VOLUME VI, NO. 17
APRIL 29, 1953

TOWARD A MATURE WORLD

IS it possible—or at all conceivable—that the modern world is now moving toward a day when "progress," whether national or international, will no longer be defined in ideological terms? Some temerity is required even to ask a question of this sort, since the lines of ideological difference among the world powers have been allowed to harden into what seem almost impenetrable psychological barriers. Yet the inquiry seems worth while, if only because rigid psychological frontiers present so striking a contrast to the deepest hopes of human beings in all parts of the world.

We have a theory to the effect that extremes of any sort have a natural tendency to produce their opposites—that when, in the relations of peoples, national spokesmen grow vociferous in asserting that understanding and peace are *impossible,* and demagogues attempt to persuade their listeners that whole populations of hostile powers must be regarded as little more than clots of evil upon the face of the earth, behind the facade of these nihilistic declarations entirely different views may sometimes prosper. This happens, first, because there *is* a basic desire in human beings to get along with one another, and second, because the potentialities of suspicion and antagonism have been, quite literally, exhausted by the prophets of hate and the military exhibitionists, so that the feelings of other people are at last released to swing in new directions.

There are other reasons for raising this question. During the past five or ten years a great deal of attention has been paid by thoughtful men and women to the idea of "maturity." This interest has not been superficial. It seems to be dawning upon a great many that uncompromising ideological attitudes—especially the oversimplified and dogmatic ideological attitudes brought into focus by the "cold war"—are marks of dangerous immaturity. While it may be true that such discoveries are still in a tentative stage of conviction, as perhaps, at the outset, ought to be all views which break with majority opinion, the feeling that a new attack should be made on the problems of the world, an attack at an almost wholly non-ideological level, is so widespread as to promise some kind of radical awakening in the not too distant future.

What prompts these thoughts? A factor in precipitating them might have been the recent announcement by President Eisenhower of the need to regard Soviet peace gestures at their face value. Mr. Eisenhower, it seems to us, is the sort of man who may be expected to mean what he says, in a declaration of this sort. Then, too, the "peace gestures" have been rather substantial. They were conveniently summarized in a recent *Christian Century* editorial (April 8), which noted: "It is astonishing, when one looks back over the brief record since Stalin's death, to see how many amicable moves the Communists have made." First, there was Malenkov's March 15 speech, in which he said:

> There is not one disputed or undecided question that cannot be decided by peaceful means. . . . This is our attitude toward all states, among them the United States of America. . . .

Then, according to the *Christian Century*, "these developments followed in swift succession":

> The Russian high commissioner in Germany, Marshal Chuikov, ordered a speed-up in clearances of trucks leaving West Berlin for passage through the Russian zone to West Germany.
>
> The funeral oration over Czech President Gottwald repeated Malenkovis assertion that all issues can be settled peacefully.
>
> The Western powers were notified that the Mittelland canal, which links the Rhine and the Elbe,

would be "repaired" by the end of last month {March}, after a broken lock had put this important transport facility for West Germany out of commission since last summer.

Foreign minister Molotov promised the British that he would see that nine Britons, including the minister to Syngman Rhee's government, who have been in North Korean captivity since the capture of Seoul, shall be released.

While Marshal Chuikov rejected the British protest against the shooting down of a British bomber, he expressed "regret" and suggested a conference to avoid future trouble. (The press reported President Eisenhower and his guest, Mayor Ernst Reuter of West Berlin, "amazed" at this, the first known instance of such an expression of regret.)

The Moscow radio suddenly discovered that, in World War II, "the Soviet Union, the U.S.A. and Britain harmoniously cooperated as allies, helping each other and coordinating their military affairs."

A week later the Communists informed the U.N. that they were ready to resume negotiations at Panmunjom for an exchange of sick and wounded prisoners of the Korean war, a proposal to which they had paid no attention when it was first made by Anthony Eden and endorsed by the United States. Strikingly, the Communist offer was worded so as to permit any such prisoners who did not wish to be repatriated to be left where they are.

Two days later came the climax. Chou En-lai broadcast a Chinese offer of general repatriation for "all prisoners... who insist upon repatriation," turning over to "a neutral state" the responsibility of arranging "a just solution" for the question of "the remaining prisoners." This was, as we have said, the proposal made by India which Chou En-lai's government spurned less than six months ago.

The comment of the *CC* is also worth repeating:

> Today it is still the Communists who seem, to many peoples, to be seeking peace; it is we who seem to turn apprehensive when they propose it. So far as psychological warfare is concerned, they are running away with it. It might be said, in fact, that Malenkov, Molotov, Chou En-lai & Company have changed the term. It is no longer psychological *warfare* they are waging, but psychological "peace-fare." And unless the United States rises swiftly to the situation created by the new Communist approaches, they will win the "psychological peace-fare" contest hands down.

Well, if the Communists are able to win an authentic peace, "hands down," should anyone mourn? Certainly not the Americans, who have long maintained that Communism is some sort of neurotic manifestation spawned of war and world misery. If Communism can thrive only in the atmosphere of international stress, then peace, not war, is the best possible way to disarm the Communist "menace."

But even if the Russian and Chinese peace gestures turn out to be no more than a Machiavellian plot to gain world sympathy for the Soviet cause, we should still feel that thinking about international affairs in non-ideological terms is worth a try. For already there is a groundswell of feeling in this direction, which may well develop into a "wave of the future."

At the conclusion of the first world war, Prof. Frederick J. Teggart, a scholar of eminence, wrote in what ought to have been an epoch-making essay, *The Processes of His*tory:

> It is obvious that war has played a most significant part in the advancement of mankind, but the benefits it has conferred have been confined to the break-up of crystallized systems of organization and of thought. Since man has not become sufficiently self-conscious of the natural processes which dominate his life, he continues to submit to the fixative influences of group discipline, and throws all his weight in favor of maintaining the *status quo*. It follows that, in the past, the gateway of human advance has been the violent conflict of the representatives of old and new ways of thought and action, whether old and new be embodied, for the occasion, in states, in groups within a given state, or in single individuals. It must, therefore, be regarded as a shortsighted view which imagines the conflict thus precipitated as in itself a desirable thing, though, heretofore, man's ignorance of himself has made such conflicts inevitable. . . .
>
> War has been, times without number, the antecedent of advance, but in other cases, such as the introduction of Buddhism into China, the same result has followed upon the acceptance of new ideas without the introductory formality of bitter strife. As long, indeed, as we continue to hold tenaciously to customary ideas and ways of doing things, so long must we live in anticipation of the conflict which this

persistence must inevitably induce. (Reprinted by the University of California Press in 1941 in *Theory and Processes of History.)*

If there are such things as "laws of human behavior," Prof. Teggart has here succeeded in stating one of the most important of them; and the essence of his contribution, it seems to us, is in the idea that such laws apply in one way to people who have become self-conscious, and in another way to those who have not.

So, then, what we are suggesting, in this article, is that the human race, in the persons of its most thoughtful members, is in the process of attaining to a new stage of self-consciousness, and that, before too long, this sort of awareness may make itself felt in the international sphere. During recent years, a number of psychotherapists have been driving intensively toward greater maturity and self-consciousness in the field of interpersonal relationships. In the process, they have become sharply critical of what Teggart calls "crystallized systems of organization and thought," pointing out the sources of emotional partisanship, hostility, and fear in hitherto unquestioned orthodoxies. The force of this kind of analysis has been inescapable. Not long ago, the Christian leader, Harry Emerson Fosdick, found reason to exclaim: ". . . our tragic problem cannot wait; it is pressing, exigent, desperate; religion is everywhere blocking man's search for unity and mutual understanding." With the voice of a true reformer, Dr. Fosdick declares: "Religions add sanctity to our cultural divisions, until some students, seeing the crying need for an all-embracing world culture, say it cannot come until religion has been so far eradicated as to be impotent."

This is the sort of understanding which the world needs—understanding which cuts right through the superficial identification of "good" and "evil" forces to the springs of causation in human behavior. Dr. Fosdick is one of a growing minority of individuals who see that righteousness is *operational,* and not a matter of being on the right "side" or subscribing to the correct "belief."

We have one more witness to call in evidence of the awakening of our time—a witness we have heard from before—Stringfellow Barr, who writes in the *Nation* for Feb. 7:

> There is a formidable world revolution in progress, quite independent of communism. It is a revolution against unnecessary misery; and by refusing to join our neighbors in attacking it we are forcing them into the Communists' arms. By refusing to join we are forcing our neighbors to smile at our defense of the free world against the Communist monster and to diagnose us as one great power looking for allies to smash another great power. Last year six "friendly" non-Communist governments embarrassingly refused to let us assist them. In Western Europe we scarcely turn our backs to elect a President before our NATO allies begin scaling down rearmament. Going it alone economically looks more and more like going it alone militarily if and when the storm breaks. This is not a picture of a successful foreign policy.
>
> Perhaps our foreign policy is not successful because it does not appeal to foreigners—a very grave criticism of any foreign policy. Maybe, to get one that did we should have to make it with them instead of for them. Maybe "leadership" involves, not laying it on the line, or getting tough, or threatening to cut off people's allowances, but listening—listening to the people one proposes to lead. . . .
>
> We American liberals have become increasingly concerned about the steady erosion of civil rights, particularly freedom of speech, by the cold war. But we run the risk of demanding freedom of speech in order that we may speak freely—about freedom of speech. We should be speaking freely—come hell, high water, smear, or prison—about mankind's most desperate problem. We should be demanding a solution more relevant to history than either "the American way" or the Russian way. We should be seeking the world way.

Letter from GERMANY

BERLIN.—What has been happening to Marxist thought in recent years, especially in Germany, the country of its origin?

We may take the year 1847 as the beginning of Karl Marx's real "Marxist" conception (publication of the *Communist Manifesto),* for in his younger years, Marx was more a Hegelian than a "Marxist." After 1848 his theory found some able followers—mostly of German nationality—who tried to improve and enlarge upon the ideas contained therein. Among them were rather well known persons—Engels, Bernstein, Kautsky, Adler, Hilferding, Luxemburg, Trotsky (we do not mention Lenin and Stalin, whose roles were practical and political rather than theoretical).

It is now interesting to note that Marxist thought as living thought stopped at about 1912 when Hilferding and Luxemburg published important and widely read books about economic questions in the period of expanding imperialism (Hilferding: *Finance Capital,* and Luxemburg: *The Accumulation of Capital).* Since that time, with the exception of some booklets by Trotsky, nothing important in Marxist theory has appeared. Only new editions of old books by the forerunners of Marxism are issued, and the Marx-Engels correspondence compiled. Thus, Marxists live today not only as *epigones,* but in the period of utmost sterility. This despite the considerable amount of new social phenomena and the profound changes in economic institutions. James Burnham was one of the few who tried to understand recent trends in society—but he did not write as a Marxist; no Marxist of any standing has ever endeavoured to analyze the important theories of Keynes, etc.

Quite in contrast to the theoretic insignificance of today's Marxism stands its relative strength in practical politics (Soviet Russia, Communist parties, Socialist parties, Trade Unions). This contradiction is fascinating and gives reason for reflections which should reach beyond superficial observations and conclusions.

While we might explain the stagnation of Marxist thought and its dogmatic torpidity in Soviet Russia and elsewhere with the general statement that this theory has outlived its application, this easy explanation neglects the enormous importance of "practical" Marxism in today's politics; furthermore, Marxism has always found its *raison d'être* in the social conflicts of modern society—conflicts which still exist, although sometimes overshadowed and almost hidden by other (national, racial, economic) conflicts. These social struggles have not disappeared during the past hundred years, even if the situation of the working class has enormously improved since Marx and Engels.

Under such circumstances, it seems preferable for your correspondent to explain the present situation of Marxism by examining the reasons for the stagnation since 1912. Because Marxism and the workers' movement are not wholly divorced from the present society and its structure, but represent instead a kind of "left wing" of this society, it follows that the changing socio-political environment has had its effect on Marxism, as on everything else. Has not modern society been decaying since about that time? (World wars, depressions, etc.) What are the most important consequences and relations, especially with regard to Marxist theory?

Given that Marxism is a negative, a critical phenomenon of society, we need to see it in relation to several other negative excrescences: the innate immorality of later Marxism (of Lenin, for example) seems close to the immorality of modern man and his political organizations (Nazism, Fascism, super-nationalism); the growth of the hundred per cent bureaucratic state in Soviet Russia differs only in proportion from the growing bureaucracy elsewhere (the degeneration of democracy and parliamentarism in Europe is particularly noticeable); the brutalization of

nationalism resembles very much Stalinism in general; the disregard of man in Russian concentration and forced labor camps is not quite unique; the relative standstill in Western culture and social science theory bears close resemblance to dogmatism in Russia today; the prevalence of monopolies—not only in the economic field, but also in propaganda, ideologies, etc.—has its terminal point in the Bolshevist party and its Politbureau.

It follows that searching criticism of today's Marxism will lead with bitter logic to criticism of our own society. Your correspondent remembers an article with the title, "Looking into the Pit," which appeared at the time when Nazi concentration camps and their horror were opened to the public. The writer of this article was intelligent enough to see things in their connections and to divide the weight of moral responsibility on *several* sides (the primitive mind usually sees only *one* culprit). Thus, if we are to stamp out Marxism, we must eradicate the social evils on which Marxism feeds.

What, then, will become of Marxism? It has no place in a world full of harmony, and should therefore die out with the lessening of social conflicts. This assertion has two implications: The swelling of those conflicts will mean the spread, perhaps a new flowering of Marxist thought; the lessening of social struggle will mean, on the other hand, the peaceful decline and dying away of Marxism.

What will the future bring? Destruction of present political structure of Soviet Russia—although highly probable—will not mean final solution of the problem of Marxism; there are too many traditional roots elsewhere. The crux of the problem lies deeper.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
"OUR COMMON NEUROSIS"

READERS who take enduring interest in important developments in the field of psychology will wish to own, or at least to study, a 1952 volume entitled *Our Common Neurosis.* This book, modestly sub-headed, "Notes on a Group Experiment," presents essays on the results of unusual studies in group influence, or "phylo-biology," as its initiator, the late Trigant Burrow, termed it. Burrow himself composed the foreword to the book shortly before his death in 1950, and reviewed the first stages of the theories leading to definition of "our common neurosis."

As a physician greatly affected by Freud's contributions to psychotherapy, Dr. Burrow early became convinced that Freud's investigations "were lacking in socio-biological breadth." "What," Burrow asked, "were the community implications in the symptomatology of the neurotic or psychotic patient?" Further questions developed naturally:

> What about the social milieu in which these untoward behavior expressions had their inception and perpetuation? Were not the mechanisms of repression, projection, self-deception, narcissism, and kindred expressions characteristic of the larger social community as well? Were not the symptoms we viewed with such clarity and objectivity in our patients also present, if in seemingly less bizarre, less painful form, in human society generally? Was it true that our so-called "normal" interrelational behavior represented the desired goal? Did "normality" really embody a stable and dependable criterion? Was it physiologically sound, biologically determined, sociologically oriented? In short, was it free, balanced, wholesome? Or did it merely represent behavior that was participated in by the majority of individuals and endorsed by the prevailing social system?

No sooner were these questions posed than Dr. Burrow felt an inescapable conclusion intruding itself, namely, that "psychiatry was hardly scientific in looking only at the evidences of disordered behavior in the individual patient and attempting to restore him to the behavior norm habitual to the wider community—the very medium in which his symptoms had their inception and development."

The bulk of *Our Common Neurosis* embodies essays by anonymous student-patients with whom Dr. Burrow had discussed this point of view. These "student patients" then became the core of the first Burrow experiments with "group analysis." In this approach to therapy, the intent was to encourage neurotic patients to recognize the extent to which their personal behavioral disorders were related to serious mental and moral confusions in society. Burrow hoped that the patients he gathered together would, with adequate guidance, be able to help themselves somewhat in the manner of Alcoholics Anonymous, yet on a much more scientific and analytical basis. By bringing together patients who, although neurotic, indicated clear signs of unusual mental capacity, and with them forming a group divorced from the tensions and false norms of the societal context, the Burrow method, according to Charles B. Thompson, often freed "the inhibited, maladjusted individual from social preconceptions and repressions," so that he "automatically reveal[ed] himself to be a personality endowed with initiative, interest, and capacity."

The association of Dr. Burrow and Dr. Thompson is of considerable interest, also, particularly since it forms the matrix for *Our Common Neurosis.* In 1923 Dr. Thompson, who later made widely quoted contributions to the study of "reconstructing" criminals, became interested in publishing a monthly psychiatric journal. Attempting to secure Burrow's cooperation in the venture, he discovered that Burrow had something similar in mind and was very willing to go along. But—and this suggestion temporarily floored Dr. Thompson—Burrow's thought was to have the material for publishing contributed and prepared by the patients! A revolutionary proposal, certainly, yet the logic was admirable. Dr. Burrow reasoned

that such a publication would give significant support to his theory concerning the societal origin of neurosis. The articles, the readers would be informed, would be written "by individuals who had themselves been subject to disturbed behavior-trends, and who had had the opportunity to orient themselves through a social analysis with respect to their own neurosis." Dr. Thompson's initial skepticism was soon replaced by intense enthusiasm for the project, since he noted that the articles by Burrow's patients were good.

As Thompson now puts it, re-capping the achievements of *Mental Health* (the name of the magazine):

> The three-year experiment left its mark upon the community and upon ourselves. It had consistently brought to a community audience the first intimations of a broad, biological conception of nervous and mental diseases. It had provided the student with an actual, working world, giving dynamic social expression to an important constructive principle in behavior therapy. Our cooperative endeavor proved an entering wedge in the direction of social integration, of healthy community thinking and feeling.

Dr. Thompson describes further the group therapy technique which so easily carried itself through the writing and editing of a monthly magazine:

> The accepted psychiatric procedure in which the doctor stands apart from the patient or student was no longer maintained. Instead, the reactions of both demonstrators and students were considered as material for objective observation and analysis. In this way a social method was introduced for the investigation of social behavior. Included in the group were neurotics and so-called normal people, representing different professional and economic aspects of society. The undertaking was no less human than scientific. It was the analysis of man in his living day. The members of the group worked together; and later on, as part of his experiment, Dr. Burrow reproduced the external conditions of the family dining-table which, in our culture, is the first social group or community encountered by each individual. In addition to the formal sessions, the students concerned themselves with common projects, one of which was the preparation of the monthly paper, *Mental Health*, in which were published the stories and essays forming the nucleus of this book.
>
> In their daily group analysis the students became more aware of the common motivation underlying their interrelational reactions—a motivation which up to that time each had thought belonged to himself alone. This experience gave impetus to their observation of social reactions everywhere. The material contributed to *Mental Health* reflected their awakening to their own disordered behavior and to a like disorder in the larger world beyond the laboratory group.

Contributions from the "anonymous" student-patients, according to Dr. Thompson, mightily stimulated his own thinking. A passage dealing with "crime and neurosis" is revealing on the problems of Thompson's special field, and illustrative, also, of the philosophic temper pervading the *Mental Health* articles:

> We are as unwilling to realize our involvement in a situation of which we disapprove as were the parents of the luxury-loving children. We are like the parents in our tendency to blind ourselves to the part we play in the development of the criminal. We do not want to see that were we not as we are, the criminal would not be as he is. Such an attitude reflects our resistance to a sensing of our involvement, and is altogether incompatible with the social consciousness in which *Mental Health is* interested. Such a social consciousness would give the criminal, as it would give the neurotic, an opportunity to realize that the tendency within him which makes him seem abnormal has not developed spontaneously within himself as an individual.
>
> Over and over again there has been stressed in these columns the point that an individual neurosis is inconceivable aside from an environment of which it is the inevitable outcome. From this point of view the only approach to the victim of a nervous disorder that can be made with any conviction is through the development of a social environment that is itself not neurotic. And that which applies to the neurotic individual and his environment applies with equal force to the criminal and his environment. The tendency to crime is in no way different from the tendency to nervous disorders. It is inconceivable that individual nervous disorders will develop in a community that is itself in a socially healthy condition. It is equally inconceivable that such a community could foster a tendency to crime.

The "healthier" this small "Burrow-society" became, the sharper grew the contrast between the interpersonal relations of its members and those of the external world. Subsequently, essays on "the causes of war," the "sources of human loneliness," and "effects of competition in social status" produced remarkably challenging insights—for which our space, unfortunately, does not permit even a brief sampling. We can underscore our appreciation for the quality of the essays, however, by remarking that no matter how much we may overwork such terms as "provocative" or "challenging" in these columns, both must certainly be employed in describing the viewpoints provided by these and other essay-treatments in *Our Common Neurosis.*

In the concluding chapter, Dr. Thompson quotes a Unesco panel's recent conclusion that "Biological studies lend support to the ethic of universal brotherhood. . . . Man is born a social being who can reach his full development only through interaction with his fellows. The denial at any point of this social bond between men and man brings with it disintegration. In this sense, every man is his brother's keeper. For every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main, because he is involved in mankind." Now, we may all easily agree with such sentiments, yet find it difficult to disavow the social traditions which militate against the realization of such a goal. Thompson says:

> The inclusive feeling on the part of children that disavows personal ownership is often met with misunderstanding by adults trained to possessiveness and a me-versus-you dichotomy. A recent newspaper contains an account of a three-year-old boy who was severely punished for distributing throughout the neighborhood the packages found beneath his Christmas tree. In her lack of sympathy with the child's native generosity, the mother reflected an impairment in feeling that exists throughout mankind. She was training her boy to conform to the social formula, to hold tight to what is "one's own." For her, as for all of us, generosity is for *ours* and against *others.* This is the habitual mood to which the incoming generation is conditioned. Self-centered reactions make up the "I"-persona, the pseudo-identity which the child is henceforth trained to impose upon his organism, and little short of a threat to life itself will reveal the latent but ever-present sense of unity binding together the elements of the species.
>
> Phylobiology makes explicit that there is a principle of coordination primarily activating the interrelational behavior of man. It is the natural balance-wheel governing man's basic motivation. The behavior of the individual can be sane and effective only when it is in accord with this biosocial principle.

While Dr. Thompson, finally, offers a curious statement to the effect that such affirmations as that of the last paragraph "possess no religious sentiment or mystical connotations," he might better have said that the conclusions resulting from Dr. Burrow's experiments depend upon no specific religious *doctrine.* There are, however, certain implications in the whole theme of *Our Common Neurosis* bearing direct relevance to ethics, and to the "mystical" proclivities of human beings.

COMMENTARY
EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES

ALMOST always, when the problem of world peace is up for serious discussion, the United States seems to appear as a kind of "bad boy" among the nations, which is neither accurate nor just, and, when discussion of this sort is frequent, becomes rather tiresome. The fact of the matter is that the United States, today, holds the initiative in world affairs, with the result that the ordeal is far more strenuous here than in other parts of the world. Further, in America, national policy is supposed to be a matter of public interest, with any or all of the people contributing the weight of their opinion. This automatically exposes American legislators and statesmen to a withering fire of criticism, no matter what they do. The business community takes one view, the liberal sector of opinion another. The chief interest of the newspapers, with occasional exceptions, is more circulation. Church opinion is marshalled according to humanitarian and sectarian interests, and jingo patriots make unrestrained advocacy of policies which, were they carried out, would soon thrust the world into the midst of another all-engrossing war.

The leaders of a totalitarian country have one absolute advantage over democratic countries in the field of foreign affairs: they are in a position to declare and execute a policy, explaining as little or as much of it as they choose to their people, and telling the people what to think about it, even to cuing in the cheers and hisses, if any are needed. A dozen men can make a decision for Russia. Many more than a dozen million, in effect, must be consulted by the United States.

Finally, enlightened public opinion, extremely difficult in an acquisitive society, is an essential of democratic maturity. Even Americans who are trying to be "liberal," according to Stringfellow Barr, need a "liberal education" in maturity. As he puts it:

> For instance, I judge that the average American cannot distinguish between sending a team of technicians into a country and finding the capital to do the things the technicians are bound in common professional honesty to advise. . . . Again, I judge that the average American cannot distinguish behveen bilateral aid from Washington, or perhaps Washington working "through" the U.N., and an international agency responsible to the U.N. though financed by national contributions. But the undeveloped countries can make that distinction—and do.

The encouraging thing about all this is that we have in America men like Mr. Barr, who, although *in* America, speak *for* the world.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
NOTES IN PASSING

A RECENT communication from the editor of *Highlights for Children*, Dr. Garry Myers, presents opportunity to repeat our enthusiasm for this monthly magazine, designed especially for children from pre-school to high school age. Dr. Myers sends us two small brochures on the editorial intent of *Highlights*, copies of which may be obtained, free of charge, from 37 East Long Street, Columbus, Ohio. Under the heading, "What Highlights May Mean to a Twelve-year-old" this claim is made:

> He is challenged to think. The child from nine to twelve grows more and more aware of his reasoning powers as *Highlights* challenges him to solve problems, and to think. Repeatedly, as he browses through this book, he pauses to observe, compare, recall, classify, and draw conclusions. He likes to put some of these problems to a younger child, to a playmate, even to his parents.

We support what Dr. Myers says from personal observation, doing so after suitable time for experiment in our own family and by some friends. *Highlights* is the only children's publication, among those received by a small female youngster in one home, which wins the sort of response all the others are supposed to elicit. Behavior has been most extraordinary, including a feverish clutching of the wrapped periodical, hasty retreat to an inner sanctum for initial perusal—and this child is only now learning to read. (No paid testimonial, just a noting of fact by a rather quizzically surprised parent.)

A further "push" for *Highlights* comes from Dr. Margaret B. Parke, research assistant for the Board of Education of the City of New York, who specifies some of the functions of this magazine:

> Different children in the family will use *Highlights* for different purposes depending on their abilities and interests. The child who cannot read will develop a desire to read as adults and older members of the family read to him. He will enjoy and talk about many pictures and actually participate in the picture-matching activities which are included. Thus he will acquire readiness for reading. When a young child is given personal attention and read to in this way, he grows up with a love and appreciation for good books and magazines. After he acquires the necessary reading skills, he will look forward to the arrival of the magazine with keen anticipation, not to be read to, but to read independently for his own enjoyment or to share with others the pleasure he experiences through reading as older folks did previously when they read to him.

Turning to another phase of children's literature, we wish to bring notice to a "juvenile" book by Phyllis Whitney, *Willow Hill* (Reynal & Hitchcock, New York, 1947). One of our subscribers turned up this medium-sized volume, calling it the only available adequate treatment of the psychological problems involved in high school race relationships. (If other readers know of good books in this category, we should enjoy hearing of them.)

It must not be easy to take up "the race question" in story form for youngsters without oversimplifying, but it seems to us that Miss Whitney has made the grade. The setting is one of America's moderately well-to-do small towns, to which is suddenly added a Federal housing project. Since the project was genuinely interracial, since many Negro families badly needed homes, and since the erection of the new buildings in the "Willow Hill" district meant that many Negro children would be coming to the white-dominated high school, all the typical attitudes which support race prejudice began to emerge. As one would expect, in the case of a story meant to be ethically instructive as well as adventurous, Miss Whitney sets the stage for several notable conversions to the doctrine of racial equality, yet this is not accomplished by a waving of the flag, nor by the sudden attainment of an exalted mood by all the town's reactionaries. And while *Willow Hill* is a particularly deft probing into the socio-economic background of

race prejudice, Miss Whitney also offers psychological insight into the irrational antagonism against all "whites," sometimes generated among the Negro people themselves.

It is at this point, we think, that the greatest contribution is made, for, at least according to our own experience, a special understanding is needed in relation to the often neurotic-tending, hostility-defense complexes of intelligent and sensitive Negro Americans. It is not always easy, even for those wholeheartedly desirous of doing so, to break down the barriers of *inverted* prejudice, and unless a great deal of understanding forbearance is practiced, the purely sentimental race well-wisher may end up with a vast annoyance at "touchy" Negroes.

One other accomplishment in *Willow Hill* is executed with consummate skill. Miss Whitney demonstrates what both "reactionary" and "middle-of-the-road" social and political attitudes mean in terms of action-situations. This is very good. The average teen-ager has difficulty in understanding theory, unless its elements are translated into decisive events, unless the struggle involved in deciding, when controversy rages, which side one is going to be on, is given dramatic portrayal.

Willow Hill has villains, but we are not sorry to find none of them beyond the possibility of redemption. For while some of our actual reactionary "villains" are not easily separated from their delusions, it seems a mistake to assume that they cannot be in the future.

Being particularly appreciative at this time of John Dewey's long-range accomplishments in the field of education, we are struck by the realization that this unique American teacher laid a solid groundwork for the improvement of race attitudes—something flowing naturally from his emphasis upon socially-centered schooling.

Three paragraphs from Harry Overstreet's *Great Enterprise* are illustrative of this, as well as of other implications arising from a broadening of the scientific perspective. According to Dr. Overstreet, man was for centuries wedded to a false conception of "personality-causation," and though Overstreet doesn't mention Dewey in respect to the transition which followed, we should like to take note of the credit due to him. The old idea of "personality-causation," Overstreet says, may be described in this way:

> Somebody (or something) did something; and something happened to a passive object. This linear way of thinking has marked all areas of human concern. This code of morals was supposed to have been "given" to Moses; the Hebrew people were "chosen" by God; the particular form of their society was ordained by God. *From the top down.* Later, in feudal times, kings were thought of as divinely appointed. Even today the line of causation in totalitarian lands runs from dictator to people.
>
> In family life, the linear idea has been embodied for centuries in the relation of parent to child: the one has commanded; the other obeyed. In the school, it has been embodied in the relation of teacher to child, the causal force passing down from the one to the other. (It was inconceivable that the line of causation should run counterwise, from child to teacher. Note how differently the causal process is conceived by a scientifically oriented mind of today. In Helen Parkhurst's *Exploring the Child's World* the cause-and-effect relation goes also counterwise from child and teacher to parent. Likewise in Marie Rasey's *Toward Maturity* the causal relations are shown to go back and forth between child, teacher and parent, home, school, and community.)
>
> The most important change in respect to causality introduced into our contemporary thinking is to turn the age-old "linear" conception into a "field" conception. As in a field of force, everything is both cause and effect.

FRONTIERS

Something New Was Added

MANAS has more than once taken note of the deliberations of a group of young professors on the University of California's Santa Barbara campus, relative to the establishment of a radically interdepartmental "tutorial" program for qualified students. The program, now in the process of construction, and therefore obviously still subject to experimentation, is meant to enable students of original bent to *find their own fields* for study and research, rather than being obliged to follow well-worn ruts dug by the predictable travels of a reigning academic hierarchy.

It is small wonder that men seriously interested in supporting the tutorial experiment, willing to devote a great deal of otherwise free time to long private or semi-private discussions with students, are also seriously interested in the perennial need for revaluing their own perspectives, and willing to be taught, or to teach themselves, "something new." On March 30, a two-hour session of the Tutorial Group tried to get entirely out of the western context of thinking, by way of examining passages selected by one of their number from the ancient Hindu scripture, *The Bhagavad-Gita*. (This Tutorial Group, it should be explained, nearly always finds itself involved in ethical issues at some point in its uninhibited work-outs of thought-analysis, and has thus appreciated that of all the attitudes to be examined for possible revisions, our taken-for-granted value-systems stand high on the priority list.)

During a previous discussion, one professor genially accused a confrere of being "antediluvian" in ethical perspective, and on March 30 he returned to this theme. Now the *Gita*, the challenger said, which really is antediluvian, is not outdated, whereas many later Western concepts have proved their own inadequacy. A typescript distributed among members of the group bore the following isolated passages from the *Gita* (chapter II), each one of which clearly requires a deal of individual interpretation, a probing for the "hyponoia," or under-meaning:

> Arjuna said: O Krishna, I am thy disciple, instruct me.
>
> The Blessed Lord said: To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the fruits thereof. Be thou neither actuated by the fruits of action, nor be thou attached to inaction.
>
> To the knower of truth, all the Vedas are of as little use as a small water-tank in time of flood when water is everywhere.
>
> From attachment arises longing and from longing anger is born. From anger arises delusion; from delusion, loss of memory is caused. From loss of memory, the discriminative faculty is ruined and from the ruin of discrimination, man perishes.
>
> Work with desire for results is far inferior to work with understanding.

What are the ethical implications of these passages and how do they contrast with typically Western ethics? Where is value placed by Krishna, the Indian Christ, and what new outlook upon values does he hope that Arjuna will adopt during the course of instructive dialogue?

Though the *Gita* is universally regarded as a religious treatise, a devotional counsel, it is quite clear that Krishna does not place the highest value upon religious "doctrine." For, he says, the wise man *reaches beyond* even those most sacred scriptures, the Vedas. What, then, is to be man's counsel, if not the precepts of religion? The answer seems to be that there is no final counsel beyond whatever degree of self-knowledge a man has attained at any given stage of development. But what are the various "stages of development," and how does one proceed from one to the other? Here, one member of the group suggested that the *Gita* may imply something like the three stages of understanding described by Spinoza as "Opinion, Reason, and Intuition." If a man makes wise use of religious scripture, on this view, he *studies* rather than *accepts* its precepts and postulates. Thus his original leaning toward a certain belief, at first mere opinion or personal inclination, is tested in the crucible of reason. Finally, when one's originally untested opinions have been subjected to "science,"

and are either discarded or given sanction for further development, the stage for illumination may be set. (Such thoughts, by the way, lead directly to the implication that most religionists attempt to skip the indispensable step of "science," hoping to move *directly* from "opinion" to "intuition." Perhaps such vaulting ambitions, too, involve the religionist in "attachment" to the "fruits of action," and thus, failing to qualify as sufficiently disinterested or objective, betray their advocates by simply generating more desires—like the desire to prove others wrong and oneself right.)

Since these passages give no commandments, establish no specific values or ends which can be either classified or debated, it becomes apparent that the *Gita* is concerned with the acquirement of an *attitude of mind*, as being the true beginning, middle, and end of wisdom. Can that attitude be described? One professor suggested that, primarily, it must involve "acceptance"—acceptance of whatever experiences come to one, a sort of "letting go" and allowing whatever will happen to happen, without either loud complaints or loud rejoicings. Here is plenty of "contrast" with most contemporary orientations in the West. Whether involved in commercial enterprise or in the enterprises incident to the operation of a university, the modern is driven by a host of desires. He strives for advancement in either case—he desires "the good things of life," means to get them and hopes to hold them. Thus, operating under the twin tensions of pride in present status and ambition for further prestige, he finds no resting place. His only security is supplied by a constant passing of opinionated judgment upon ideas, social issues, and his fellow men.

The *Gita* then counsels development of a particular kind of "resignation" which enables one to step outside this endless whirl. But Krishna insists this does *not* mean attachment to "inaction." He tells Arjuna that, as a warrior, he must "fight out the field" and seek to gain the kingdom which is rightfully his. He is to be *devoted* in action—in fact, so devoted to the proper accomplishment of his natural duty that he will waste no time in worries over past failure or in anticipations of future successes. *He does not judge*—not even himself, leaving all judgment of all action to The Law.

Now, what can a man do with this sort of abstract counsel? For one thing, it was suggested, he can try to recognize the extent to which he even if a university professor—is ridden by desires. And, especially if he really wishes to serve duty in the natural calling of "teacher," he will see that being both a teacher and a man full of desires combines incompatibles. Does he then set his will firmly to eradicate his desires? Not at all. He simply recognizes the true nature of things—that the desires he has are "natural" to him at his present stage—but that when he is *ready* to reach a higher stage, he will essentially *be* at that stage already. Remember, there is no specific goal to be reached—no final wisdom, no tangible marks of attainment along the way which mean anything at all. There is only one criterion: does his present attitude fit him to find the most in what he is and has, or does it embroil him in tension? Does it commit him to an endless succession of judgments, the mere offspring of personal "wants"?

This is a strange sort of thinking for university professors to try, and obviously many of them thought so, too, even if so august a personage as Robert Oppenheimer recently commended the *Gita* as representing the fundamental key to right living. Some in the group kept saying, "But look at India—no sanitation—no concern over human life," as all men, professors or otherwise, are tempted to say when they wish to defend a way of thinking and living obviously under fire. Others, perhaps, saw one of the oldest traditions of "pure religion" in a different light from that permitted to shine on the culturally over-interpreted Christian scriptures, and felt, it may be, that the spirit of such precepts was somehow akin to a voice within themselves.