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TO THINK LIKE A MOUNTAIN

THE attempt to find in "Nature" the light we need on the problems of human decision is so fundamental a tropism of the mind that this tendency may itself be a primary revelation of meaning. Yet nature speaks with many voices; either she is filled with ambiguity, or we habitually make only partisan readings of natural processes, which probably comes to the same thing.

It sometimes seems that nature reveals nothing but temporary plausibilities to those who study her for egocentric ends. She unfolds diabolical and eventually self-destroying secrets to men who have become convinced that *power* is the procurer and guardian of good. She gives deceptive support to the rationalizations of aggressive leaders who justify their ruthless requirements for "national survival" by examples from the animal struggle for existence. She has intoxicating delights for pleasure-seekers and subtle poisons for plotters. She will fatten stolid gourmands as easily as she punishes worry with ulcers. Birth and growth subsist on death, which is forever making unpredictable appointments with us. Nature mothers endless longings in men and then shows a singular disregard for their satisfaction.

A man trembling with fever, or succumbing to wasting ill, wonders what he has "done wrong." Much of the time, no one knows, and his departure from this life is marred by guilt-laden fantasies. The pliabilities of vital function allow all sorts of habits to become "second nature," until our needs are the precise opposite of our most driving wants, and then hedonist philosophers learn to make nice distinctions about what is "natural," with all the obscurity of theologians interpreting the "will of God."

Nature is endlessly accommodating to the man looking for vindication of his private motives as well as those he is willing to disclose. She has numerous references for every philosophic school and supplies weapons to every kind of tyrant. Pushed a little in one direction, she willingly confirms the anticipations of special pleaders who, having learned a little of one of her languages, imagine that they know them all. Narcissus, too, had great natural piety, and found excellent reasons for believing what he saw in the pool.

Perhaps Nature has a fundamental contempt for all those who come to her in a bargaining spirit, or in too much of a hurry. And she may like least of all the people who, because they have learned how to do a few tricks, boast to the world of their "explanations" of natural forces. Such men have no capacity for awe, and Nature, in just return, lets them construct infernos.

Quite possibly, then, only the man who has learned that he can expect no free rides from nature is capable of learning wisdom from her. Discovery of philosophic truth seems to require a natural beggary. It wasn't until Admiral Byrd, alone in a burrow of ice near the South Pole, gave up hope, that the universal rhythms of nature penetrated his soul.

To feel the flooding tide of natural truth, you have to be an undemanding, unexpecting man. You can't fight nature, win from her, or compile handbooks about the use of her creatures and forces, and hope to see in her anything but a reflection of these plans and calculations. Only the man who asks nothing from nature is vouchsafed a vision of her transcendent symmetries. The books about nature that are worth reading are all books by nature *lovers*. They are by men who intuit beyond all doubt that Nature has vast intentions of her own.

No one has understood this more clearly than Aldo Leopold, one of the few men who learned to speak *for* nature instead of about her:

> To the laborer in the sweat of his labor, the raw stuff on his anvil is an adversary to be conquered. So was wilderness an adversary to the pioneer.
>
> But to the laborer in repose, that same raw stuff is something to be loved and cherished, because it gives definition and meaning to his life.

A laborer "in repose" is a man no longer in pursuit of anything. He is not utilizing, but wondering. Mr. Leopold says that he is also "loving." Can a man "love" the natural world? One might as reasonably ask if there can be "reverence" for life.

It seems an entirely rational proposition that one cannot at the same time despoil the earth and love or revere it. Loving the earth is learned from sharing considerately in its being. Aldo Leopold's life grew into a rite of devotion to the world of nature, with the result that its majesties became as objective to him as mere physical outlines are to the rest of us. His last book, *A Sand County Almanac* (Oxford University Press, 1949), brings to the reader the report of a participant in the community of life. In his last chapter, "The Land Ethic," he writes of how people who have learned love of the earth might behave:

> The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land.
>
> This sounds simple: do we not already sing our love for and obligation to the land of the free and the home of the brave? Yes, but just what and whom do we love? Certainly not the soil, which we are sending helter-skelter downriver. Certainly not the waters, which we assume have no function except to turn turbines, float barges, and carry off sewage. Certainly not the plants, of which we exterminate whole communities without batting an eye. Certainly not the animals, of which we have already extirpated many of the largest and most beautiful species. A land ethic of course cannot prevent the alteration, management, and use of these "resources," but it does affirm their right to continued existence, and, at least in spots, their continued existence in a natural state.
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> In short, a land ethic changes the role of *Homo sapiens* from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it. It implies respect for his fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such.
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> In human history, we have learned (I hope) that the conqueror role is eventually self-defeating. Why? Because it is implicit in such a role that the conqueror knows, *ex cathedra*, just what makes the community dock tick, and just what and who is valuable, and what and who is worthless, in community life. It always turns out that he knows neither, and this is why his conquests eventually defeat themselves.

This man's knowledge of nature is simply astounding. Tattered fallacies in "conservation" policies flutter from his pages like dead moths. Nature has her own being, and we frustrate its fulfillments at our peril. A civilization so vain as to imagine it has learned how to "exploit" nature successfully is arranging for its own doom.

An hour or so spent with this book draws the reader into the sweep of life-cycles and ecological interdependencies more complicated than the most elaborate equations. The author makes a case even for the wolves which used to inhabit mountainous regions. He sees the wolf, not as a wicked predator, but as guardian and husbandman of the landscape:

> I have watched the face of many a newly wolfless mountain, and seen the south-facing slopes wrinkle with a maze of new deer trails. I have seen every edible bush and seedling browsed, first to anæmic desuetude, and then to death. I have seen every edible tree defoliated to the height of a saddlehorn. Such a mountain looks as if someone had given God a new pruning shears, and forbidden Him all other exercise. In the end the starved bones of the hoped-for deer herd, dead of its own too-much, bleach with the bones of the dead sage, or molder under the high-lined junipers.
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> I now suspect that just as a deer herd lives in mortal fear of its wolves, so does a mountain live in mortal fear of the deer. And perhaps with better cause, for while a buck pulled down by wolves can be replaced in two or three years, a range pulled down by too many deer may fail of replacement in as many decades.

> So also with cows. The cowman who cleans his range of wolves does not realize that he is taking over the wolf's job of trimming the herd to fit the range. He has not learned to think like a mountain. Hence we have dustbowls, and rivers washing the future into the sea.
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> We all strive for safety, prosperity, comfort, long life, and dullness. The deer strives with his supple legs, the cowman with trap and poison, the statesman with pen, the most of us with machines, votes, and dollars, but it all comes to the same thing: peace in our time.
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> A measure of success in this is all well enough, and perhaps is a requisite to objective thinking, but too much safety seems to yield only danger in the long run. Perhaps this is behind Thoreau's dictum: In wildness is the salvation of the world. Perhaps this is the hidden meaning in the howl of the wolf, long known among the mountains, but seldom perceived among men.

Who would listen to or be willing to learn from a wolf, except men forgetful of conquest, eager to declare the legitimacy of other forms of life? But it isn't only the wolf that we must learn from; the lessons of nature are mainly in analogues. Thinking like a mountain would be a portal to whole encyclopedias of natural meaning.

The leap from Aldo Leopold's point of view to what the cultural anthropologists once called "primitive animism" is hardly more than an exchange of words. Ancients used to hymn their allegiance to the world of nature, which, in some of its relationships, they found sufficient reason to deify. Mr. Leopold seeks similar apotheoses because he must. When a species of bird that gave animation and dirigibility to a portion of the earth's surface is made extinct by the avarice of hunters, the ecologist knows, he says, "that there has been an ecological death, the significance of which is inexpressible in terms of contemporary science." Behind the countless visible appearances of living nature lie their *noumena*, he says, the imponderable essences of the world of life. For the modern lover of nature, this philosophical vocabulary becomes unavoidable. "The physics of beauty," Leopold writes, "is one department of natural science still in the Dark Ages."

But there is hope for science, at least for some scientists. Gaston Bachelard, a French physicist, implies a corresponding reform in the title of his book, *Poetics of Space*. And Thoreau (Wylie Sypher points out), to whom Bachelard was much indebted, practiced the poetics of space at Walden, where he wrote: "A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature." Technicians may pull out their plummy measurements, but a man, if he would discover anything important, must learn to *behold.*

The difficulty any lover of nature has with his audience is that modern readers will not accept as true any statement unless it is so plain and unequivocal that they can be *bludgeoned* with it. Poetic intimations are "nice," but what can you do with them? Well, in this book, Mr. Leopold has a forceful if oblique answer to such questions. He is able to show from years of experience in conservation work that the unequivocal drive of self-interest is simply not good enough even for self-interest. After several pages given to illustrating the built-in shortsightedness of the economic motive, he says:

> No important change in ethics was ever accomplished without an internal change in our intellectual emphasis, loyalties, affections, and convictions. The proof that conservation has not yet touched these foundations of conduct lies in the fact that philosophy and religion have not yet heard of it. In our attempt to make conservation easy, we have made it trivial.

Is there a more emphatic way of saying that people have to feel themselves members of the community of life before they can act in harmony with nature? That enlightened selfishness is never enlightened *enough?*

But Mr. Leopold does not expect to recruit lovers of nature with a parade of warnings and threats. Only people still bemused by the short-

term rewards of conquest think anything can be accomplished by the rhetoric of punishment. The power of nature is real, the punishment sure, but no man ever changed his mind in the right direction by the paralyzing influence of fright. You may be able to limit a man's actions with fear, but he will never be uplifted by vision nor moved to act save by his own powers of imagination. These are the persuasions which come naturally to Mr. Leopold.

His wondering about the meaning behind Thoreau's "In wildness is the preservation of the world" will bear some collaboration from us all. Man's project, we have long assumed, is to *tame* the world. But a useful taming would neither denature nor despoil, while we have become experts at both. What is the vital quality in wildness that ought to be preserved? Probably no man who has not tamed himself can know. A constructive interdependence with the rest of nature is surely possible, and behind Thoreau's meaning of "wildness" may be the delight in life which wild things express and which, at another level of being, becomes the joy of self-awareness that human beings may some day savor fully, when they refuse to be enslaved by so many artificial securities and alienating arrangements. Mr. Leopold has a happy way of making this suggestion:

> There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace.
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> To avoid the first danger, one should plant a garden, preferably where there is no grocer to confuse the issue.
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> To avoid the second, he should lay a split of good oak on the andirons, preferably where there is no furnace, and let it warm his shins while a February blizzard tosses the trees outside. If one has cut, split, hauled, and piled his own good oak, and let his mind work the while, he will remember much about where heat comes from, and with a wealth of detail denied to those who spend the weekend in town astride a radiator.

Curiously—or perhaps naturally—the more aroused of the modern ecologists seem to feel that they cannot get their message across without calling upon religious emotion. It may be that, apart from the desperate warnings they offer, this religious emotion is their message. Fortunately, Mr. Leopold's emotion is filtered by a rollicking sense of humor and tempered by what seems a Yankee hardheadedness, and it comes through with both power and fitness as a result. The reader gets the message in the form of a philosophic religion of nature.

There is today a convergence of serious thought on the rapidly emerging issues of ecology—a branch of science that is hardly a hundred years old. Even psychotherapy is groping its way toward recognition of the crucial importance to mental health of man's feelings about the natural or external environment. Harold F. Searles, a practicing psychiatrist, has written a book to discuss the effects of the increasing remoteness of the non-human environment in the advanced technological societies. He says in one place:

> My thesis is that this [nonhuman] environment, far from being of little or no account to human personality development, constitutes one of the most basically important ingredients of human psychological experience. It is my conviction that there is within the human individual a sense of *relatedness to his total environment*, that this relatedness is one of the transcendently important facts of human life, and that if he tries to ignore its importance to himself, he does so at peril to his psychological wellbeing. . . . By "relatedness" I mean a sense of intimate kinship, a psychological commitment to the structural relationships which exist between man and the various ingredients of his nonhuman environment. This experience of relatedness involves a maintenance of our sense of individuality as a human being, a knowing that however close our kinship, we are not *at one* with it. The mature human knows that he is irrevocably, irreversibly a member of the human species, and can rejoice as well as despair in this knowledge. It seems inevitable that the human being will experience varied and conflictual feelings about his nonhuman environment, for mankind's position in regard to this

> environment is existentially a conflictual position. He is grounded in nature, and yet is unbridgeably apart from it.

Perhaps Dr. Searles is saying, in the cipher of his specialty, that the price of individual self-consciousness is the feeling of separateness it produces, and that only feelings of kinship with the world about us can convert this isolation into the bipolar sort of identity that is natural for human beings. For there *is* a sense in which we are "at one" with nature. That might be what Aldo Leopold would say, since he was himself forever engaged in building bridges of thought across the unbridgeable gap of which Dr. Searles speaks. Here, no doubt, we are in the land of ultimate paradox and need the help of a Plotinus to conceive of the "atonement" that deepens individuality by extending its radius to infinity for a golden moment or two.

Meanwhile, Dr. Searles also has his warnings. He suggests that the failure to feel kinship with the nonhuman environment makes men vulnerable to invasion by it, in unanticipated ways. For example, if the conveniences and services of technology become the only links we have with the outside world, we become dependent on artificialities which turn into obsessive necessities. Their services threaten because we think we should die without them. For many of us, a serious power failure would be the practical equivalent of the end of the world.

It seems certain that the right kind of human differentiation, or individuation, will take place only in balance with growing bonds of kinship with a world which we increasingly understand and gain affection for. The highest individuality would then be also the widest conscious unity that one can imagine. And this, agreeable to ancient pantheisms, would be the expression of philosophic love.

REVIEW
A YOUNG BUT PROMISING SCIENCE

MANY years ago, Julian Huxley remarked that "man's so-called supernormal or extra-sensory faculties are in the same case as were his mathematical faculties during the Ice Age"—an observation which gives aid and comfort to the reviewer of books about extra-sensory perception. Accustomed to expect reports of scientific experiment to declare unambiguous findings, he is naturally puzzled when the author of a paper on psychic research wonders if how he felt one morning while running a test affected the results. Does telepathy or precognition work better when you are optimistic about the reality of psychic powers? And if your misses and hits have a more dramatic spread when you feel exuberant, is this an important discovery?

Well, parapsychology is a very young science. It isn't sure about a lot of things. This is doubtless a wholesome situation, since if university degrees in parapsychology regularly produced graduate Cassandras and Sybils and Delphic Oracles, we would hardly know how to cope with such people. Fortunately, their skills have a suitable Ice Age modesty. Yet contemporary ESP research has at least demonstrated to the satisfaction of a great many people that supernormal cognition is a fact. Its performance may be unpredictable and unreliable, and the *modus operandi* remain bewilderingly obscure, but it is a fact. And so far as the many uncertainties of parapsychology are concerned, what A. H. Maslow says about all branches of science relating to the mysteries of subjectivity, clearly applies:

> Knowledge has an embryology too; it cannot confine itself to its final and adult forms alone. Knowledge of low reliability is also part of knowledge.

This is the sort of knowledge with which reports of experiments are concerned in the volume, *Parapsychology Today* (Citadel, 1968, $6.00), edited by J. B. Rhine and Robert Brier. These papers, as Dr. Rhine says, "seem rather specialized and technical and somewhat remote from the larger objectives to which the research is directed." Other material in the book is of much greater interest to the general reader.

Yet it is natural to wonder what transformations a more extensive development of *psi* faculties would work in human beings. Perhaps there would be no more need of a "science" of such matters than there is now for a science of making the heart beat properly. Such possibilities were the basis of a fantasy contributed by Edward Bellamy to *Harper's Monthly* for February, 1889. Ostensibly the report of an American who was shipwrecked enroute from Calcutta to New York, the story tells of a mysterious island inhabited by a race of mind-readers who found the castaway unconscious on their beach and restored him to health. The psychological asides accompanying the romantic content are especially pertinent. The traveler relates:

> I learned that mind-reading is chiefly held desirable, not for the knowledge of others which it gives its possessors, but for the self-knowledge which is its reflex effect. Of all they see in the minds of others, that which concerns them most is the reflection of themselves, the photographs of their own characters. The most obvious consequence of the self-knowledge thus forced upon them is to render them alike incapable of self-conceit or self-depreciation. Everyone must needs think of himself as he is, being no more able to do otherwise than is a man in a hall of mirrors to cherish delusions as to his personal appearance.
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> But self-knowledge means to the mind-readers much more than this: nothing less, indeed, than a shifting of the sense of identity. When a man sees himself in a mirror he is compelled to distinguish between the bodily self he sees and his real self, the mental and moral self, which is within and unseen. When in turn the mind-reader comes to see the mental and moral self reflected in other minds as in mirrors, the same thing happens. He is compelled to distinguish between this mental and moral self which has been made objective to him and can be contemplated by him as impartially as if it were another's, from the inner ego which still remains

> subjective unseen, and indefinable. In this inner ego the mind-readers recognize the essential identity and being, the noumenal self, the core of the soul, and the true hiding of its eternal life, to which the mind as well as the body is but the garment of a day.
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> The effect of such a philosophy as this—which indeed with the mind-readers is rather an instinctive consciousness than a philosophy—must obviously be to impart a sense of wonderful superiority to the vicissitudes of their earthly state, and a singular serenity in the midst of the haps and mishaps which threaten or befall the personality.

Here, described with an almost brash clarity, are qualities of being which are surely among the secret longings of those who undertake the stumbling, uncertain course of psychic research. And if these workers are reluctant to speak openly of such dreams, this is natural enough, since they are trying to behave like dispassionate scientists whose personal enthusiasms are supposed to be carefully concealed.

Yet when a serious thinker examines the implications of the data of ESP research, daring to structure hypothetically the conditions which might give them a rational explanation, he may arrive at a similar ideal construction. For example, Prof. H. H. Price, in an article in *Philosophy* for October, 1940, proposed that we ought to ask why minds do not communicate directly, *all the time*, instead of regarding acts of telepathy as curious "exceptions." As he put it:

> It begins to look as if both the unity and the isolatedness of a single mind were the result of certain special restrictive conditions, which are generally but not always fulfilled; or perhaps not even that, but rather a mere appearance arising from the extremely limited and superficial character of ordinary self-consciousness.

This is precisely Bellamy's point. His shipwrecked traveler soon learned from the mind-readers the "extremely limited and superficial character of ordinary self-consciousness." This becomes evident in the first part of the story, when the narrator reports his embarrassment in the presence of the wonderful islanders:

> I imagine that the very unpleasant sensations which followed the realization that I was among people who, while inscrutable to me, knew my very thought, were very much what anyone would have experienced in the same case. They were very comparable to the panic which accidental nudity causes a person among races whose custom it is to conceal the figure with drapery. I wanted to run away and hide myself. If I analyzed my feeling, it did not seem to arise so much from the consciousness of any particularly heinous secrets, as from the swarm of fatuous, ill-natured, and unseemly thoughts and half-thoughts concerning those around me and concerning myself, which it was insufferable that any person should peruse in however benevolent a spirit.

Bellamy's story helps the reader to understand why the best of modern psychologists are drawn to literature and especially to the novel for help in their formulation of theory. Literature is centrally concerned with the *moral* states of mankind, and the novelist, unlike the preacher, deals with these states existentially instead of moralistically. It was to escape from the intolerable arrogance of ignorant moralists that scientists originally decided to ignore the moral states entirely, even at the cost of accepting a mechanistic universe. And now the distant objective of the recovery of a moral universe, sometimes shyly admitted by its practitioners, is the animating principle of parapsychology.

Meanwhile, needing to walk before they run, parapsychologists endeavor to turn some of the techniques of mechanistic investigation against the basic mechanistic assumption, hoping to be able to say—as they can and do from time to time—"What do you make of *that!*" The metaphysically neutral tool of mathematics turns out to be the most effective resource of the parapsychologists. Lacking an island of mind-readers to make their case overwhelming, they try to create one with statistical demonstrations. Skeptics are challenged to inspect the occasional successes of this sort of model-making.

Some of the papers in *Parapsychology Today* are devoted to historical accounts of the general scientific reaction to the impressive mathematical

testimony in behalf of the reality of ESP. (Two such papers, one by Sir Cyril Burt, the other by Dr. Louisa E. Rhine, have already been noticed in MANAS.) "The Relationship of Parapsychology to Communism," by Nikolai Khokhlov, has special interest for the reason that the mechanistic assumption of orthodox science is also a foundation idea of the Soviet ideology—which sharpens the tensions produced by any open departure from the ritual materialism of the Communist State. The author of this paper points out that the Russians are by temperament "particularly sensitive to the transcendental, to ideas based on eternal values, to possible keys to the enigmas of life, to a world beyond the sober reality of sense," and tells what happened to some of these tendencies under communist rule. Psychic research, he says, which had been active in Russia since the middle of the nineteenth century, went underground after the Revolution, but it continued. In recent years, with the encouragements of the post-Stalin thaw, it has been surfacing in various ways. Sometimes Soviet defenders of psychic research argue simply that open-mindedness is the basis of all scientific progress. Others propose that if evidence for the supernormal is not inspected, and its "supernatural" implications refuted, a rebirth of superstition may result.

Prof. Khokhlov speaks of the continuing influence of the humanistic side of Socialism. This is identified as the "unspoken aspect of communism" which pervaded some of the early members of the Communist Party. This spirit, he says, still exists, and there are those in Russia who hunger for evidence that "Man can free himself from socio-economic slavery, with human nature possessing much more psychological potential than has previously been assumed." Soviet publications are having to take these longings into account, and a popular magazine, *Science and Religion,* in the main anti-religious, recently devoted a third of one of its issues t o a discussion of "Telepathy: Pro and Contra." Prof. Khokhlov writes:

> The contemporary revival of religious feeling in the Soviet Union is not completely along the traditional Christian lines. It is much more an upsurge of a search for the mysterious, the far-removed, world beyond the senses, for a cosmic wisdom as a set of principles extending beyond materialism. From that sea of people, dissatisfied spiritually and ideologically, a real popular demand has emerged in the last decade or so in Soviet Russia for a new, revised picture of the universe and man's picture in it.

This is his concluding comment on the work of Soviet parapsychologists:

> The fate of the world today depends on the common understanding by the whole human race of what a human being really is. . . . Is it not possible that the ideological differences between their approach to the problem and ours are insignificant as compared to the common appreciation of the magnitude of the task and its importance to the fate of this planet?

COMMENTARY
THE DISCIPLINE EXISTS

WHAT notice should the austere world of philosophy and science take of the great swings of the pendulum of popular opinion? *None!* is the highly moral answer of professional integrity, yet it can be followed only in principle. Any great change in the focus of popular interest permits men with hungry minds to set out in new directions. The very climate created by a wave of human longing may give psychological "objectivity" to matters which, a generation earlier, very few thought it worth while to inquire into.

This now seems the case in the area of transcendental belief. There is undoubtedly deep validity in the widely voiced claim that excesses of unbelief have rotted the moral fabric of civilization. So, one needs no crystal ball to predict the onset of an Age of Belief. The vacuum will be filled. The hungers will be fed. And, almost certainly, we shall have new excesses of belief to the extent that men mistake feeling "good" or "secure" for knowing the truth.

At such a moment as the present, then, men of responsible mind need to ask themselves certain questions. How are excesses of any sort best controlled? Excesses of popular enthusiasm are always difficult to identify while they are gaining strength. The excesses of science—or scientism—for example, could hardly be seen because the trouble lay not in what science did or discovered, but in what it *left out.*

The excesses of religion come from including *too much* in the diet of faith or belief, because we have become so desperately hungry. But how could a man guard himself against such temptations? The area of belief seems totally problematic.

But it *isn't* totally problematic. It only seems so, because that is what enemies of religion and philosophy have been claiming for some three hundred years. The easiest way to get rid of the mystics and the metaphysicians was to insist that there can be no discipline applying to subjective cognitions.

Well, if there is such a discipline, how do you find out about it? The answer is not as obscure as most people think. You look at the men who practiced it—the men who, during the age of the onset of unbelief, refused to be carried away by this wave of *unearned* skepticism. You read, not the Johnny-come-latelies among the expositors of "spiritual" philosophy, but the men who maintained this position when it was really a losing side to be on. Among seventeenth-century thinkers, for example, you study the Cambridge Platonists, who saw coming the withering sirocco of Cartesian dualism and mechanistic philosophy, and fought a noble opposition. You read Ralph Cudworth, Henry More, and Joseph Glanvil—men who sought *balance* for the mind of their times.

It is not a matter of establishing the "correct beliefs." There are plenty of people who will worry about that. The task of lining up new creeds always has too many authors and too many people eager to publish them. It is the style of thinking which seeks balances and counts costs that needs attention. This sort of thinking, when you encounter it, often seems extravagant, but that is because it emerges against the grain. Take for example Glanvil, of whom a historian of ideas has said:

> Thus we get the queer spectacle of a Fellow of the Royal Society lashing his age for a type of "unbelief" which Lecky and others celebrate as one of the finest triumphs of the age. He carries his campaign against *"dogmatizing"* so far as to attack the latent dogmas of "skepticism" itself. "That there are no witches or apparitions seems to him a piece of unwarrantable cocksureness, and to accept such a current assumption merely because the climate of opinion has encouraged it, is the mark of an unphilosophic mind.

William James interested himself in psychic phenomena at a time when most of his colleagues thought him a little "off" for dabbling in such matters. Yet he proposed a psychological

cosmology that provides a rational framework for understanding the strange happenings reported by workers in ESP:

> . . . there is a continuum of cosmic consciousness against which our individuality builds but accidental fences, and into which our several minds plunge as into a mother-sea or reservoir. Our "normal" consciousness is circumscribed for adaptation to our external earthly environment, but the fence is weak in spots, and fitful influences from beyond leak in, showing the otherwise unverifiable connection. Not only psychic research but metaphysical philosophy, and speculative biology are lei m their own ways to look with favor on some such "panpsychic" view of the universe as this. Assuming this common reservoir of consciousness to exist. . . . What is its own structure? What is its inner topography? . . . What are the conditions of individuation or insulation in this mother-sea? To what tracts, to what active systems functioning separately in it, do personalities correspond?

James asked these questions in a time when it was difficult and unpopular to do so. So did a few other men. They found help in Leibniz, in Plotinus, and from some others. The discipline may still be an "embryo science," but it exists.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
THE SECRET OF THE SEED

THE days of the one-room country school are doubtless gone, never to return except under improvised circumstances, even though the learning that went on in some of those schools was far more intensive than in the "unified school district" institutions which replaced them. We know of one such school, closed less than a dozen years ago, whose children turned out to be scholastically a year in advance of pupils of the same age in the larger school many miles away, to which they were inconveniently carried by bus.

Well, we have at least some explanation of why the one-room school was often a wonderful place for children. It developed resourcefulness. Lately we came across the account of another kind of school that wraps such questions in total mystery. In one of the packets of educational materials called "Jackdaws," published in England and distributed in this country by Grossman (125a, East 19th St., New York, N.Y. 10003), there is an outline of the schooling that was available to a boy named Will Shakespeare. One of the seven broadsheets included in the packet on *Young Shakespeare* relates:

> The type of education considered necessary in Shakespeare's day can be seen from the course laid down by John Lyon, the founder of Harrow. In 1501 the whole curriculum at Harrow was as follows: in the lower three forms, Latin grammar, Cicero, Cato, Terence, Ovid. In the fourth form, Virgil, Caesar, Livy, Demosthenes, Socrates, Hesiod, with verses and themes (i.e. writing Latin verse and Latin prose).
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> This was unchanged for more than 200 years, and then more Greek was introduced. History, both modern and ancient, Euclid and vulgar fractions were added in 1829, and some modern languages in 1857. . . .
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> The famous saying of Ben Jonson that Shakespeare knew "small Latin and less Greek" must not be misunderstood. Jonson was a scholar and was thinking of a very high standard of classical knowledge. Shakespeare probably knew a great deal more of the classical languages than an Oxbridge undergraduate today.
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> His education certainly did not advance further than the grammar school standard. Having begun with the horn book, he went on to use Donatus' Latin Grammar which had already been in use for 1,000 years. Then he would study another aged work, Boethius' Arithmetic (A.D. 500). He probably did not get as far as Priscian's Latin Book (A.D. 500) or Cicero's Rhetoric, Aristotle's Logic, Ptolemy's Astronomy, Euclid's Geometry, and Pythagoras on Music. In fact, more than a thousand years might have contributed nothing to human knowledge, for all the attention which the schools paid them. They taught precisely the same texts as in ancient Rome. Perhaps Shakespeare was the better off for not having a lot of Latin and more Greek.

Shakespeare's dependence on a small number of books for his characters and plots is the subject of another broadsheet. He relied heavily on *Plutarch's Lives,* available in English from a French translation, which gave him the basis for *Coriolanus, Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra.* Another book on which he drew was the much longer and duller Holinshed's *Chronicle,* in which the original of *Macbeth* is found. He got his "natural history" out of an English translation of a Latin work by Friar Bartholemew.

Obviously, from any "modern" point of view, the curriculum to which Shakespeare was exposed was a starvation diet, and it makes you wonder if much of the fuss about curriculum isn't beside the point. Of course, you couldn't "explain" Shakespeare with *any* curriculum, but Elizabethan England and the cultural life of the seventeenth century, into which it flowered, was nourished on the same medieval fare. Perhaps a further comment of the broadsheet on schooling in Shakespeare's time is pertinent:

> Of course he [Shakespeare] learned much out of school. In fact one might say that his education was interrupted by his going to school. He lived in a great age of exploration and adventure, when geography was as "live" as space travel today. The history that we have to learn from books—Philip and the struggle with Spain, the first colonizing of America, the rise of puritanism and the decline in England of Roman Catholicism—was going on round him. Often we can

> read his feelings about current problems in his so-called historical plays. Thus King John lived more than 300 years before him, but much that the characters in the play say and feel is what Shakespeare heard gossiped about in Stratford, or later, as he strolled in St. Paul's or joined the crowd in Whitehall.

We can say this, at any rate: Shakespeare's education throws practically no light on his greatness. And helping the student to a place where this becomes matter for reflection may be the main contribution of the Jackdaw on young Shakespeare. The Jackdaw packets—of which there are scores, mostly concerned with history and biography, with a few on great figures in science—are a brave attempt to bring the present-day student some of the flavors of life and thought in the past. Each packet has reproductions of actual documents (translations provided), pictures belonging to past times, old maps, and ably written broad sheets which distill essential background. The student has somewhat of a chance to get a feeling for history and the origins of great scientific advances from this material. (The packets are $2.95 each—bookstores have a complete list of the subjects covered.)

Yet the better the educational materials of this sort, the clearer become the independent obligations of the teacher. For to "feel" something about a great man's times is only to get ready to understand the influences or confinements from which he broke loose. In the case of Shakespeare, Harold Goddard has argued this question with the provocatives that should accompany all historical studies. In a chapter on the playwright's integrity (in *The Meaning of Shakespeare*), he says:

> . . . the poems alone are enough to suggest that Shakespeare's development may have been almost as independent of his later environment as the embryo is of the place where the mother happens to reside. But how account in that case, the historical critics will ask, for the way that development kept pace with the changes and even the fashions of Elizabethan drama? Why are Shakespeare's ideas in so many instances indistinguishable from what may be called the ideas of his time? But why, then, we may ask in turn, has the world shown no such consuming interest in the other men who followed those same fashions and held those same ideas? Plainly it is something that differentiates Shakespeare from his age, not something that integrates him with it, that is the source *of* his attraction for us. If I pour water into a cup, a pitcher, a tumbler, and a vase, it will instantly conform in each case to the shape of the vessel into which I pour it. But the cause of the conformity is not to be found in the shape of this or that particular container. It resides rather in the mysterious and unchanging fluidity of the water itself. Genius has something of the same quality. But that is the less interesting half of the story. There are two ways of fitting into one's environment that are as opposite as night and day. To fit into one's age as mud does into a crack, or to be molded by it as putty is under a thumb is one thing; to fit into it and use it creatively as a seed fits into and uses soil is quite another. The secret of why the germinating seed selects certain ingredients of the soil, while utterly ignoring others, lies in the seed, not in the soil.

Understanding "seeds" involves more questions than answers, yet it is the central project of education.

FRONTIERS

Fanon's "Final Outcome"

THE success stories of mankind, you could say, are mostly recorded in engineering manuals, while the dramas to which we are much more compellingly drawn lie in individual accounts of heroic and often failing struggle. A recent case in point is the lif.e of Frantz Fanon, the black psychiatrist who died of leukemia in a Washington, D.C. hospital in 1961.

The general impression of Fanon is that he was "a determined apostle of violence," but as J. E. Seigel says in the Winter issue of the *American Scholar,* "Fanon was more than this and the parts of his life this image neglects also speak to our condition." Mr. Seigel's article, "On Frantz Fanon," restores to Fanon certain noble dimensions which, although they are by no means absent from *The Wretched of the Earth* (his last book), are more clearly present in his earlier *Black Skin, White Masks.* Fanon's lifelong effort was to speak as a man—a man in the universal sense. He pursued this struggle against incredible odds. Mr. Seigel says:

> Fanon felt the split between blacks and whites to the depths of his soul, but his zeal was to overcome it, not to solidify it. He gave himself wholeheartedly to the anticolonial rebellion in Algeria, but he feared and hated violence even while he glorified it. Fanon has been made the symbol of conflict; we must see that he also stood for reconciliation. To do so is to move a step closer to reconciliation ourselves.

What emerges from this essay on Fanon is the portrait of a man who attempted to rise above the distinctions of color at a time when racist crimes against black people made this almost an emotional impossibility. The reader of *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove, 1967) soon sees why. Director of a psychiatric hospital in the Algerian city of Blida, Fanon first secretly aided the rebels, then resigned to join them openly. He worked with the Algerians until he died, at one time serving as ambassador to Ghana. The story of his life moves like a Greek tragedy. His acts reflected a black man's loyalties, while his aspiring mind hovered above the struggle like a tortured god. Reviewing the change from the mood of *Black Skin, White Masks* (*Grove,* 1967)—in which Fanon had declared: "I am not a prisoner of history. I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny"—to the celebration of blackness in *The Wretched of the Earth,* Mr. Seigel shows the continuity of Fanon's deepest feelings:

> Thus the determined revolutionary of *The Wretched of the Earth* and *A Dying Colonialism* differed profoundly from the brooding, inward author of *Black Skin, White Masks.* Yet the two writers were after all the same man, and their identity is not hard to discover. Beneath the social and political analysis of decolonization there remained the earlier concern for overcoming the effects of alienation and fragmentation. For a time the anticolonial struggle would magnify black feelings of separation from whites, but its final outcome would be the destruction of black racism, not the intensification of it. In *A Dying Colonialism* Fanon wrote of white Europeans who joined the Algerians in the face of French actions during the rebellion, and he accepted them with enthusiasm. A description of the same phenomenon in *The Wretched of the Earth* led to the declaration that, "In their weary way toward rational knowledge the people must also give up their too-simple conception of their overlords. The species is breaking up under their very eyes." As some whites join the rebels in their struggle, the "primitive Manicheism of the settler" is overthrown. In another sphere, the revolution itself destroys both the basis and the need for a racist culture: "To believe that it is possible to create a black culture is to forget that niggers are disappearing just as those people who brought them into being are seeing the breakup of their economic and cultural supremacy." Fanon was still trying to "reach out for the universal."

How Fanon himself felt about violence is clearly portrayed in a description by Simone de Beauvoir, who knew him in Paris shortly before his death. She wrote:

> Though an advocate of violence, he was horrified by it when he described the mutilations inflicted on the Congolese by the Belgian or by the Portuguese on the Angolans—lips pierced and padlocked, faces flattened by *palmatorio* blows—his expression would betray anguish, but it did no less so when he talked about the "counterviolence" of the

> Negroes and the terrible reckonings implied by the Algerian revolution. He attributed this repugnance to his condition as an intellectual everything he had written against the intellectuals had been written against himself as well. . . . It was evident that he found it distressing not to be fighting the battle on his native soil, and even more not to be Algerian-born. "Above all, I don't want to become a professional revolutionary," he told us anxiously. . . .

One should not find it difficult to understand the titanic measure of this intense man's frustration—his longing to think universally overwhelmed by the ruthless negation of white institutions, and the massive, habitual injustice impenetrable by reason. One can see how the very energy of his higher longings turned his later writings into powerful tracts for the times, yet never entirely hiding his original inspiration. Flashes of that inspiration keep showing through. Fanon's war in heaven gave his war on earth its moral power. Mr. Seigel ends his discussion by saying:

> The point, then, of this discussion of Fanon has been to try to wrest him away from the *terribles simplificateurs* who seek to equate him unconditionally with the advocacy of violence in *The Wretched of the Earth.* It is not possible to say how many of those who claim to follow Fanon actually resemble him in the depth of their inner conflicts, or how many may someday learn to see themselves in Fanon's picture of the irrational style of black antiwhite thought. Fanon's adoption as a spokesman by militant blacks in our country is both a reminder of the painful present and a warning of a troubled future. But in meeting the challenge this poses, we would do well to consider whether, hidden behind the rhetoric of black militancy there does not remain something of Fanon's hunger "to reach out for the universal."