" nourishment can satisfy. So far, we can see little more than the crumbling of tradition—a process which at the same time makes men both vulnerable and free.

CHILDREN
and Ourselves

OBSERVATION for an hour or so of any young and active child leads inevitably to a conclusion which has often been recorded—but which comes as a fresh discovery to new parents. The discovery is that much of what the child is doing, throughout the day, is a quest, carried on with the seriousness and dedication which we usually associate with *work.* The child "relaxes," too, of course, but he never sets aside as much time as the father who plans for nine or eighteen holes of golf during the week, and again on the weekend. Adult sort of "play," for the young child, seems to be whatever he does when he is not concentrating, but whenever he is concentrating—which is really most of the time—he looks and acts as if his real object is to *learn* something. He experiments, he considers as many possibilities in respect to the fascinating object before him as his small mind can conjure up, and then he experiments some more. He falls down innumerable times, but is less interested in the jar of the falling than in why it was that he could not remain upright. He likes to go uphill and downhill, likes to climb and to balance himself precariously—because he is learning how his body works, and how various obstacles may be dealt with.

It occurs to us that we have here an important clue to some of the missing ingredients in the education of older children. If our analysis is correct, it is not *natural* for children to "play" in completely random fashion except for a short time. True, these periods of irresponsibility may be necessary, just as we find it necessary to put down a book and to think about something else or do something else after intense concentration. But the real difference is not one between work and play, but arises because for the very young child every new endeavor involves discovery. When the child has become four or five years old, his basic experiments have been made, at least so far as his physical environment is concerned, save for certain new situations which may come his way. He now needs guidance and training in order to show him how his "work propensity" may find further scope. It is no service to the child to adopt the questionable premise that what he really wants is play and more play, for this point of view is not the child's, but is superimposed by our own careless observation. The child who comes to understand that we expect his energy to be expended pointlessly, and that we expect him to regard moments of complete "freedom" as indulgent gifts, is apt to lose his natural desire for purposeful activity. The wise parent or teacher, in our opinion, tends in various ways to reverse the usual adult psychology: he presents the task or challenge as a gift, and takes for granted the child's fascination and enjoyment when such an opportunity has been presented.

The difficulty here lies in another attitude characteristic of our time: we seem to have come to assume that people are only truly happy when they are *not* working. The advertisements of all major insurance companies feature the joys of those years when the annuities begin to pay off, when one no longer goes to the office or applies himself to the tasks of machine-shop or plant. But we should know better. We have only to examine our own emotional reactions to realize that there is a strong likelihood our enjoyment in living will diminish considerably when we are on the sidelines, watching other people create and strive. And when we read, as we say, for "pleasure," do we truly derive *more* pleasure from reading which is completely divorced from purposeful thinking, or does a greater sense of well-being flow from reflection upon literature that improves our own thinking? The answer, again, is rather obvious, save for those whose psychological condition creates a demand for escape. But not only those who are psychological sufferers accept escapism. Our entertainment is usually expected to provide forgetfulness, and, in consequence of this, we continue to provide similar scaled-down versions of escape for the "play" of the younger generation. Do they thank us for it? Does the un-integrated

behavior, the aimless destructiveness of many of those we call delinquents, indicate something quite other than appreciation?

Life should not be departmentalized. Just as the adult who finds pleasure in his work, and turns his pleasure to some sort of account, is the happiest of men, so with the child or youth. Both his work and his play need to be designed, in part, for him by parents and teachers—but there is no reason why he, like those few adults who are "psychologically mature," cannot realize the greatest fulfillment when the two are closely related—made interdependent rather than separate.

We recall a letter from a subscriber, printed a few years ago, describing how much a child can learn from wandering freely over the fields for days on end. But such testimonials do not contradict our thesis. The child who roams in this manner is learning, and knows that he is learning. As he wanders he is quiet, observant, reflective—he might even be said to be "working" at learning, whether he knows it or not. The later skills of adult life, especially when these turn out to be exceptional, often indicate a direct relationship to the former child's play—proving that the child "relates" in a very real, intuitive way, when left to his own devices.

The rub comes when, in our atomistic, unrelated society, adult activities are found to be so remote from anything the mind of a sensible child can understand. The boy who loves to build airplanes from balsa wood, for instance, is not going to be able to emulate the early independent designers of aircraft. Work for Lockheed or Douglas, yes, but work as part of a meticulously organized process which grinds on, for most employees, without any opportunity for bringing a personally conceived idea to actual birth. The technics of today are so technical, so departmentalized, that, while a child's natural bent, expressed through "play" during youth, may lead him to employment, there is little chance that further opportunity for creative activity will be the reward.

The creativity of the future, it seems likely, will have to turn to things of the mind, dealing less with things of metal and wood; it may involve a hunting for fresh educational and social perspectives rather than the hunting and fishing of wood and stream. But here we fail the youngsters again. At the very time when originality has all but left the material world—except for refinements of our mechanical wonders—our education emphasizes the "practical." Subsidized directly by government and indirectly by industry, technical facilities in university plants grow by leaps and bounds. The rewards, for youth, are tangible and attractive, but the "work" itself is the sort of work which makes men seek the sort of play that is not good for them—the sort of play which reads "escape" no matter how it is spelled. Technical work, unless it is inventive, leads to mental stagnation—unless leisure activities can turn to creative pursuits, either practical or philosophical.

So, by this roundabout route, we come to stress the importance of the quality and nature of adult recreational activity. According to the arguments with which we began, it is the natural state of man to create through his "play"—to build in some manner which he enjoys. The sociologists and psychologists tell us that it is the use of leisure time which will determine, first, the mental health of the future, and, finally, its society. So, what kind of play do you favor? Do you learn while you play, and what do you learn? Perhaps a parent can do nothing more important, by way of example, than making the "play" in his own life count for something understandable to the child.

FRONTIERS

The Psychic Labyrinth

SEVERAL weeks ago, this Department found occasion to suggest that a scholarly disinclination to deal seriously with vulgar wonders of psychism and associated speculations might result in a wave of popular miracle-mongering, in which the public would have no better sources of information than the publishers who profit from sensationalism. "Reactionary" is an epithet which is seldom appropriate, but we can think of no other to apply to the snobbish attitude of those scientists, especially psychologists, who persist in ignoring the vast amount of evidence for psychic forces and powers, and who, not content with this personal isolation from the main stream of human experience, imply that the evidence is hardly worth looking at.

Meanwhile, the publications with no academic tradition of skepticism to preserve, and no "scientific" dogmas to endanger, continue to cater to the flooding popular interest in things supernatural. The January *True*, a monthly which sets out to astonish its readers with "facts," tells the story of "the world's most unusual detective," a Dutch psychic whose services are available to the Haarlem police for the location of missing persons and the apprehension of criminals, and who earns his living as a healer by means which recall the methods of Anton Mesmer of nearly two hundred years ago.

This man, Gerard Croiset, is termed a "mental medium" by Murray Bloom, who writes the *True* article, but from the evidence presented, the designation seems incorrect. Croiset is rather a psychic of impressive clairvoyant capacities, and he refuses any pay for the help he affords to the police in solving difficult cases. He works under the supervision of Dr. W. H. C. Tenhaeff, director of the Parapsychological Institute of the University of Utrecht, and Dr. Hans Bender of the University of Frieburg. Bloom's story gives the details of several of Croiset's dramatic successes in solving police cases, but most interesting of all, perhaps are the circumstances of a "failure." Bloom writes:

> In a perverse way I was cheered when I found that Croiset is fallible. He is not always successful, a fine human attribute that oddly enough makes some of his more incredible exploits quite believable to me. There was the case of the jewelry show window which had been plundered one night after someone had thrown a brick through it.
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> The police gave Croiset the brick to see what impressions he could get. All Croiset could "receive" was that the burglar at the age of 8 had been in an orphanage where he had been whipped frequently. The police, of course, didn't consider this a useful clue. But a year later when they caught the burglar, they found that he had been in an orphanage when he was 8 and was often caned there.
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> Dr. Tenhaeff. . . told me one day, "Croiset always gets stronger impressions where an orphan or a mistreated child is involved. Why? He was brought up from the age of four by foster parents and was often harshly mistreated by them. One family used to punish him by chaining one of his legs to a strong stake nailed to the floor so that he couldn't go more than a few feet. To this day we find that Croiset is always apt to get strong impressions if the people involved in a case have leg ailments of any kind. . . ."
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> Croiset's memory of his father is a happy and respectful one. The latter was a follower of Tolstoy, the Russian author and philosopher. One of the tenets of Tolstoy's philosophy is that the criminal is a victim of society and is to be pitied rather than punished. As a result, Croiset admitted, to this day he is reluctant to help the police where ordinary crimes are involved.
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> "I don't like to be instrumental in grabbing some poor wretch," he explained. "And when, as in the jewelry robbery, I get the impression the man was an orphan or spent much time in unhappy foster homes, as I did, I find that there is a block in my ability to help the police."

Once Croiset picked four winners at the Longchamps racetrack. He never did it again. "The atmosphere," he said, "the people, disgusted me. This is not for me." He is glad, also, that he cannot use his gift for the members of his immediate family. "If I knew everything I couldn't stand living. It would be terrible."

During the war he worked in the underground, warning Dutch resistance leaders of forthcoming Nazi raids. Later, in a Nazi concentration camp, he discovered his ability to heal: "he found that in the doctorless camp he could help many of the sick simply by passing his hand over them for a minute or two." An Amsterdam psychiatrist, Dr. H. Musaph, has guardedly admitted that Croiset, mainly by suggestion, is able "to make seemingly atrophied muscles work either while he was making passes over the paralyzed limbs or soon after."

Dr. Musaph remarked that Croiset's methods are not "original," which is very nearly the most important thing he could have said. Few people realize the extent of the literature dealing with persons with such capacities, from the days of the ancient sibyls of Greece to nineteenth- and twentieth-century psychics and healers like Andrew Jackson Davis and Edgar Cayce. The most useful books giving broad coverage of the subject are those which were published during the nineteenth century, before scientific skepticism lowered the boom on inquiry into psychic matters. The Bohn Library edition of Joseph Ennemoser's *History of Magic* is a two-volume treasury of lore on psychics, sensitives, and healers of the past (London, 1854). Then, in 1863, Longman, Green published William Howitt's *History of the Supernatural.* Howitt was one of the more intelligent of the Spiritualists, and while he writes with an interest in proving the Spiritualist case, his book is nevertheless useful for its extended accounts of psychic manifestations of various sorts throughout European history. H. P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled* (1877) is a work which deals with much the same material, adding the insights of Oriental mysticism and psychological discipline to the more or less "spontaneous" phenomena of Europe and America.

The strength of public interest in psychic matters is illustrated by the continuing exploitation of Morey Bernstein's Doubleday book, *The Search for Bridey Murphy,* now in its eighth printing (145,000 copies), with demand far outrunning supply. One repercussion of the Bridey Murphy excitement (Bernstein's book is also being serialized in forty-two newspapers and has been purchased for a movie) is that it has "touched off a fever of activity among other amateur hypnotists, leading to more age regression experiments and often new headlines at the local level." (Los Angeles *Times,* March 11.) Sensing the news in these activities, the Associated Press questioned psychologists on the "regression" technique of tapping supposed information concerning the former "incarnation" of a hypnotic subject. Dr. Louis R. Wohlberg, New York Medical Center psychiatrist, told of a woman who, under hypnotic regression treatment for an emotional problem she could not explain, suddenly "burst into what appeared to be pure gibberish." The doctor finally determined that she was speaking pure Greek—poetic Greek, in fact. Later, however, it was learned that when she was two years old she had lived with her mother in the home of a Greek professor who often recited Greek poetry out loud! Dr. Wohlberg used this case to show an alternative to the reincarnation theory, and went on to warn against amateur hypnotic experiments, as containing many "real dangers."

Professional psychologists probably would not credit still other alternatives for the Bridey Murphy type of "recall," such as access to a reservoir of psychic impressions of the past, but as these experiments continue, it is likely that evidence will be produced which will require a broader field of interpretation than either modern psychiatry or oversimplified "reincarnation theory" can offer.