

## WHEN PATIENCE IS NOT A VIRTUE

THE plaintive appeal of the man who wrote "Going Broke on \$10,000 a Year" for the July *Harper's* will not dampen the lashes of many readers. A snort of disgust is the more likely response from us low-brows and proletarians who wobble along on barely respectable fractions of this amount. A snort of disgust is certainly in order, but if it is produced by the feeling that, given the opportunity, we could do very much better than "Jay Taylor" with ten thousand a year, then the disgust may be aimed in the wrong direction.

It seems true enough that if you have to live the sort of life Mr. Taylor says you have to live in order to make ten thousand a year, then ten thousand isn't enough. And the disgust, instead of representing the view that Taylor is a bad manager of really ample funds, ought to be directed at his willingness to live that kind of a life for any money at all.

Mr. Taylor is in a trap. It seems a friendly sort of trap, at first. It is the trap collectively devised by the copy-writers of all the advertising agencies in the country—all the sales managers, and all the self-appointed definers of the twentieth-century style American Dream. Taylor, as he explains it, is compelled by the conventional requirements of "success" "to live by standards I did not set, cannot afford, and must adhere to under a code as rigid as that of Moses."

Here is a sample listing of the constraints under which ten-thousand-a-year men suffer:

My neighbors and my neighborhood are important, because as an executive I'm not supposed to live just anywhere. I have to have a reasonably good address. That means I can expect to pay \$25,000 to \$30,000—to buy a house, and make a large down payment to start with, or I can expect to payments comparably high. I am expected to entertain, so food and liquor charges run on the steep

side. Our house furnishings are supposed to be better than average because we have business entertaining to do. I'm not supposed to wear the same shirt or tie two days in a row. When I ask my wife to come into the city to help entertain customers, she's expected to dress the part of the helpmate of an executive of the company.

And so on—on and on. The sad part of this story is that the writer seems to like what he is doing, or would if he could afford it. The article gives every evidence of being a circumspect if anonymously outspoken appeal from the runners-up in modern business administration to the top-level executives, inviting the latter to raise salaries all around, for the good of the American system of free enterprise. Mr. Taylor seems to be saying, "As one high caste member to another, the way you're treating me just isn't cricket." Quite possibly, with the people he wants to affect, this appeal may carry more weight than reports of actual hunger in depressed areas. After all, the managers of the free enterprise system have a Great Trust.

There is a modest pathos—or is it bathos?—in this legend of the aspirations of America's young executives:

What do we want out of life? Deep down inside we are motivated by a genuine desire to administer, nourish, and carry on the American free-enterprise system of business and government in which we deeply believe. Physically, we want nothing too unusual, considering our responsibilities and our presumed future prospects. We want to own our own homes, our own cars, and enough life insurance to take care of our families when the seemingly inevitable coronary occlusion comes along. We want to send our children to college, take an annual vacation with our families, look and dress well, and save some money to invest, just as the advertisements suggest.

We pass from this melancholy vision to another sort of analysis of the *status quo*—this

time by a scientist who is probably as successful in his field as Jay Taylor has been in his. The point of the scientist's remarks, however, which were published in the March *Scientific Monthly*, is considerably different. "Cleared for Top Secret" is a description of the unfamiliar and tortuous paths into which democratic administrators are forced when they attempt to guard against subversion from within. Our author, also anonymous, is a monument of scientific patience. When, after four months of being investigated, he was finally cleared for government employment, having suffered direct and indirect expenses of some \$3,000, he wrote a congratulatory letter to the chairman of the Review Board which found him "loyal," expressing appreciation of the way his case was handled. While, in his article, he does not find the methods of loyalty investigation without defects, his general conclusion is that the United States is democratically muddling along through a difficult situation, doing its best to discover truth and to prevent injustice.

Both these gentlemen, sales manager and scientist, are having or have had their troubles. Both, in a sense, are victims of the war—one of the wave of war inflation, the other of the wave of war suspicion. Yet neither betrays the slightest breath of objection to the basic causes of the "unpleasantness" in their lives. To try to look behind the facade of immediate causes of their difficulties would amount, in a very practical way, to abandoning what little security they possess—the security that is gained from willing assent to convention. It might be that if a thousand sales managers and a thousand research scientists were to raise their voices in articulate condemnation of the general atmosphere of our civilization, others would be awakened, and something might be done, but the idea of anything like this happening is practically unthinkable. With the dull patience that hopes and bears, the sales managers and technologists play it safe.

This is natural, of course. It is natural for sales managers who "want out of life" what Mr.

Taylor says he wants, and for scientists to whom the threat of war gives wider scope for the practice of their specialty, to accept the *status quo* without troubling themselves about anything beyond the most obvious and immediate irritations. And then there are always the pat rejoinders, "Well, is there anything *wrong* with having twelve or fourteen thousand a year, instead of ten?"; and, "National security is important, isn't it?"

There are two answers to these questions. The first explores the "ideals" of the ten-thousand-a-year man, weighing them against the burden of meaningless activities he bears just in order to attempt to realize them. You see these bright and beginning-to-look-oldish young men in all fashionable places. They frequent the more exclusive pubs; appear in their convertibles driving along leafy highways to the beach; you pass them in the corridors of the better office buildings. They are the *unco guid* of America's religion of success. They hide their qualms and frustrations under a cheery smile, a firm grip, and constant expectation that their true merit will soon be recognized. After all, fifty thousand a year isn't so very much, these days.

The second answer neglects the hollow character of the business climber's life, turning to the practical issue of whether the climber has much hope of getting very high. The real force of Jay Taylor's article lies here. The fact of the matter seems to be that the high costs of war have skimmed the cream off even the ten-thousand-a-year man's bottle of milk. The simple factor of self-interest should impel him to take a long look at the kind of a society he is living in, and pledges his life to continue. Even for profit-seekers, the *status quo*, which gets worse with the passage of each new tax law, is not a good business proposition.

The scientist has a more pointed obligation to examine his life. He is not just vaguely involved in the war economy. It is his inventiveness upon which the managers of our society depend to

make our war economy a victorious war economy, so that, today, the successful economy is the economy most potent for destruction of other societies. That isn't what we *want*, but, as we glibly explain, it is what the nasty world is making us get ready to be.

The point of the second answer is that, while high ideals may not make us rich and prosperous, low ideals aren't much good in the long run, either, economically speaking. Meanwhile, a poor man who does something worth-while with his life can enjoy at least *some* happiness, while the not-quite-rich-enough executive and the tethered scientific specialist working on guided missiles (or something worse) are not likely to be happy at all.

To put the matter bluntly, it seems evident that either our kind of civilization is getting ready for some sort of far-reaching revolution, or it is getting ready to die of moral malnutrition. The difficult thing, while in the midst of a process of this kind, is to know what to do—where to throw one's weight, what to support and what not to support. The web of conventional activities seems so continuous, so inescapable, and, for the most part, so "inoffensive," that breaking out—to what?—gives small promise of improvement. Yet to go on as we are amounts to submission to the narcotic of the familiar. It amounts to saying to our ourselves that we find nothing better to do.

The pity of it all is that we have created a culture which has left no place for the eccentricities of genius to survive. Our greatnesses are all culled and cut to size, according to "a code as rigid as that of Moses." The columnist and the informer and the demagogue are the all-powerful arbiters of taste in living, of safety in politics. There is not even room for a "wild, barbaric yawp," to give expression to yesterday's delight in being alive. Who, except little children, ever thinks of taking delight, today, just in being alive?

What we really need is some fiery inspiration, some zealous declaration of principles that touch the heart of our malaise. Or, if we are too

sluggish to be stirred from the curiously mixed torpor of being at once too well fed and too depressed by disappointments, then, some shocking disaster which will smash forever the illusory hope that, somehow, just going along with the *states quo is* enough to take us to the promised land.

The grip of the drug is insidiously strong. Suppose you could see the faces of a few million Americans at about eight o'clock in the evening—all of them with eyes glued on television screens, thankful for hours in which they do not have to think, in which they can forget. What reflections would the sight inspire? Yet television, we are told, and are sometimes inclined to admit, is the evidence of unparalleled achievement in natural science. Who has ever had the things that we possess? Where, one might ask in reply, has so much greatness been applied to produce so little result in human values?

It is for such reasons that MANAS, from the first, has spoken so warmly of activities like the Great Books discussion groups, which leaven, if only a little, the sea of small conforming thoughts with the vigor of great ideas. It is for such reasons that we return again and again to the thinking of great idealists such as Plato, great reformers such as Buddha, and other persistently questioning thinkers of the past and the present. The real hope we have of immortality lies in the contents of our minds. If we think only little thoughts, we shall die little deaths, like bubbles spreading away to nothing on the surface of a great river. Even if we believe, as many do, that the core of soul in the human being is an indestructible essence, destined to seek other births in other lives than this—there is still the common-sense reality to be faced, that there can be no immortality for the wasted portion of our lives, for the energies spent in pursuit of wholly worthless objectives.

Too long have we stifled our hungering after profundities. Too often have "dropped the subject" of the meaning of our lives, losing the

thread of reflection in a whirl of money-making or pleasure-seeking, or in a whirl of discontented failure at both. Suppose there is a deeper content in human existence than we have bothered to discover; suppose we have seized the lesser opportunities, only to overlook the greater, the one that might have brought everlasting riches to our hearts. What a miserable disaster it would be if the only "unforgettable character" we ever are able to encounter is in the capsule version of a *Reader's Digest* anecdote!

The ancient dreams of human greatness lie all about, but they are pale with neglect, shadowed by the indifference of an age which elaborates its fears and distrusts far more than any projects of daring and nobility. Where are the heroes? They wear the drab of the conscripted and compelled. What does a truly free man do in our society? What will a free mind say? Nobody, or almost nobody, can tell, for nobody, or almost nobody, is interested.

Our age, perhaps, will be remembered as the period of forgotten years—the years which men and nations passed waiting for their destiny to announce itself; the years when nothing really memorable happened, save for the slow accumulation of tendencies which, in their own time, found the maturity of both death and rebirth, decay and regeneration.

## *Letter from* **CENTRAL EUROPE**

SALZBURG.—When, in 1945, the authorities of the Allied occupation entered Austria and Germany, they had practically no difficulty in reaching decisions in all matters of public importance: they simply reversed everything that the National-Socialists had done. Little of knowledge or the judicious spirit was needed to execute this policy, and it seemed to prevent any possible reproach that the Allies were like the "Nazis" or the "Fascists."

In 1938, Hitler had declared Austria to be a part of Germany. No wonder, then, that the Allied authorities ordered the Germans living in Austria to leave straightway. At the same time, their property was confiscated—from furniture, houses and bank-accounts to coats, suits, and wrist watches. It didn't matter whether or not they had ever taken any interest in politics, or if they had married in Austria and thus had to leave their relatives: they were loaded into vehicles (commonly used for animal transport) and, after having passed the German border, placed in concentration camps.

Since Germany, during the first post-war years, seemed to be knocked out altogether, while Austria was permitted its own government from the beginning of the occupation, Allied officials—little acquainted with the economic resources of Europe—tried to direct the attention of the Austrians to the fact that their capital, Vienna, was (after the destruction of all the large cities in Germany) the greatest German-speaking center left, and Austria, they urged, would do well to use this "by-fate-offered" opportunity to seize the monopolies which Germany had enjoyed in many branches of the production trade. After a few efforts in this direction, most Austrians realized that, as Germany recovered, any real competition would be out of the question, since this neighbor, speaking the same language, is many times larger than Austria with regard to territory and population, and also has most of the necessary raw materials near at hand.

Then, in 1949, the "German wonder" was revealed! Responsible for that "wonder" which has since placed Germany among the leading export powers of the world, was the "punishment" which the Germans received, when hundreds of their factories

were removed or blown up—*after* the war. In consequence of this punishment, Germany's factories are now becoming well equipped with brand-new machinery which works more economically because more technically advanced.

There were other paradoxes. While the U. S. Government and press were grumbling and growing more and more angry at those "old-fashioned" European countries which still believe in boundaries, visas and customs, their occupation officials abroad kept issuing new ordinances, until, finally, the traffic between northern Austria and southern Germany was rendered more difficult than it had ever been before.

The facts are these. Few if any Austrians think of reuniting with Germany. But nevertheless most of them are convinced that the "big brother" cannot be ignored with regard to the well-being of Austria. The same Germans who were plundered and kicked out a few years ago are today received with utmost politeness by the many hundreds of hotels and inns of Carinthia, Tyrol and Salzburg, where they arrive as summer-guests with well-filled wallets. While the border-crossing formalities have been somewhat facilitated, many German tourists—as the Austrian travel agencies sornily emphasize—are still prevented from coming.

Trade has not yet reached a volume that is advantageous for Austrians. Only a few days ago I wanted to buy a small musical instrument. The salesman told me that it was not manufactured anywhere in Austria, and as for importing such things from Germany, he lowered his voice and said, "They would rather have us buy from the North Pole than from our competent next-door neighbor!"

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

## *REVIEW*

### A CONTEMPORARY TRAGEDY

IT is one of the many ludicrous footnotes to modern popular culture that Elliot Arnold's *Walk With the Devil* now appears in a Pocket Book edition bearing the cover blurb, "They took their love before war could cheat them." Mr. Arnold's book is not only a serious novel, but may also be called a tragedy in the classical sense, although the publishers are obviously convinced that the "sex-for-the-millions" approach is the only sure way to sell anything. There are several grounds on which Mr. Arnold might view this cover blurb with sardonic disfavor. In the first place, his book gives very little attention to what Damon Runyon would call the "female party"; in the second, *Walk With the Devil* is chiefly a brilliant psychological analysis of the fascist temperament.

For any analysis of the fascist temperament to be brilliant, we must realize, our own propensity for fascist ideas and posturings needs to be explored. Fascism is not, philosophically or psychologically, a "we-and-they" subject. The attitudes of mind from which the political manifestations of authoritarian amorality arise are common enough the world over—something Mr. Arnold was able to observe personally when stationed in Italy as a member of the Allied Air Forces.

The plot of *Walk With the Devil* prompts the title of this review. Two Italian brothers whose parents emigrated to America during their childhood conclude a cycle of personal vendetta on Italian land. The older brother, for years a notorious gangster, had been deported to Italy after serving a prison term, having been convicted through an idealistic "anti-vice" crusade served by his younger brother, then an attorney.

During the invasion of Italy the Office of Strategic Services decided that the ex-gangster should be induced to betray, for a price, the Germans with whom he shares control of a section of Italian countryside. The honest lawyer, in other

words, is commissioned to bribe his unscrupulous brother to betray the Germans; he is then further enjoined to acquiesce in a counter-betrayal of his brother, all in the name of the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter. In the process the lawyer obviously must himself *become* a fascist by subscribing to the "end-justifies-the-means" code of wartime intrigue. In the end, the gangster brother, at the point of death, has a dignity and straightforwardness which the American officer has been required *by military order* to relinquish. As in some of the old Greek plays, the cycle comes full circle, Nemesis operating to try a man's ideals unendurably, until he is drawn into the maw of personal destruction.

Guido, the younger brother, is as well prepared as a man can be to resist the use of fascist methods, but the demands of war draw him into the very position he has for years been opposing. The following, we think, is a lucid description of the sort of moral deterioration often incident to war. Guido sees what is coming, but does not know he will himself be borne along by the mighty tide:

"In a way," he said, "you can say that it is a victory for their side, for Fascism. Quite an important victory. We're winning the battles, but they're winning the ideas, which *is* a nice twist. They won the first idea when they got us to fight which meant we accepted their terms about how differences should be settled. The first shot we fired brought us down to their level, which I suppose is a truism about any war. This thing with me isn't important at all, but no matter how it comes out they will have won again. We'll lick them, of course, but we'll have to lick them on their terms, and how can we convince them of their immorality by defeating them on their own terms? We lost that argument the minute we had to go to war, because at that point we agreed with them that the settling factor in the dispute was force, and that's what they'd said all the time. When we win, all we'll prove is that our muscles are bigger than theirs. It's like trying to convince a man force is a bad thing and the only way we can prove it is to hit him on the head until he understands."

When Guido establishes contact with his gangster brother, Bartolemeo, in an Italian villa,

he nevertheless argues that the war is worthwhile, apparently to convince himself as well as Bartolemeo that this is so. Guido is trying to believe that America can retain a genuine passion for democracy after cessation of hostilities. He even utters the cliché, "We have been through wars before." But Bartolemeo answers:

"Of course, but never such a war and never to such a degree. And never a war of ideologies, such as this is. You will be snared by your own ideas. Ideas are contrary things, Guido. They seem to move in a direction of their own, thoroughly out of control, and the direction is usually opposite to the actions they inspire in passing. Your actions are conducting you along a particular course, the announced aim of which is to destroy certain political concepts which you proclaim as abhorrent to you. But at the same time, without most of you understanding it at all, these same concepts are entering your minds and taking possession of you."

The tragedy of the two brothers is the tragedy of nations. Just as Achilles and Hector were symbolic of races and civilizations—symbolic, too, of the divisive factors within the nature of any single man—so are the brothers Bertini symbolic of millions of men wise enough to see the probability of their own doom and yet not wise enough to avert it. Guido, the one-time idealist, has finally to face the fact that thinking must stop when wars begin:

"There can't be any thinking about it," he said. "It's all right to think at the beginning, before you're in it. It's not too wise, but you can get away with it then. But once you're in it you've got to stop thinking. It couldn't be run if everyone thought about it." He laughed. "Imagine everyone involved suddenly quitting whatever it is they are doing and spending ten minutes just thinking about it. Everyone, on both sides. Just stopping and thinking, the way they would stop and think about a pair of shoes they were buying or what they would choose on the menu. Imagine what would happen." He shook his head. "Perhaps not too much. Perhaps nothing at all. Perhaps at the end of the ten minutes they would start again without any change at all. Because by this time the die is cast. And because mixed up in all the slop are a few truths. The worst thing isn't the war at all, it's fighting in the war without knowing why. It's a formula. The ideas are used at first, like bullets you

turn on your own people, and then the job starts, and when the job starts, the ideas have to quit. The ideas become dangers when the job starts."

*Walk With the Devil*, we suppose, could be called a pacifist novel. Certainly the passages here reproduced are strongly anti-military; but we think the provocation of the book reaches beyond traditional pacifist criticism, and is particularly noteworthy for this very reason. Guido's remark that "the worst thing is not the war at all, it's the fighting in the war without knowing why," seems to transfer war-opposition from the emotional level, where it no longer belongs, to a level whereon man must question the fundamental affront of war to his integrity as a rational being. Mr. Arnold thus encourages the speculation that some of the best anti-war writing may come from those who are still thoughtfully unhappy participants.

Novelists who display psychological and moral insight of the sort which is apparently natural to Elliot Arnold will, we hope, continue the output of such books as *Walk With the Devil*; perhaps the time may come when the Pocket Book corporation will be willing to introduce such a volume in the way that it should be, as, for instance, by quoting on the cover the ideas noted in this review. If we ever do come to a time when readers will be more responsive to such an introduction than to "They took their love before war could cheat them," our chances of diminishing those emotional immaturities which make for Fascism in any land will be immeasurably better.

**COMMENTARY**  
**THE WORLD IN SHADOW**

THERE are times when the shadows hanging over the modern world seem a little too dark to be entirely real. Political and international shadows, while formidable, are not the worst. These, although externally oppressive, can always be expected to clear so long as human beings have faith in themselves and their capacity to change the circumstances under which they live. No circumstantial shadow is dark enough to hide the light of human courage. We sometimes forget the fact that disaster never tarnishes nobility. When a Socrates is poisoned by the State, a Jesus crucified by a provincial governor, a Bruno burned to death by the Inquisition, or a Sacco and a Vanzetti are sent to the electric chair, the greatnesses of these men do not suffer from the ignorance and the moral blindness of their enemies. Noble qualities are rather heightened by the comparison. It is a sure instinct of great educators which leads them to instruct the young in the lives of such men—men who appear in history with sufficient frequency to suggest that heroism and the will to stand by principle are qualities which all men possess potentially, whatever the discouragements of the immediate present. The same instinct, we suspect, animated the great myth-makers of the past. The myths are about human greatness, not about obstacles and disasters which overtake the great. It is as though the teller of these tales wished to say, "Behold, I show you what you children of men are capable of, if you will dream as I dream."

In some measure, probably, we can hold the scientists responsible for the dying out of great dreams from our culture. The scientists have devoted themselves to declaring the potentialities of nature; and, meanwhile, man has suffered by neglect. The greatness of nature—the nature explored by science—is dimensional and measurable. Our appreciation of nature grows out of description of the forms, laws, and processes through which our knowledge of natural forces is

accumulated. Only recently, during the past ten or fifteen years, has there been a serious interest in man as something more than a "thing"—more than some sort of end-product of the measurable realities of the world of matter and form.

Human greatness, manifestly, is not a matter of measurable dimensions. The attempt to bend all definitions of man into the strait jacket of the measurable has been, perhaps, responsible for the vast swing of social organization in the direction of total control by authority. We have lost the habit of thinking about man in terms of his moral potentialities. We discuss people in terms of their "manageability."

And this, we think, has placed the world in shadow. Our dreams are not enriched by high faith in man, high faith in ourselves. Perhaps we are too worldly wise for myths. Perhaps we are too schooled in science to be moved by allegories. But the stark reality of our need seems unmistakable. And since human greatness often arises in hours of extreme need, the study of ourselves by these comparisons may be a necessary step.



## CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

OUR cautious defense of competitive athletics here some years ago (MANAS, NOV. 23, 1949), we should now like to supplement with quotations from a very remarkable letter. There should be no difficulty in understanding why any defense of institutions which revolve around the competitive spirit must be "cautious," for the competition of nations and ideologies perpetually brings us to the brink of world wars. It is not intelligent to deify competition in itself, unless you take no stock in dreams for the final realization of a cooperative human society.

One of the points we tried to make in the 1949 column—a crucial one, we think—is that actual participation in a competitive sport involves the necessity of disciplines which counteract other emotions finding scope in jealousy, fear, and anger. This does not apply, of course, to the mere spectator, who seems to go on a sort of vicarious emotional jag over the thrill of watching contact and contest, as do some oldsters at home over the "boys at the front."

Some day we should like to see a scholarly monograph on the occasions during the span of Western history when the members of opposing armies short-circuited the war fever long enough to get to know something of each other as human beings. We recall instances wherein large bodies of troops have shaken off a good deal of "hate" propaganda when confronting the actual men of the opposing army, perhaps after numbers of captives appeared in their midst, or after stories of mutual courtesy or humaneness in protecting the wounded from fire, etc., have had time to circulate.

The youngster of our own home, when we stop to think of it, may go through just such a process when he engages in physical competition with some boy he has been told not to like—or whom he has told himself not to like. In other words, it seems clear to us that there are two

factors in any form of competitive athletics. There is the expected intensification of rivalry, but at the same time a tendency to confine it to the physical level, and, in a sense, to share it there. Most human beings, we think, enjoy sharing much more spontaneously than hating—if hating can ever be enjoyed! And then, it may be, when the participants realize that they have been successful in confining their aggressive feelings to the physical level, they become pleased in discovering a real liking for each other.

Over and over again, something of this sort was demonstrated during the 1952 Olympic Games, initial tensions between Russian and American athletes progressively giving way to a comradeship in sport, even to evidences of mutual respect. In the Los Angeles *Times* sports column for Aug. 5, editor Braven Dyer claims, with apparent extravagance, that "the fine spirit of sportsmanship which all competitors displayed at Helsinki" is "the main hope of peace in the world." In support of a proposal that the games be held every two years, Mr. Dyer quotes a letter from a twenty-year-old UCLA student, a veteran wounded in Korea. It is a letter both encouraging and thought-provoking, of which we reproduce substantial sections:

In April of 1951 I was wounded while on duty with the U.S. Marine Corps in Korea. Consequently I had come to hate anything or anybody connected with Communism. So, naturally, when the Russians marched on the field, I saw an arrogant, hardened, bitter group of athletes. At least that's what I thought I saw.

But I was sadly mistaken. On the following day, the first day of actual competition, I saw a Russian turn and shake the hand of the American who had just beaten him. As the Games progressed this happened not once, not twice, but every time a similar situation arose. There never was any difference shown by any of the athletes on the field, and I never saw a display of poor sportsmanship by anyone. Win, lose or draw, the Russians were true sportsmen to the end. I noticed the Russians give and receive encouraging pats on the back.

During the second round of heats in the 400 meters, someone blew a whistle just as the starter's

gun went off. A Russian runner mistook the whistle for a signal to stop and restart. When he realized his mistake he had lost 15 yards. In order to qualify for the semifinals he had to place at least third in his heat. The loss of those 15 yards seemed enough to cost him all chance. When the huge crowd realized what had happened the fans began to cheer for the unlucky Russian. I don't think the crowd would have cheered for a man who was a member of an arrogant, hardened, bitter people. They would not have cheered for a poor loser. But they did cheer, loud and long, as the Russian pulled into third and qualified.

I am not defending Communism or any of its puppets. I am not condoning their actions in Korea or anywhere else. I am merely trying to illustrate how the Olympic Games are helping to bring this unsteady old world together.

I believe that if the people of every country could see the Games "in their own back yard," that closer harmony would be automatic. I also believe that if the people of the world could conduct themselves as their athletes did at the Olympic Games that war would be on the way out.

I only hope that the Olympics can be staged more frequently and that by watching the men and women who compete that the nations of the world will see how ridiculous bloodshed is and settle down to live at long last in "peace on earth, good will to men."

There is a type of play among the children of a village in India, in which the youngsters climb tall trees and stealthily approach crows perched upon the limbs, endeavoring to tie a bright piece of cloth to the birds. They vie with each other in this competition of agility, but share the sheer adventure and daring involved. Perhaps because these were Indian children—children of a land where the doctrine of harmlessness in respect to all living creatures has long been honored, the children expressed what one writer has called the "pantheist mood." They had no desire to possess the crows, either dead or alive. (Can we imagine a similar sport being carried on with like results among children of the more possessive Western peoples?) The point is that sport *need* not mean anything psychologically anti-social. There is something in human beings which periodically affirms the necessity of symbolic trials of strength,

especially during the passage from adolescence to maturity. By deeds of great daring we sometimes affirm an intuitive faith that man can always be a little more than his apparent physical limitations, always rise a bit beyond what the body might be expected to do. This is the secret of man—the knowledge that mind and soul can make "the material self" so malleable that "impossible" things may be accomplished when the will is set.

In a culture in so many ways effete, competitive sports afford opportunity for this sort of self-demonstration. By a curious twist of circumstance, a sphere of activity seemingly the least dependent upon the activity of mind may become a persistent reminder that mind can and does "transcend matter." Then, as we have said before, sports involve demanding self-discipline, and without some practice in self-discipline no man will ever feel or find himself wholly a man.

The training of athletes has apparently become something of a State project in Russia, with the idea of encouraging favorable attitudes toward the USSR. But however much this is a corruption of the spirit of free competition—or whatever the reactive measures adopted by America—the individual athletes will for the most part escape the propaganda purposes of the State when they come into direct contact with their sports "enemies," discovering that those they think to be their enemies are not really enemies at all.

## *FRONTIERS*

### Questions For Libertarians

HISTORICAL evidence that is puzzling to believers in the democratic tradition—or, to speak more accurately, to those who have largely adopted and attempt to live by the eighteenth-century principles of political revolution—keeps on presenting itself. We shall devote this space to a brief, random, and very incomplete survey of such evidence.

First, there is the sort of evidence found in a book like *Peaks and Lamas*, by Marco Pallis (Cassell, London, 1939). Here is an account of the culture of the Tibetans who live near the borders of India. Tibet, as everyone knows, is probably the most "theocratic" country in the world. There are certainly more lamas or priests per capita in Tibet than anywhere else. The government is a government of priests. Yet in Ladak, according to Mr. Pallis, the personal freedom, serenity, and happiness of the people make their lives almost idyllic:

The peasant houses were a never-ending joy throughout Ladak, with their combination of the qualities of amplitude, solidity, classical plan and appropriate detail. A mean or cramped or ill-constructed dwelling was never to be seen, while a fair proportion of the bigger ones made us feel positively envious. This was true of every village through which we passed. Nowhere else have I seen any houses to compare, on an average, with those of the Ladakis.

What Pallis has to say of the daily lives, household arts, common sense, courtesy to travelers, and general well-being of the Ladakis is of a piece with his description of their homes. Yet the "education" of these people, not only of the peasants, but also of the scholars—who are almost always religious officials—knows nothing of the principles of freedom as expounded in the West. These people are wholly innocent of the doctrines of individualism. Their artists shun innovation like the Original Sin—until, at least, they are able to exhibit surpassing mastery of all

the existing art-forms, after which tradition permits them to be "creative" in minor ways. Yet these limitations impose no frustrations upon the artisans and craftsmen.

The temper of agnosticism seems absolutely unknown to the Ladakis. These people, while living under a system which is anathema to the liberal-minded West, and despite the decline of their monastic culture, show little need of a "revolution." They seem better off by far than many of those peoples who represent the highest achievements of political progress. You can argue, of course, that they are happy in their delusions, but after reading about their lives, one is bound to wonder just how much of the foundations of this social order is delusive, and how much derived, however remotely, from authentic understanding of the nature of things.

Another sort of evidence bearing on this question is found in the studies of Prof. Raymond H. Wheeler, professor of psychology at the University of Kansas. In 1939, Prof. Wheeler published in the *Social Frontier* (May issue) a rather extraordinary summation of studies of the effect of climate on civilization. One of his practically inescapable conclusions is that cold-dry climates on the one hand, and warm-wet, on the other, favor (or are associated with) notably different patterns of civilization. Reporting his findings, Prof. Wheeler wrote:

Some 250 of these variables have been studied and more are constantly being added. Democratic, republican, and "romantic" epochs fall on the cold side, while socialistic, totalitarian, and "classical" epochs fall on the warm side. The mentality of classical, warm periods is much more profound than that of cold periods, as measured by philosophy, science, art, and literature. These are periods when culture is dominated by a wealthy aristocracy. Cold periods are dominated by a democratically minded middle class of more humble, but of no less important achievements. Warm periods are organic; cold periods, atomistic. The warm are idealistic, the cold, utilitarian; the former, rational, the latter, empirical; the former, "time minded," the latter, "space minded."

Perhaps, as a Greek proverb has it, wisdom flourishes only in political decline; at any rate, the blessings of the cold-dry type of civilization have obvious limits, if the present can be taken as a measure of middle-class, atomistic achievement. Skepticism, as the basis of culture, exhibits little except a self-devouring tendency, once the positive energies of revolution and material conquest of nature have run their course.

We turn now to a small, irregularly-issued journal, *Catalyst*, which engagingly describes itself as a publication which "frequently disagrees with its readers, and occasionally with itself." In the (dateless) sixth number of *Catalyst*, Edward Mountland, identified as a teacher of English literature and a drama critic, writes on "Faith and Culture" in a way that tends to confirm some of the suspicions which prompted this brief discussion. He begins by saying: "When a culture becomes conscious of its assumptions it begins to doubt what it has been doing and decays. The never-ending voyage of mankind is a search for the assumption that cannot be questioned." You may not agree with Mr. Mountland, but you cannot dispose of this proposition easily. Our own amended version of what he says might be to the effect that a truly mature civilization would be one that is able to survive the ordeal of critical self-consciousness—a kind of Hegelian synthesis, perhaps, of the opposing forces he posits. The passage pertinent to our theme, however, is this:

The dogma of the age would have it that the increasing democratisation of our society will lighten the governmental hand. But aside from the economic sophistry involved in this argument, it does not fit the facts. Historically, authoritarian governments based on old and stable societies have interfered least with individual freedom. In the first place, established authority is prevented from becoming despotic by age-old customs and traditions which the most despotically inclined legitimate authority finds extremely difficult to supersede.

But the regimentation which is the political concomitant of revolution is a very different thing from the "absolute" power of authority. A successful revolution which has newly overthrown a system of

authority, traditions and principles must, by its very nature, act counter to the system it has overthrown. It generally cannot make immediate use of the traditions or administrative procedures under which the laws were administered by the old regime, and which, because limited by custom, were more or less humane. A revolution has no precedents—there can be no traditional limitation on the new leader's powers. He knows that he will not be obeyed on the strength of his authority as the old leader was. . . . Therefore repression and force.

This is the argument for "Legitimacy," so brilliantly stated by Guglielmo Ferrero in *The Principles of Power*, and urged, centuries earlier, by William Shakespeare in *Troilus and Cressida*, although with metaphysical implications which are lacking from modern political philosophy. We have quoted this passage before, but then, Shakespeare bears repeating:

O! When degree is shak'd  
Which is the ladder of all high designs,  
The enterprise is sick. How could communities  
Degrees in schools, and brotherhoods in cities, .  
. . .  
But by degree, stand in authentic place? . . .  
Force should be right; or rather, right and  
wrong—  
Between whose endless jar justice resides—  
Should lose their names, and so should justice  
too.  
Then everything includes itself in power,  
Power into will, will into appetite;  
And appetite, a universal wolf,  
So doubly seconded with will and power,  
Must perforce make a universal prey,  
And last eat up himself.

So, Mr. Mountland implies, does awakening intellectuality suspect tradition, question assumptions, and finally "shake degree" until the order of society is stricken by the palsy of doubt. Doubting, it falls into structureless *anomie*, leaving the maintenance of "order" to the fierce dispensers of force and oppression.

Pursuing his thesis, he makes some caustic and not altogether unjust observations concerning the arts:

When the common spirit and tradition are very far gone, the artist is forced to draw more and more

on the comparatively shallow contemporary experience which is all that the men of his time have in common. This has little survival capacity, for art is an attempt to make meaningful the experience of men, and if men in a society have no conscious and secure aim in life, its artists cannot give their lives a meaning. It is like writing a novel about a horse or a dog: it cannot be very significant, for no horse, however well bred, can do anything to try to affect its destiny. Confronted with men who have given up the struggle to be human, the best one can do is to write about them honestly. This the realists and naturalists of our age have done. (Hemingway, Dreiser, Farrell.)

...

The final movements of decadence proliferate enormously and our time has seen literally scores of artistic and literary salients grow and collapse since the first World War. This rapid bubbling of movements always heralds the final disintegration of a culture; they make such specialized demands upon their supporters that only specialists have time to keep up with them. The common man no longer takes notice of them, loses all sense of art, and replaces it with entertainment. This, in our day, is the function of the radio and the best-seller.

Mr. Mountland recalls the contrary blessings of the Middle Ages, an inclination which makes us suspicious in another way—*of* his thesis, rather than of the conventional views he attacks. Yet there is truth—a partial truth, no doubt, yet a truth—in what he says. We cannot, we must admit, live without a faith; but, what Mountland does not add, the faith that we require is one that is natural to the modern mind—the mind which is capable of critical self-consciousness. The paradox of faith is that, historically, it anon saves and anon damns. A course of reading in revolutionary history is surely indicated for those who feel themselves beginning to be carried away by the sweeping grandeur of the argument for faith, authority, and legitimacy. What sort of faith? Whose authority? What grounds of legitimacy? These are the questions which the routine polemics of political controversy often ignore.

A quality in life is what we ought to be seeking, instead of either the Grand Hierarchy of Belief and Order, or the Grand Revolution

Against the perennially sprouting wrongs that Authority based on status always finds a way to impose. It is a quality, perhaps, which enables truth to survive freedom, and freedom to survive order and degree. How to define this quality: that is the difficult thing.