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THE COMING GENERATION

ONE thing that is probably not taken into account by parents who are wondering how their children will turn out, and how they will manage with the mess of a world they have inherited, is that the generation now in its teens is growing up among adults—teachers and parents—who are far less sure of anything than *their* parents were.

Thirty years ago, people were pretty certain about a lot of things. On the whole, they thought they knew what was wrong with the world and what needed to be done to make it better. In those days, civilization was confronted by "problems," to be sure, but not by apparently insoluble dilemmas. In those days, the atheists were cocksure, the Communists were idealists, the businessmen were nearly all amateur philosophers with expansive Rotarian hopes. Americans, with the good humor of people who cannot imagine that anyone will ever contradict them, went about letting it be known that they had the best form of government, the strongest army and navy, the greatest industrialists and the most ingenious inventors. They also had an infallible formula for progress, which was to be achieved by going on with what they were doing without thinking very much or trying very hard to understand just what they were doing.

There are peculiar hazards, of course, in any attempt to sum up a change in the temper of the times. But that such a change is going on can hardly be denied. It is marked by a loss of complacent reliance on conventional ideas and a corresponding decrease in the psychological security felt by conventional people. The hierarchies have not yet toppled, but they are wavering upon unstable foundations. In political thought, for example, Thomas Jefferson is not quoted half so much as Lord Acton; that is, Jefferson is quoted with far less conviction than Acton is quoted, which means that political commentators take their fears of corruption and tyranny more seriously than they take Jefferson's optimistic idealism. Threats have more psychological power than hopes, these days.

The promise of scientific method, as such, has practically exhausted itself, in the popular mind. The scientists who were most read by the general public during the nineteen-forties were not the men who continued the tradition of the Enlightenment—the doctrine that experiment and reason will surely lead mankind out of the dark ages of bigotry and ignorance. Best-sellers among recent "scientific" books are those which are devoted to the limitations and inadequacies of scientific method, books like Lecomte du Noüy's *Human Destiny*. The old generation of militant atheists has died out, and, except for a few extreme and primitive-minded Fundamentalist sects in religion, there is no group offering a simple and dogmatic explanation of the problems of life.

A kind of tired sophistication has overtaken belief and unbelief alike, reducing the apostolic convictions of both religion and science to little more than languid memories. What Ortega wrote of Europe, some twenty years ago, has now become virtually self-evident in all parts of the world where the elements of Western culture have been prevailing influences. He said:

> Europe has been left without a moral code. It is not that the mass-man has thrown over an antiquated one in exchange for a new one, but that at the center of his scheme of life there is precisely the aspiration to live without conforming to any moral code. Do not believe a word you hear from the young when they talk about the "new morality." I absolutely deny that there exists today in any corner of the Continent a group inspired by a new *ethos* which shows signs of being a moral code. When people talk of the "new morality" they are merely committing a new immorality and looking for a way of introducing contraband goods. (I do not suppose that there are more than two dozen men scattered about the world who can recognize the springing up of what one day may be a new moral code. For that very reason, such men are the least representative of this actual time.) Hence it would be a piece of ingenuousness to accuse the man of today of his lack of moral code. The accusation would leave him cold, or rather, would flatter him. Immoralism has become a commonplace, and anybody and everybody boasts of practicing it.

Something, however, has been added to popular attitudes in the time since this was written, in 1930. Fear has been added, the deep and guilt-laden apprehension that we cannot get along without a moral

code. Another and more terrible world war has written its verdict across the horizon of our future, forcing nervous and compulsive, although at times reluctant, attention to the various stern "I told you so's" of orthodox religion. Twenty years ago, nearly everyone with any learning or acquaintance with the popular interpretation of history sneered at the Middle Ages and praised the Renaissance.

Today, it is becoming customary to sneer at the Renaissance and to write longingly of the "order" of the Middle Ages. In the Middle Ages, we say, a man knew about what would happen to him, but in *these* times, nobody knows. In these times, men of means are carrying their fractured psyches to psychiatrists for comfort and reconstruction, but a lot more men are going to see priests. They seek, not religious philosophy, but refuge from doubts—doubts of the benevolence of the world around them, most of all doubts of themselves.

It seems important to recognize, however, that it is only the psychological security of the older generation—the people who were cocksure, conceited about their civilization, their science, their religion, twenty years ago—which has been invaded and shaken. The boys and girls in high school and college, today, had no psychological environment of settled assumptions to grow up in—no sense of security to be destroyed. They grew up and are maturing in a world that is basically distrustful of itself—in which anybody's guess, instead of unquestioned orthodoxies, may quite possibly be right. If you tell them to join a church, they think of the impotence of organized religion to stop either the first or the second or the third world war. If you say "science," they think of the atom bomb. They are not very much impressed by any "system," for where is the system which still has enough prestige to keep itself looking important, today?

The youth of this age could be called the "plastic" generation, insofar as their minds have not been shaped by any one unifying system of ideas. Instead, they have received from their elders only the fragments of systems in process of breaking up into small and contradictory pieces. Parents and teachers are in the position of having to say to the young, "It may not be much that we have to teach you, but it's all we've got!"

Fortunately, there is another side to the picture. The young men and women of our time have also an extraordinary opportunity for independence of mind, simply because of the lack of certainty among the members of the older generation. The dissolution of dogmas means insecurity only for those who have relied upon dogmas; for others, it means freedom from prejudice and preconception. It means that questions will be asked about things which were once taken for granted, that supposed impossibilities may become possible again. It means, too, that if the voice of the human heart sometimes speaks to the mind, its counsels may not be denied by the blindness of science or the conventions of religious interpretation.

It has been centuries since young people have discussed directly, without prejudice or cynicism, the question of the human soul, its possible existence, its nature, powers, and conceivable destiny. The problem of whether or not there is a moral law which affects human life in all its aspects has not been seriously taken up in popular thought since Emerson's time. For religionists, the idea of moral law has been so confused by the doctrine of miracles and the arbitrary will of God, that the iconoclastic denials of atheists were almost a heaven-sent challenge to the twisted logic of the theologians. Scientists could have no official opinions at all on the subject of morals, the idea of a moral law being for them a creation of undisciplined fancy.

But today the scientists have been overtaken by humility. They are not eager to pound home the last rivet in a closed system of materialistic assumption. Many of them would rather have an inconsistent system with a few holes in its logic where, perhaps, a friendly angel or two can enter, if it should turn out that there is a place in this world for angels. Hope, they say to themselves, is more important than consistency. And their spokesmen, like Dr. du Noüy, are saying; "All right, God; you always said that this was your world—that you made it. We or somebody has made a mess of the world, and you'd better take over, now, if you really meant what you said."

So, from the viewpoint of a newcomer to the scene, the old fight between science and religion is over, and each side has both lost and won. Most of the scientific arguments against religious dogma are as sound, today, as when first proposed, but they are seldom repeated any more. And the revival of religion grows out of no new inspiration, but only out of fear of

the unknown and a sense of the inadequacy of the scientific explanation of things.

A situation of this sort affords extraordinary opportunities, educationally speaking. The generation now moving into adult responsibility—according to our theory, at least—is entirely lacking in the inheritance of fixed tradition. It may be a confused generation, but it is also open-minded. Many of this generation have been through three or four years of war. Their education, insofar as they had any, was strictly functional with respect to the war effort. Nobody passed along any "cultural tradition" to them. They are people without a strong sense of history, without a strong sense of much of anything except the compulsions and needs of their present lives. A lot of the things that seemed important to their parents will not seem important to them. They have fewer reflexes of acceptance and rejection. Having been in the army, they have a healthy distrust of the wisdom of Authority. Having been through a war, activated largely by slogans, they are not likely to be deeply interested in the "slogan" aspects of attempts at peace-making. And they are the people—they and their children—who are going to make tomorrow's world.

A situation like this one and we are deliberately and admittedly concentrating on the bright side of the picture—makes you wish that one Emerson, one Thoreau, and one Bronson Alcott could be planted in every hamlet, town and city in the United States. Perhaps we should add one Socrates and one Thomas Paine to these three, just to be sure that something besides the formation of excellent discussion groups would take place. Set five men like these down in any community, anywhere, and *something* good would be bound to happen. But why? What did these men have that American communities are lacking in, today? Why is there a bit of inspiration in just the idea of being able to walk down the street and have a talk with Socrates, or to go over to the Unitarian Church to hear Emerson explain why he can't even be a Unitarian any more?

The answer is that all these men had fighting convictions about the nature of man—convictions that, for them, were more important than anything else in the world. It is men like that who give civilization its savor, who make it into something worth saving. When Socrates tells the Athenian jury that they can go ahead and order him to die; that he will continue to think his own thoughts and speak his mind—Socrates thrills us with a sense of human greatness. When he explains to his friends, a few minutes before he is to drink the hemlock, that death is a small matter, that it is the integrity of a man's spirit that really counts, and that that spirit cannot die—we believe, while we are reading him, anyhow, that the soul of man is immortal, and that we are souls like Socrates.

When Paine declares, "An army of principles will penetrate where an army of soldiers cannot; it will succeed where diplomatic management would fail: it is neither the Rhine, the Channel, nor the Ocean that can arrest its progress: it will march on the horizon of the world, and it will conquer"—one feels that Paine is making the only sort of "revelation" that self-respecting men can accept: he is declaring for human dignity and the power of reasoning intelligence.

If only there were enough people to talk and think like that! The young men and women would follow them around, asking questions; the children would love them and seek them out. Religion would leave the churches and become a part of men's lives, and philosophy would not be a dry, academic subject to be avoided at all costs.

But people think and talk like that only when they are filled with great convictions, when their lives are so rich with the creative spirit that it crowds out all fears and pettiness and "frustrations." It is this, perhaps, that we need to recognize most of all. Most of our personal unhappiness comes from a kind of cultural and moral vacuum which results from the absence of deep thinking and great convictions. If we can teach the coming generation this, and only this, we shall have done our part.

Letter from GERMANY

BERLIN.—The re-education of Germany's Eastern population to the admiration of a new "Fuehrer" is well on its way. Hitler as national leader failed, and the new hero is a Russian, Stalin, the "wisest of all men." The recent world-wide campaign on the occasion of Stalin's birthday gives sharp outline to some of the aspects of the new "Fuehrer" cult.

This campaign was born from fear and is therefore extremely hollow in itself. The Russian bureaucracy fears the possibility of a new war with a mightier foe than Hitler—a war that could mean social and even physical extinction for the bureaucracy. The Stalin campaign tries to conjure into existence armies of millions of people who oppose a war against Russia and are friendly toward Stalin. But a close view of the campaign suggests only a surpassing of the late Dr. Goebbels—who was called the inventor of "voluntary compulsion."

"Stalin" does not mean "peace"—it means fear of war with results unfavorable—perhaps deadly—for the Polit-bureau. Less obvious is the answer to the question: Why, in our time, are certain countries producing distinct "Fuehrer" cults? Living in Germany, one may think that the malaise of our period of history is deepened by the fact that the more impersonal the governing power becomes, the more do personalities who represent ingenious mediocrity reach controlling positions. The ability of such persons is extremely exaggerated; it stands in inverse ratio to their organized publicity. It seems evident that the epoch of true and free individuality has ended, and that a new epoch of higher individuality can be brought about only by reducing the "impersonal powers" of modern political authority to certain and distinct relations between human beings. With the reduction of "powers" to men, the necessity of idolizing mediocrity will disappear. Thus, we have first to make known those powers, to describe them, and then to reduce them.

Although our world is split in two, the Stalin cult cannot be the result of one side only; it is produced by both sides, by the East and the West. When we criticize that cult, we have to criticize similar attitudes in every country. The comprehensiveness of our view has to include the social injustice which produces faith in a Stalin as a social remedy—a faith which may be simple enough to be manipulated and abused by Stalin himself, but still has its origin in unsatisfactory conditions. Thus criticism of Stalin is also criticism of the conditions of our world which have elevated him to power.

When the Berlin author, Alexander Abusch—a type par excellence of the modern intellectuals of Eastern Germany—said in a speech to honor Stalin's birthday: "It is a triumph for mankind that there is a Stalin!" we have to answer: "Yes, it is a triumph of our time, but a triumph of stupidity over reason." And we have then to recognize the factors which may lead to the suspension of this contradictory reality, and to the revival and breakthrough of reason.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
PLAN FOR A BOOK

MR. C. E. M. JOAD, in a recent *New Statesman and Nation*, tells what he would put into a book supposed to contain "what every contemporary young man ought to know." The result is a useful article, although the use to be made of it, here, will probably be somewhat different from what Mr. Joad would hope of such a book, were he to write it.

His article begins with the following outline:

> You want to provide a map of the modern world, and by "world" I don't mean simply the collection of States whose political and economic relations dominate contemporary thought, but the stars and the atom, life and mind and matter and art and God, if God exists—in fact, the whole bag of cosmic tricks. (For it is, I think, an accident of our times that men's attention should be concentrated so largely on their relations to their fellow men and to the State. Man is a person, as well as a citizen, his body is in nature and related to nature, and he possesses, many have held, a soul which relates him to the world which is above nature.)

Mr. Joad suggests his own opinions quite candidly. Man is a being who (quite likely) "has" a soul which is "supernatural." Then, in the course of his article, he describes the major forces which, in the past, have been regarded as changing or abolishing this view of man, and he finally concludes that the Christian conception of the soul has survived these powerful influences, that the God-idea has no need of being abandoned. He ends his article: "We have no longer the old assurance as to the design of the universe and the intentions of its Creator, but we still find it difficult to get on without postulating some design and some kind of Creator." For Mr. Joad, the cultural forces which attacked Christianity during recent centuries did not make the grade.

What are these forces?

> Broadly they are four: a materialist determinism, deriving from an extension to the universe as a whole of explanations which have been used with such conspicuous success in special departments; Marxism, deriving from a reflection upon the forces and factors that operate in the development of human societies; the theory of evolution based upon researches into the past of life in general and of human life in particular, and Freudianism founded upon an examination of the individual psyche.

This paragraph exemplifies Mr. Joad's special talent for clarifying generalization. So far as the world of modern science, modern sociology, modern politics and modern psychology is concerned, these *are* the prevailing forces with which "every young man" must contend, whether consciously or not. And education ought, as Mr. Joad suggests, to help the young man to contend with them as consciously as he can. To contend with them, of course, is not to refuse to learn from them. These forces have secularized modern society. The solution is not to go along and adopt *their* first principles, but to fit what they have to teach us in with our religious convictions. Reasoning thus, Mr. Joad arrives at the view that, despite modern evolutionary theory,

> . . . God may still work in His mysterious way by causing new species to arise. The fact that man is not a brand new creation but is probably a mutation in the germ plasm of some pre-existing species does not invalidate the creative principle; it only throws light on the machinery of its operation.

He finds himself able to get along with even Marxism, on the assumption that the Marxist analysis deals with "great movements of history," while a man's "relation to God" can be quite independent of the forces which determine the economic and political forms of society. Freud is credited with the discovery, in clinical terms, of Conscience, for according to the great founder of psychoanalysis, conscience "is implanted in all mankind." We may not like its accusations, but they are nonetheless inescapable. And this, again, Mr. Joad says, "is precisely what the Christian religion has always maintained."

Nor can he find anything in the general scheme of scientific materialism to contradict the Christian idea of creation. Meanwhile, both astronomy and physics prophesy that the world

will some day come to an end. Always alert for important parallels, Mr. Joad again remarks: "But the Christian view has always maintained that."

What Mr. Joad is really maintaining, throughout this article, is the simple contention that neither scientific determinism nor biological evolution nor Marxism nor psychoanalysis nor all of these together is an adequate substitute for basic moral philosophy. He is saying that the specialists in physics, social criticism, biology and abnormal psychology have not taught us how to be wise and happy human beings. This is wisdom, but it is wisdom whether or not Mr. Joad's own choice of religion happens to be wisdom, too.

What he does not tell us—and what every contemporary young man ought to consider, along with Mr. Joad's analysis—is that no religious outlook which teaches a deep respect for the innate dignity of man has ever had serious trouble from the scientific spirit. When scientists turn against and seek secular substitutes for religion, there is usually a good reason for their antagonism. Galileo's experience with the Inquisition might help to explain why so many physicists have been agnostics. The facts supporting the claim of Marx that historical religion is the opium of the people are not secret—every history book worth reading is full of them. And the antics of William Jennings Bryan at the Scopes trial in Tennessee—not to mention earlier Christian diatribes against the advocates of evolution—were enough to make intelligent people prefer a nice, well-behaved ape for an ancestor, to humans who are anything like sectarian believers in the letter of Genesis. The fact is that, until the challenge of the influences of which Mr. Joad speaks, Christianity was content to insist upon anti-rational dogmas which had the effect of *driving* nearly everyone of independent mind into the ranks of atheists and unbelievers. The physicists with their doctrine of cause and effect attacked the doctrine of miracles. The evolutionists with their theory of gradual transformations and development made the creation-from-nothing idea ridiculous. The Marxists exposed the greedy alliance between organized religion and economic power and the Freudians forced recognition of the hypocrisy behind conventional ideas of "respectability." (A further contribution of psychoanalysis has been its exposure of the degrading effects of the idea of Original Sin and the whole catalog of guilt complexes which haunt those who have accepted mechanical ideas of right and wrong from inherited religious tradition.)

Now that popular religion has become somewhat civilized as a result of these influences, it is certainly less objectionable (which is something different from being "more acceptable"), although, dogmatically speaking, it is also in a seriously weakened condition. Metaphysically, it was always weak, because most of its strength lay in dogma, and what Mr. Joad claims to have survived the ordeal of modern science successfully is little more than the nebulous feeling that materialism is not enough. Without its historic dogmas, Christianity has very little to say about the nature of things, except in its ethical counsels, and these make no notable addition to the ethics of other great religions.

Mr. Joad seems relatively untouched by the spirit of science when he phrases the claim to the possibility of soul by calling it a "possession," and he denies by implication the possibility of *rational* religion when he says that the soul may relate man to a world that is "above nature." Why should "nature" exclude the reality of soul? Supernatural religion is a lazy man's religion—religion which can be believed without genuine understanding.

The one gift of importance of the scientific revolution to the culture of the Western world is the idea of natural law and natural man, and this is the gift that Mr. Joad seems to reject, so far as the crucial question of the human soul is concerned.

In contrast to Mr. Joad's proposals, the recent formulation by Oliver Reiser of a "Pledge" for scientific humanists throughout the world has at least the promise of a genuine synthesis between

science and religion. As a starting-point for the reclamation of ethics from *both* dogmatic religion and scientific materialism, this credo presents ideas that "every young man" should have opportunity to reflect upon. We reproduce it from Prof. Reiser's pamphlet, *Scientific Humanism as Creative Morality* (published by Haldeman-Julius, Girard, Kans.):

> I. As scientific humanists we accept the doctrines of Pantheism and the worship of the *Unknown God* of Bruno, Spinoza, and Einstein as the proper philosophy of a scientist who recognizes human intelligence and scientific methods as the only tools of knowledge and progress.
>
> II. We renounce allegiance to all authoritarian religions and totalitarian political systems, whether these be Fascism, Communism, Judaism, Protestantism, Catholicism, Mohammedanism, Hinduism, or other absolutistic systems of thought and practice.
>
> III. We pledge ourselves to the service of truth, free from all particularisms, in the conscious control of social change toward new and higher forms of human evolution.
>
> IV. We accept national sovereignty and loyalty to existing political states as necessary but passing phases of the transition to a coming World Government. When world federation is achieved, patriotism as a national sentiment will be subordinated to the obligations of world citizenship. In the meantime we look upon World Philosophy—the continuing search for synthesis—as the only "ideology" men need for social cooperation and advancement.
>
> V. We believe that the present moment sees us living in a world ripe for the greatest forward movement in all human history. There is no standing still. Either we move forward and upward into the life more abundant or we move downward to disintegration, deathward into chaos and annihilation. Granted that there is more suffering, anxiety, loneliness, hunger, and privation than ever before, it is also true that there has never been, over an angry and scarred horizon, a vision of such dynamic and universal meaning for all mankind.

Here is a credo with a living, affirmative spirit. While it has more principles than form, more bravery than belief, experience has shown that principles, when applied, create their own appropriate forms, and that bravery keeps beliefs from becoming weapons in the hands of the astutely self-interested.

COMMENTARY
THE PURPLE RUG

TWENTY years ago, when Reginald Reynolds, an English advocate of Indian independence, returned home from India and a stay with Gandhi, he found that the darkly suspicious British government had put two Scotland Yard detectives on his trail. Today, Gandhi's most famous disciple, Jawaharlal Nehru, can go visiting anywhere in the world, and, as Milton Mayer puts it, he will get a purple rug to walk on. If he goes to Chicago, people ride to see him in limousines. If he should go to London, Scotland Yard will have men around, not to watch him, but to watch over him.

In all likelihood, Nehru was closer to Gandhi than Reynolds was, and if intimacy with Gandhi makes a man dangerous, he is much more to be feared. Nehru was actively allied with all those who opposed with inexorable determination any imperialist dominion over India. And Nehru is still the same person, isn't he? Further, he is associated in the government of India with men like Rajendra Prasad and Rajagopalachari, who were among Gandhi's chief lieutenants.

In 1950, Mr. Nehru stands for precisely the same things that he stood for in 1930—then, as now, he was a great Indian patriot, a man of extraordinary integrity—but *something* has changed. The relationship of Mr. Nehru to something called "power" has probably changed the most.

If Nehru had come to America twenty years ago, he might not have been watched by Secret Service men, but, again as Milton Mayer puts it:

> At the bus depot the delegation of three black Indians would be waiting for him, and they'd take the street car to the wrong side of town for a curry in the one-room apartment of a fourth Indian, with a fifth and maybe a sixth, completing the mass meeting.

Mr. Mayer may be a little sour about this, but what he says is substantially true. And Mr. Mayer, of course, is naturally worried by the fact that, although Mr. Nehru says India will resist aggression "non—violently," if it comes, a quarter of the Indian national budget is nevertheless allocated for armaments.

There may not be much of a moral to this comparison. It has to do mostly with the sort of recognition a purple rug stands for, and how proud we can be of showering honors on Mr. Nehru in 1949, without being as much ashamed of the treatment received by Indian patriots who came to this country before India was free.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

EXPERIENCE seems to indicate that every man who writes on philosophical, psychological, or social subjects has at some time or other thought about an ideal school for children. This is not because all writers love children—which they may or may not do—but rather because anyone who commits serious thought to paper almost inevitably develops certain convictions as to what would constitute basic improvements in education.

What would be the minimum requirements of an ideal school, or, more directly, what conditions of human life would really satisfy you, me, or anyone? If we could visualize clearly the conditions we would regard as fully satisfactory—satisfactory as a background for our own creative activities—we would then be able to proceed, logical step by step, to a definition of the school we should most like to create. To reduce the equation to its greatest simplicity, let us say that the man who has an ideal of what constitutes "social happiness" must also have favored ways of getting to it, which means he has a philosophy of education. What resources are needed for building "happiness"? Helping men to discover them is the work of education.

Let us begin with a consideration of the universal human need to attain the happiness of harmony with the primary environment. For, first of all, we have to be able to be happy "in Nature." "Nature" is part of all human lives. You must know how to identify yourself, in some manner, with spring and winter, storms and boiling sun, snow and salt spray, high altitudes and deserts. If you cannot "like" these experiences, you will be limited in your horizons by various things you cannot appreciate and consequently wish to avoid. And "Nature" cannot be really appreciated, any more than can a person, except by an acceptance of its *whole* being. The "whole" has some sort of ensouling essence or synthesizing quality which finally becomes the true object of appreciation or love. The greatest naturalists, for instance, have never been narrow specialists. So, when "love" between humans is sufficiently important to be dignified with use of that word, we take it for granted that one's face and body, one's ideas and feelings, are all appreciated for their interrelationship to each other. Similarly with "Nature"—we cannot pick and choose between the seasons and climates, the deserts, oceans and mountains and the galaxies of stars in such a way as to leave any of these out of the circumference of our appreciation—else we do not fully enjoy any part of the whole.

There is a kind of security needed, by every human being, over and beyond the theoretically ideal "inner security" of full self-reliance. This is because no one can be "self-reliant" in a vacuum: self-reliance also means the facility to understand, adapt to, and make useful and creative the basic conditions of one's environment. The only sense of security that can be depended upon is, it seems to us, one which is rooted in the person's capacity to derive both physical and psychic sustenance from the natural world. Finding roots for security in any social structure is a problematical business, since social structures are constantly altering or crumbling. But the productive potential of the earth and the beauties of all that is *not* man-made remain forever the same; therefore, the man who can make the most of these is the man with a resource which no one can take away.

It makes no fundamental difference whether a family lives in the city or on farm or mountain land—education for this kind of appreciation is always needed and always basic. But, how do we manage to teach full appreciation of the natural world to children? Biology and botany are not sufficient. For educational purposes, it is all too easy for departmentalized study of these subjects to lead to a matter of "missing the forest for the trees," and we don't really know or feel trees *until* we have seen them in the forest. The old saying seems to us to have a literal as well as a figurative relevance. Further, it seems to us that the child

must have good and full opportunity to spend time away from cities and the proximity of groups of people, and that endeavors to make this possible constitute a basic prerequisite to educational success. But even this, by itself, is inadequate, if we are seeking the best educational equation. Not only the *child,* but also the *teacher,* needs this environment, and, more important, the child and his "teachers" need to spend time together in the out-of-doors. Probably, too, both the teachers and the pupils need to spend some time alone *away* from even their teachers or pupils. In any case, we can recommend, without qualification, the practice of every teacher emulating John Muir for at least a little time out of every week, to the extent that environment allows.

Our present society allows some partial approximations of this practice, but, once again, they are not sufficient. Some Boy Scout troops, whose Scout Masters are particularly devoted to the values of out-of-doors inspiration, may increase the number of their excursions beyond the average. But these Scout Masters are only "part-time teachers" of the young, if they consider themselves as teachers at all. Most of the teaching opportunity comes from parents and grammar and high school instructors. The child who lives on a farm may also have an "out-of-doors relationship" with thoughtful parents, though this relationship may not carry through into the realm of specific subjects studied in school.

We would say, then, that no school can manage to fulfill ideal requirements unless the learners and the principal teachers have some sort of integral relationship in out-of-door life. The barest beginning in such a direction is made by some of the smaller agricultural training schools, but it is only in such unusual circumstances as those made available at Sevagram that we see this opportunity fully developed, and organic to a cooperative living scheme in the child's regular environment. Sevagram, too, has always made it possible for parents who grasped the intent of educational effort to participate in the learning and teaching process. The same centers where crafts ant various subjects were taught the children became also dispensers of adult education in both departments.

FRONTIERS

Freedom for Psychology

THE mid-century year of 1950 is an excellent time to examine the assumptions about man made by scientific psychology, as contrasted with the views held by nonspecialized human beings. Probably in no other field of research have so many beside-the-point "data" been collected and learned conclusions imposed upon an unsuspecting public—a public quickly awed into submission by the prestige of a scientific vocabulary. Fortunately, for the purpose of this comparison, we have the analysis of a modern psychologist to draw upon, the work of a man whose long familiarity with the winds of contemporary psychological doctrine gives what he says considerable authority.

In the December 1949 issue of the *Journal of Parapsychology*, Dr. J. B. Rhine writes an editorial on "The Relationship between Parapsychology and General Psychology." While he is tactful and conciliatory in speaking of general psychology, there is no concealing the fact that he regards its future progress as wholly dependent upon a revolutionary reform in the present assumptions of this branch of science. And unless one is prepared to discount the entire program of psychical research at Duke University and a number of other psychological laboratories as either fraudulent or scientifically unsound, it is practically impossible to disagree with him.

This is not to suggest that the fate of mankind rests with a program of university research in psychology. There were wise men with knowledge of the reach and potency of the human mind before the advent of what we call modern science, and there will doubtless be others long after many of the present concepts of science have been forgotten. But in our century and time, the integrity and impartiality of scientific research have an obvious importance to our culture. Dr. Rhine, it seems to us, happens to be fighting for these qualities in the field of psychology, and this may be of greater ultimate significance than the "proofs" of ESP which serve as his weapons in the struggle with academic orthodoxy.

What, first of all, is Parapsychology? It is, says Dr. Rhine, *"the study of those phenomena attributable to personal agency which in some degree transcend physical explanation."*

It includes such happenings as prophetic and clairvoyant dreams, the non-physical communication of ideas and feelings from one person to another (called telepathy), the location of underground water by a divining rod, and a number of other forms of psychic activity that lack an explanation in terms of the familiar laws of nature which scientists commonly use to tell us how things happen in the physical world.

What, then, is General Psychology? As Dr. Rhine defines it—and his definition seems free of any important error—general psychology is largely an attempt to explain human behavior without reference to any of the primary causes which ordinary people think of as responsible for what they and others do. It is "psychology without a soul." While striving for a theoretical foundation consistent with the older branches of science—physics and biology—psychology has tried to ignore *persons* as originating causes. Things happen *to* and *in* persons, according to general psychology, but the persons do not *do* anything. As Dr. Rhine puts it:

> What is the difference between a person and a non-personal thing? A few of the great psychological leaders such as McDougall and Steam, kept this question alive during their lifetime; but in the main, psychology has never done anything about it. Psychologists therefore have never known just where to place the person or personality in the scheme of nature. Many, like the behaviorists, have gone so far as to rule out of court the conscious experience they could not explain, dismissing by definition the difference between a person and his nonpersonal world.

In contrast, parapsychology deals with all events which may be gathered under the single idea of non-physicality—events which "seem to defy physical explanation." It attempts, in short, to assure human beings that they are r*eal.*

To have to wait for a branch of psychology to tell us whether or not we have any real existence may seem a highly artificial situation; and that, of course, is exactly what it is; but if we accept the theoretical declarations of academic psychology at their face value, and assume that they are "scientific" and therefore "true," that is the sort of situation we find ourselves in. We need not take it seriously, if only for the reason that, not being trained in metaphysics, the psychologists themselves have never taken it seriously,

but have gone right on practicing the virtues and making choices and being kind to their families, hating Hitler and believing in democracy, the same as the rest of us who still believe we are people who have thoughts of our own. And in pleasant obliviousness to this shrieking contradiction, they have not even had the self-consciousness to say, as their intellectual ancestor, David Hume, remarked, when reflecting upon his own skeptical abolition of the self,

> "I dine, I play a game of backgammon, I converse and am merry with my friends . . . and when, after three or four hours' amusement, I return to these speculations, they appear so cold and strained, and ridiculous, that I cannot find it in my heart to enter into them any further."

Dr. Rhine's great strength is that he deals with the problems of psychology primarily as a philosopher, a man with an urgent interest in human values. Finding evidence for the view that there exists an order of causation which is independent of the mechanistic world of physical cause and effect, he exhibits this evidence, not merely as an irrational curiosity, but for its importance to the question of whether or not man is a free agent. In his words:

> One of the main consequences [of the consolidation of general psychology with parapsychology] will be that psychology can then quit fumbling with its fundamental problem of volitional freedom. Although almost the entire population of the world adheres to the concept of free will as a universal faith, psychology has hitherto had nothing to contribute on this important issue. The concept seems to be interwoven into our whole structure, but is it true? Certainly if man, together with his environment, constitutes a unitary *physical* system, there would be nothing in him that could be considered free in any real way from anything else. However, since personality is found in the psi experiments [*psi is* a term to cover any "personal factors or processes in nature which transcend accepted laws"] to have certain properties that transcend physical law, and since it shows evidence of principles having a different order of lawfulness, the subjective self can understandably operate with some measure of true freedom from the objective order in which it lives (as a clutch may be let in or out to integrate or separate two different mechanical systems). Parapsychology thus finds scientific confirmation for one of the most fundamental common-sense principles in human conduct, that of the freedom of the will.
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> Having a case made for volitional freedom, the psychologist may now take hold of the various social freedoms and political liberties in all their many ramifications. As it is, they take much of their own significance from the volitional freedom exercised by the individual person. In the light of the psi researches, man appears more like the complex person his intuition has pictured him through the ages to be, one in which the self, operating on one set of principles, enjoys some independence of operation because of the difference in its laws from those of the rest of the organism and its environment. This can be only a partial freedom, it is true, because it is limited by interaction itself, which is binding and unifying. But it is enough for the liberation of the individual from the concept of determinism which materialism has projected into our Western culture.

A passage like this one, by a scientist of standing, should evoke from many readers a sigh of relief and satisfaction. Actually, it liberates our "scientific" culture from its literally "schizophrenic" outlook—an outlook which, on the one hand, denies emphatically, on the grounds of scientific psychology, that there is any self-existent and independent individuality in man, while on the other hand it exhibits immeasurable righteous enthusiasm for Freedom and Morality. If freedom and morality are precious, there must, after all, be someone or *something* that is moral and free, and that something, as Dr. Rhine so clearly points out, is what general or academic psychology has been unwilling to admit.

With freedom established as a premise of psychology, however, there will be some hope of discipline in moral ideas, and some chance of evolving a sociology which is neither fuzzy in philosophy nor fascist in implication. A new current of inspiration is sorely needed by all the branches of psychological and social science. Possibly some of the workers in these fields will accept it from Dr. Rhine. Some psychologists, of course, may say that the introduction of "free agents" into their theories will be like the admission of a personal God. But the "god," in this case, will be man, and not some outside power—which ought to make an important difference to them.