

## A LOOK AT INDIA

SOME of the problems of the modern world, while they ought not to be left to "time," at least show promise of finding solution in the course of decades. The conflict between peoples of different racial origin, for instance, while close to the boiling point in regions of special tension, as in Africa, will probably die out as existing forces of education and mutual respect and understanding continue to gather strength. There has been real progress in the United States in race relations. While there should be no resting on "laurels," the progress is undoubted and should be recognized. The best evidence of this advance lies in the fact that people of both the Caucasian and Negro races are able to work together and meet together under various circumstances with much less self-consciousness and feeling of "difference" than was possible a few years ago. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to think that a time will come when skin-color, and other physical differentiations of race, will be irrelevant.

The race problem, however, needs only basic respect for human beings and common sense for its solution. Other problems, such as war, the less obvious but devastating consequences of industrialism as practiced in the West, and associated psychological and emotional ills, give no occasion for optimism. More than "good will" is needed to get at the subtler difficulties of the modern world—difficulties which are often regarded as part of "normal" contemporary life, so that criticism is left to a small minority of perceptive individuals who recognize in various trends of recent years the symptoms of social and moral disintegration. The fact that these trends often appear to be irreversible is enough to introduce a note of desperation to such criticism.

This is one of the reasons why we make an effort to keep track of what is happening in India. Among the new nations of the world—newly re-

made—India is practically unique. Here are some 380 million people among whom are found virtually every social ingredient of modern populations. India has a tremendous rural population—some 80 per cent of the total. India also has every kind of "leader"—political, religious, nationalist, and cultural. Approaching a great cross-roads of history—the same cross-roads before which other nations of the world stand—India shows a marked degree of self-consciousness in considering the choices which lie ahead. Most Indian leaders, for example, seem persuaded that the present is in some sense, perhaps many senses, a revolutionary epoch. Very few Americans give evidence of this awareness. Leaders in the United States seem convinced that Americans already possess the formula for the "good society." There are articulate exceptions, of course, such as William O. Douglas of the United States Supreme Court, and several others, but for the most part American spokesmen labor under the delusion that what the world needs is to be converted to the "American Way." So prevalent is this notion that one might conclude that the winning of a twentieth-century war brings great misfortune, since it seems to produce the conceit that the national philosophy of the victor is thereby vindicated.

India has won no wars. She won her freedom without a war, and the chief instrument of her liberation was a man who had no use for war and preached incessantly against violence for any reason.

There are several reasons for regarding modern India with special interest. First, India probably has greater philosophical riches in her literature and religious traditions than any other country. The man who has been nurtured with the memories of India's past greatness as a motherland of civilization, and who has absorbed some of the

maturity of Sanskrit thought, comes to the forums of modern discussion the equal of any other in intellectual preparation. Further, many of India's present-day leaders are equipped with thorough education in the scholarly and scientific heritage of Western civilization. Such Indians are in a position to unite the fruits of two great cultures and, perhaps, to find a synthesis of what is of value in each. This, at any rate, is a part of the logical possibility of recent Indian history. Finally, India has lately been favored by the presence of remarkable men, in one case—that of Gandhi—a veritable genius. This is the sort of event which has no particular explanation, except in the framework of a theory of history more pretentious than anything we have to offer. Whatever the explanation, Gandhi was an epoch-making man; just as, at the close of the eighteenth century, both France and the United States produced epoch-making men who did much to shape the pattern of the future for generations to come.

In the perspective of centuries, Gandhi may be regarded as the truly revolutionary figure of the twentieth century. Even if we admit that he lived "before his time"—that his great campaign for non-violence was too "radical" for nations bound by the tradition of righteous war—we are obliged to acknowledge at the same time that the world must some day become non-violent, if only to save itself from extinction. Perhaps a change as extraordinary as this in the motives and habits of people requires not one but many men to come "before their time." So, we take the liberty of proposing that Gandhi was such a man, and that his work prefigured a transition to be realized, one way or another, by masses of men in the future. In these terms, Gandhi was much more than an "Indian" leader or patriot. He belongs to the world.

When Gandhi was assassinated, MANAS printed an editorial which had these concluding paragraphs:

A role given to Gandhi by the Indian people, and in some measure accepted by him, was that of

their "father." The reverence felt toward him was filial in spirit. For many millions, therefore, the bereavement is intensely personal, a feeling which is undoubtedly stronger than the sense of "national" loss. As the years pass, however, it may be recognized that the gift of Gandhi to India was something more than a wise, paternal guidance; it was something greater, even, for India, than his historic demonstration of the moral strength of the philosophy of non-violence, which was rather a gift to modern civilization than to India alone.

Gandhi was a great man, first, because of his indomitable will. More than anything else, he embodied the spiritual force of an awakened and concentrated mind, fixed on his chosen objectives. . . . In Gandhi became manifest a quality of manhood which holds the secret of the only future worth striving after for modern man. That was his great gift to India—not the reverential figure of the "father," but the example of a free human being.

It seems unlikely that India will ever have another "father." This is an epoch in which India must grow to her own maturity and moral equilibrium, not by adoring her sages, but by becoming like them—like Gandhi.

More than seven years have passed since Gandhi's death. This is not the place—nor have we the capacity—to chronicle the progress made by India since that fateful time. We can only note that two men, both of them deeply affected by Gandhi, have now the center of the Indian stage—Prime Minister Nehru and Vinoba Bhave. Each has achieved fame of a different sort. Nehru has won the respect of the thinking world as a man determined to guide his nation in a foreign policy which is without partisanship, which rejects all compromising alliances and which is honestly committed to peace. Vinoba has inaugurated the *Bhoodan* or land gift movement, by means of which the land-owners of India are being persuaded to bestow portions of their land upon the landless farmers. A great moral fervor has grown up around the Bhoodan movement, which has acquired a strongly religious coloring. Nehru, it might be said, is the inheritor of the Gandhian tradition of principled politics, while Vinoba follows the line of religious influence, and has

practically abandoned any resort to the mechanisms of political institutions.

In the May 14 number of *Harijan*, the weekly paper founded by Gandhi, the present editor, Maganbhai P. Desai, discusses "Gandhi, Nehru and Vinoba." There is reason to think that the analysis presented in this article qualifies its writer as a man well able to continue *Harijan's* impartial commentary on India's current history, just as, before him, K. G. Mashrowala carried on the magazine after Gandhi's death. It is this analysis which brings the insight that India's problems, although set in an Asian locale, are the problems of the world.

Mr. Desai deals first with the question of Gandhi's "successor," showing that Gandhi, with characteristic wisdom, rejected the idea of successorship in any especially significant sense. Gandhi did say that Nehru "would possibly carry on the work of the nation in the sense and manner in which he himself was doing," and on another occasion he said that "Vinoba understood his philosophy even better than he himself did." Mr. Desai comments:

Do we not feel that when two incidents are put together Gandhiji, possibly inadvertently, divided his wealth of genius into two parts and indicated two different successors, one for each? He seems to point to Jawaharlal as successor to his political and Shri Vinoba as successor to his spiritual or philosophical genius! Or had we better say that on account of the pressure of circumstances and events in India the power that was Gandhiji polarized itself into two after his departure? Are we not able to see such distinction between Shri Vinoba and Jawaharlal?

There follows an interesting development of how these two have embodied in their careers the currents of Gandhi's influence, but whereas, in Gandhi, a dynamic if paradoxical balance was maintained, the work of Vinoba seems somewhat out of key with the work of Nehru, and vice versa. Vinoba has turned the land gift movement into a religious crusade, aimed at a stateless, decentralized society in which non-violence will be the rule. Desai reports:

Recently he [Vinoba] has started speaking in the language of a messiah. For instance, he declared at the Puri Sammelan, "I see that God is making me His instrument in the establishment of a non-violent social order," that is, an order free of the coercive power and rule of the State. It seems as if the complex which has been described by writers on psychology in English as the "Messiah complex" is fast developing in Shri Vinoba.

The editor of *Harijan* points out that Vinoba is worshipped by the Indian people after the fashion of the traditional worship of a saint. Gandhi, however, while loved and regarded as a father, worked through the Indian National Congress:

. . . as he had a liberal outlook he did not allow the establishment of a rule by elders; he took work through and from the Congress in a purely democratic way. And he always believed that the Congress was greater than he. Whenever he saw the Congress taking a course towards ideas different from his own he withdrew himself from it but was careful to help it in its work even then and give all the credit of greatness to it for whatever was achieved.

The point, here, is that Vinoba, in recognizing the evils of the modern Power State, seems to be eschewing any form of political organization to implement the social gains of his movement in institutional terms. He depends upon a "change of heart," and is now calling for an almost miraculous advance through the Bhoodan movement. At the annual Sarvodaya conference held last March, he spoke of transforming India into a "State-free" society by 1957!

The dangers of emotionalism in appeals of this sort seem obvious enough. Gandhi was a more patient man.

Yet Vinoba's aggressive attack on the State is symbolic of the tremendous danger with which Statism and the military power of the State now threaten all the world. Even if there is a kind of fanaticism in the proposal of a state-free India by 1957, it must be admitted that Vinoba may help to focus attention on the Frankenstein qualities of modern political and military organization. Oversimplification has at least this value.

Nehru receives his share of criticism from Desai, as a man unable because of his birth and upbringing to understand the grinding poverty of the Indian masses. On this we are in no position to comment, although a comfortable environment does not necessarily limit the perceptions of an unusual man. When Desai says, however, that Nehru hinders the establishment of a non-violent economic order in India because of his Western education, we are moved to observe that the slow movement of history may rather be at fault. Nehru is under certain obligations to maintain relations with the rest of the world, and this means that he is fated in some measure to think as the rest of the world thinks. He has the unhappy task of trying to synthesize as best he can the requirements of modern diplomacy with the principles of Gandhian thought. Manifestly, it cannot be done, but there is a mood which has been preserved, a quality of integrity which may actually be all that is possible. As for Nehru's "skepticism," and his dislike of the word "God" as Gandhi seemed to use it—here, perhaps, is instinctive realization that the Western agnostic, scientific tradition holds a philosophic verity which India has as much need to grasp and reinterpret as she has of renewing the values of her ancestral philosophy.

Doubtless, the work of these two men contains very little of the solution of the problems of the modern world. But possibly the *principles* of solution are present in germ in what they are doing. At least, the problems have been defined in candid terms—a step which many Westerners fear to take.

## *REVIEW*

### A PACIFIST VOICE IS HEARD

ONE thing about the Pacifists—they never stop trying. Year after year, war after war, a constant effort is made to find the right keynote for an anti-war appeal that will gain world-wide attention. A recent booklet issued by the American Friends Service Committee, *Speak Truth to Power*, is the broadest compendium of "war-resister philosophy" yet produced. This seventy-page publication has attracted the respectful attention of some of America's leading scholars and writers. The New York *Herald Tribune* for May 28, for instance, contained an open letter from the eminent psychologist, Gordon Allport, calling attention to *Speak Truth* as "the soundest psychological analysis I have seen of our present international predicament and of the spiraling futility of our foreign policy."

Dr. Allport is not the only man of distinction who furnishes an endorsement. Robert M. Hutchins, Lewis Mumford, Hans Morgenthau, Erich Fromm, and Norbert Wiener, in varying degrees, have matched Allport's further assertion that the course of action recommended in *Speak Truth* "offers what may be the only road to survival with the retention of our freedom and self-respect."

The pamphlet's breadth of approach deserves special attention. A somewhat precious title is adequately offset by the reasonable, non-doctrinaire tone which runs throughout. The twelve writers who collaborated in production of *Speak Truth* are not talking only to men of their own persuasion—nor, more importantly—do they judge that only conscientious objectors contribute the things that make for peace. The following passages may serve as introduction for readers who will wish to read for themselves:

Our main purpose is not to restate the many prophetic expositions of the pacifist position. Beginning with The Sermon on the Mount, the Christian tradition alone has produced a library of

enduring religious statements, and the same can be said for the literature of other great faiths. The urgent need is not to preach religious truth, but to show how it is possible and why it is reasonable to give practical expression to it in the great conflict that now divides the world.

In recent years, outside of theological circles, and infrequently there, there has been little able discussion of the pacifist point of view. Pacifism has been catalogued as the private witness of a small but useful minority, or as the irresponsible action of men who are so overwhelmed with the horror of war that they fail to see the greater evil which sometimes exists and that the sacrifices of war may be necessary to turn it back. Whether condemned or in a sense valued, pacifism has been considered irrelevant to the concrete problems of international relations.

This study attempts to show its relevance. It is focussed on the current international crisis. It begins with a survey of the same concrete problems with which any discussion of world affairs must deal. It is concerned with problems of security, the growth of Russian and American power, the challenge to American interests presented by Soviet Communism. It recognizes the existence of evil and the need to resist it actively. It does not see peacemaking as the attempt to reconcile evil with good. It speaks to the problem of inevitable conflict.

We believe it is time for thoughtful men to look behind the label "pacifist," to deal fairly with the ideas and beliefs which sustain those whose approach to foreign policy begins with the rejection of reliance upon military power. We speak to the great majority of Americans who still stand opposed to war, who expect no good of armies and H-bombs. Their reluctant acceptance of dominantly military policy has been based on the belief that military power provides the necessary security without which the constructive work that builds peace cannot be undertaken. They are for a military program because they feel they must be. "There is no alternative."

We have tried to present an alternative and to set forth our reasons for believing that it offers far greater hope and involves no greater risk than our present military policy. Our effort is incomplete, but we believe it is a step toward the serious examination of a non-violent approach to world problems.

As might be expected, the analysis of Russia in *Speak Truth* leads to an entirely different conclusion respecting our favorite enemy: it is *still*

the opinion of pacifists that the Russians (not that abstract "Russia" of which politicians speak, but the Russians as people, including many of its political leaders) might respond very nicely to a U.S. goodwill policy which has the ultimate aim of getting rid of our military establishments. As those of our readers who remember Dwight Macdonald's present position as a non-pacifist, stated in *The Root Is Man*, will know, the question of withdrawing troops from West Berlin is the sort of question which *ought* to give pacifists gray hairs; part of Macdonald's withdrawal from unqualified pacifism may even have originated in his annoyance at oversimplifiers who contented themselves with shouting a principle and worried not at all about the poor West Berliners, many of whom were wanted by the Russian police as "enemies of communism" and who would have fallen into their hands if our military forces had departed. *Speak Truth* does not take up this question directly, and one might wish it did, but here are a few relevant passages which follow a quotation from a New York *Times* columnist, James Barton, who said that "for perhaps the first time in history reflective men have had to grapple with the pacifist's questions." The writers of *Speak Truth* then say:

There is no escaping the necessity to be willing to act first ourselves if we are to have solid ground for getting others to act with us. It will be said that for a nation to consider disarming alone in an armed world is madness; but the fact that obviously stares men in the face today is that *an armed world in this age is itself madness*. To refuse any longer to labor under the delusion that it is anything else is the beginning of common sense, as it is the counsel of divine wisdom. Moreover, it is quite possible that the Soviet Union, confronted with such a change in American behavior, might startle us with a new response. At the very least, the example of a people living without the burden of militarism and offering friendship to all, would call forth the impulses to freedom that exist in all men. What might have happened, for example, if the remarkable East German uprising of June 1953 had had as its inspiration a United States free from involvement in the effort to rearm Western Germany and in the tragic perpetuation of an impossible division? As it was, the United States' position was a

discouraging one. We welcomed the revolt, but could only stand idly by, unwilling to risk unleashing war, and yet unable to offer any other kind of encouragement. Moreover, we were so preoccupied with power concepts that one of the most striking aspects of the uprising was largely overlooked: *the fact that a group of Russian soldiers refused to fire on the unarmed and non-violent demonstrators*. Not only were the demonstrators spared violence, but a number of their grievances were recognized and corrected. How can this outcome be squared with the familiar argument that only naked power is respected by the Russians?

Nor must it be forgotten how this whole non-violent era, about which we are speculating, would be brought about. Under our democratic philosophy, as we have already pointed out, it would not be created by fiat, but as the result of insistence on reconciling measures by a gradually growing pacifist minority. The writers are convinced that this process in itself would so change the climate of world opinion that no power on earth could oppose it effectively. The influence of growing programs of economic assistance, freed from the compulsions of strategy and carried forward by dedicated men and women through the operating agencies of the United Nations would lift the heart of the world. Increasing support of the United Nations itself, as a world forum for peaceful settlement, universal in membership and inviolate of selfish national pressure, would create a new basis for an emerging world community of law. The earnest desire to negotiate differences, backed by a gradually increasing willingness to abandon our military posture, could open the way for the relaxation of tension and the achievement of disarmament. Nations which are at present hostile and threatening, would be relieved of any reason for being hostile and threatening, and would face a world opinion so warmly approving of the United States that continued hostility would be difficult to maintain.

We must, however, face the possibility that hatred has gone so far, and injustice penetrated so deeply, that even a revolutionary policy of peace could not prevent international aggression. A nation which had disarmed would not in that event abjectly surrender and let an invader run over and enslave it as is often alleged. On the contrary, it would have open to it possibilities of non-violent resistance that offer more prospects of a creative and genuinely victorious outcome than is the case with violent resistance under modern conditions. It is the nation whose reliance is upon arms that now faces the bleakest prospect in the event of international

aggression; for victory in any ensuing holocaust is clearly impossible for anyone. Both "victor" and "vanquished" would dwell together in a brutalized and devastated world in which the values of democratic civilization would have been largely swept away.

Little about the lengthy quotation here presented is new. We simply voice the opinion that the pamphlet, *Speak Truth to Power*, in its entirety, carries a great deal of persuasion. It may be hoped that the recommendations of the eminent men mentioned in the opening paragraph will gain the attention deserved.

Those who wish to purchase and read this well-printed contribution from the Friends—so often well-named—may purchase copies from any branch of the American Friends Service Committee. The New York office is located at 144 East 20th Street (3). The price is 25 cents.

## *COMMENTARY* MORAL DYNAMICS?

VARIOUS articles appearing in the Indian press on the occasion of the annual Sarvodaya Conference help to illustrate the effort of Indian thinkers and reformers to plan the reconstruction of India along original lines. The Sarvodaya movement, in which Vinoba Bhave is a leading figure, has for its ideal "a just social order where there will be no exploitation, no poverty, no economic inequality." It involves, for the individual, "(1) non-dependence upon others and therefore (2) productive labor as immutable rules of life." For the nation—or rather, for the people, since a society pervaded by the spirit of Sarvodaya would hardly be a nation in the modern sense it means decentralization of authority, the abandonment of the military arm of government, and the reduction of all public administrative functions to an absolute minimum.

In an address at Monghyr, Prof. Ramdhari Sinha Dinkar explained the movement thus:

Sarvodaya is part and parcel of a big world thought which is not satisfied with the material progress of mankind and is looking for new ways to harmonize material prosperity with the spiritual well-being of man. It is a continuation of the ideas of Ruskin, Tolstoy and Thoreau and it draws inspiration from such contemporary thinkers as Huxley and Russell, who are now driven to the irresistible conclusion that means are of greater importance than ends. When we talk of Sarvodaya, we are talking of a great world movement which is trying to find out an alternative to communism, an alternative to a regimented sort of society where man is not inspired to achieve noble ends, but is rather forced to accept them. Much of the post-war thinking is characterized by this anxiety and most of the thinkers of the world have appreciated the Gandhian technique of non-violence only during this decade. But while the new thought is in only a nebulous state outside India, we in India can claim the credit of having put that idea to actual test and the world is at present looking at our experiment with the same interest with which it once looked at the experiment of Russia.

Another Indian writer, U. A. Asrani, contributes to the *Hitavada* of Nagpur (April 9) an analysis of the psychology of Sarvodaya. He writes:

According to the Sarvodaya philosophy, the colossal disparities of incomes and salaries have not to be obliterated either by the violent methods of communism or by the slow and meagerly effective methods of socialistic legislation. If we can only create a social atmosphere where rich people are ashamed of rolling in wealth, where they realize that ultimately they have to share their possessions with the have-nots, then moral persuasion will easily play the trick. . . . The Sarvodaya believes in man—including a capitalist—having a conscience, and hence in moral force, instead of class hatred, being a potent factor for effecting an economic revolution. . . .

Most people regard all such plans as mere idealistic nonsense. But for Gandhi's non-violent movement and Vinoba's Bhoodan, nobody would have listened to them. Modern civilization has such a glamor about it, particularly for us who have not yet reached its pitch, that people are not prepared to forsake it for something visionary.

This writer now turns to intellectual and cultural leaders of the West to show that such men as John Dewey, Sigmund Freud, Arthur Morgan, Arnold Toynbee, and many others have offered criticisms of Western culture similar to those found in Sarvodaya.

The extraordinary thing about this movement of modern India is the unabashed proposal of outright idealism as the basis for human society. This is a thing which the tired cynicism of the West could hardly permit. Even Western idealists may quail a little at the fulsome expectations of the Sarvodaya enthusiasts, while being obliged to admit that the conceptions of this movement go to the core of the discontents of modern civilization. It is perhaps the traditional religious vocabulary—so natural to the Indian, yet essentially distrusted by most Westerners—which complicates the matter.

For the West, study of what is going on in India may bring a new appreciation of the power of outspoken idealism; it may open the way to a



fresh consideration of the nature of man and the quality of the forces which are able to move him to action. It is certainly true that the alternative to communism and Statism which the Sarvodayists see in their dream of a decentralized, non-violent society has not the slightest possibility of being realized unless hitherto unrecognized moral resources can be tapped in human beings.

Conceivably, these developments in India may be regarded as providing the philosophic minds of the world with evidence of the fact of moral dynamics. Whether Vinoba is a part of "God's plan" or not is hardly important, so long as the profound energies he seems to be capable of bringing to the surface are admitted to be real.

## CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

I QUITE appreciate the dilemma, Glaucon—you wish your children to be creative in their thinking as they grow older, but also desire that they be obedient to your commands now, during youth.

In order to understand the meaning of such a word as "creative," however, we must question your assumption that children should be obedient in all ways at *any* time. And in the course of our discussion, Glaucon, I think you will realize that this dilemma is akin to the one that exists between the Five Hundred and myself; they feel it necessary for the youth to be obedient in regard to belief in the gods, while I, on the other hand, feel that obedience as to religious matters is something which should never be exacted, even from the very young.

Now, stop and consider your own attitude for a moment. Is it not true that you wish your children to *believe you*, as well as accept your decisions in things that pertain to their safety and welfare? But I say to you, Glaucon, if you wish to command the belief of your children in the verity of whatever you impart to them, you thereby begin to forfeit their chances for independent thought when they grow into men and women. I see no alternative to this, since it is the mind that makes one free of belief—at least, free of other people's beliefs—and it is freedom which makes it possible to designate a man or woman as "creative." No one is creative in the sense that he discovers entirely new ideas for the first time. He *is* creative to the degree that he exercises choice and judgment in selecting and utilizing whatever ideas come before him, by way of parents or tradition.

Just as it is impossible, Glaucon, to go both north and south, or east and west, at the same time, so is it impossible for you to encourage independence of thought—or "creativity"—and at the same time require the allegiance of children

to your own opinions. It is true that a certain natural right exists to exact obedience in respect to duties performed in the household, and in regard to other matters which come under your proper jurisdiction as the household's head. Your child lives because you provide him with food and shelter, and he is thus bound to respect your "commands"—in everything that does not pertain to the realm of ideas.

This sort of obedience is a part of the natural order of things, as indicated by the necessity for those who act as sailors on a vessel to obey the orders of their captain. But most parents confuse what might be called "orders of authority"; they are even more interested, alas, in commanding allegiance to their *ideas* than in obtaining strict obedience in the realms where such obedience is good and proper.

The very ones who indulge their young with all manner of useless expenditures, fulfilling every whim dictated by the urge for pleasure during youth, are those who expect to extract, in return, a guarantee that their own beliefs concerning the Gods will be accepted. This is a grievous mistake, for it eventually leads to a quite proper and necessary rebellion. The parent is exasperated and hurt when the child he has raised indicates that he must think in his own way. At the same time, those who have been indulged too much during youth often rebel in a confused manner, hurting both themselves and their parents much more than is necessary. So I say, Glaucon, please remember that even a child is a being of mind, and the use of the mind must be honored at all times. True, the mind of a child is not like the mind of an adult; it is as if, in babyhood, there is only a small expression of that which finally makes a human being a thinking individual. But the *quality* of mind is not altogether different, even in infancy. There, too, it should command respect.

This, Glaucon, brings opportunity for considering the seriousness of the issue as yet unresolved between myself and the Council. While I am willing to accept their right to dictate

my actions—even, if necessary, to the drinking of the hemlock—I am and have ever been unwilling to accept the view that my *thoughts* should also be at their command. Similarly, a child, while unable to stand firmly for its rights, will inevitably feel every unfitting encroachment upon those rights. He is, because he is a *human* child, aware of the fact that a special dignity, integrity and independence should be accorded his choice of ideas and beliefs.

It does no good for elders to command him to accept a certain allegiance, and, in fact, it works against the interests of those who wish to pass on the best of tradition they have garnered from their own forefathers. For it is inevitable that, just as the horse forced to water is not likely to drink, the child who finds himself compelled to accept beliefs under duress will suspect the quality and verity of the thoughts, and yet be unable to understand that his inward rebellion is actually due to the method of instruction rather than its content.

Take for instance the matter of belief in rebirth of the soul—a common enough faith in our religious traditions. Of what use is such a faith? It is worth both everything and nothing, Glaucon, depending upon whether those who propose it insist that it be believed, or merely proffer it for contemplation. A worthy belief demonstrates its worth only when men are willing to put it to every rational test, argue in its favor in the public forum—and admit the right to differ of those who choose to advance contrary views. When one merely sits upon a belief, afraid to weigh it, it is quite evidently hidden from that one's view; he knows, really, little about the very thing he has planted himself upon. Sitting on eggs is well enough for fowl, for this is a part of the natural order of things for them, and new chickens come into being by this means. But man cannot fructify the life of the mind without the warmth generated by questioning.

There is another important aspect to this subject, Glaucon. The life of the mind reaches to

full maturity only in the atmosphere of confidence. But how can the young develop confidence concerning ideas and opinions which have never been tested in their own experience or thinking? From the earliest days the child must be helped to distinguish between what he knows and what he does not know. Unless he is tutored in this manner he will have no firm ground upon which to stand, and will inevitably undergo transition from a person of much blind faith in everything told him, to that other kind of person who has *no* faith, least of all in himself. But even the youngest child will benefit from building a small but sure confidence in that which is *truly his own*. So, Glaucon, I beseech you to "command" your children all you need in regard to practical affairs, but not to command them to accept your beliefs—or mine. Otherwise they will end having faith neither in you, in Socrates, nor in themselves.

## *FRONTIERS* Visions of the Night

IT may come as a surprise to some readers to learn that today, in the United States, there is serious psychological research into the question of whether human beings can see into the future (by superphysical means), and whether, from what they see, they may become able to actually *alter* either the course of some future event or some of its effects. An article in the *Journal of Parapsychology* for March, 1955 supplies evidence that workers in the field of parapsychology have given extensive attention to this question. The problem is set by the author, Dr. Louisa E. Rhine of the Duke University Parapsychological Laboratory, in the first paragraph:

The idea that it may be possible to know the future or, in other words, to exercise precognition at once raises some difficult secondary questions. No other psi concept cuts across such deeply ingrained ways of thought as this one does. Not only does it appear to contradict the traditional idea of causation, but it also seems to challenge the idea of volitional freedom. For on the face of it at least, it would seem that if the future can be known beforehand, then that future must in some sense already be existent. Like a roll of movie film, it must somehow be fixed and determined and waiting only to be unrolled and experienced. If such should be the case, the idea of volitional freedom could only be a delusion.

The substance of this article is based upon study of a total of 462 cases of apparent or presumed "precognition," in most of which some other explanation of what is reported is difficult to imagine. The cases are divided into two groups—those in which no effort was made to alter, change or avoid the event foreseen, and those in which intervention was attempted. The following case, reported by a Navy wife, will illustrate in general the sort of experience involved:

During the war my husband was in command of a Naval ship, and naturally thoughts of him were often in my mind. After he had been away for almost two years I dreamed one night that he started home by plane. The plane was wrecked and everyone

aboard was killed. I had that dream on 14 consecutive nights. I wrote him asking him when he returned that if it were humanly possible not to come by plane. Several months passed and early one morning he called me from a California airport saying he had just arrived and would leave in about an hour. He asked me to meet him in Washington the following day. I was horror stricken. My feelings are difficult to describe, but I felt he must not fly. I persuaded him to come by train. He cancelled his reservation and had coffee with several officers who had flown in with him, and turned in for a few hours of sleep. When he got up he found the plane on which he was to have left had crashed about 10 minutes after it left the field and everyone aboard was killed.

Actually, there are thousands of such cases on record in the annals of psychic wonders. If it were not for the difficulty of explaining how this "vision" into the future works, probably no one would think of denying its possibility. But since there is no familiar hypothesis to account for precognition, and no generally accepted psychological laws from which such a hypothesis might be constructed, reports of this sort have for many generations rested without either investigation or attention from modern psychologists. If a supposed happening is impossible according to known scientific laws or principles, why bother to investigate? It has been the work of people like the Rhines and their colleagues at Duke University, and a few other psychic researchers around the world, to collect and establish the *facts* of various sorts of supernormal perception, as the necessary foundation for inquiring into how such processes may be explained. So far, no scientific explanation is available. As Mrs. Rhine says:

After all, a hypothesis that could fully explain precognition would have to say how the personality, whether as a whole or in part, could foresee the future, or else it would have to explain the nature of time in such a way that the logical barrier to foreknowledge would be removed. It is no explanation merely to *assume* that some part of the personality is able to cross the time boundary.

Fundamentally, this article examines the question: Can an event of disastrous effect be

avoided or prevented, if it is foreseen? The matter of avoidance or prevention, however, may very well depend upon *how* it is seen, or upon the conditions which make it possible to be foreseen. Then there is the question: What is an "event"?

There is a continuous flow of change and activity throughout the world. This flow is punctuated by what we call "events" for the reason that certain intersections of action are important to human beings. An event, therefore, is such by reason of its subjective value to man. The web of action is constantly being modified by human decision, some modifications being obvious and deliberate, others apparently fortuitous so far as observable human motive is concerned. Yet we know that all sorts of changes are unknowingly caused by human action, for the reason that we never anticipate all the consequences of what we do, and doubtless never recognize some of them after they occur. Every event, therefore, is part mystery, so far as full explanation of its causes is concerned. This is especially evident from the recent discoveries of psychosomatic medicine, showing that the stress of emotion may produce characteristic physiological effects.

Now if we postulate—as the phenomena of precognition and ESP generally seem to justify—that we live in a double world of causation, the world of physical causes and the world of psychic causes, then many events may be compounded of two sets of causes; not only this, but we have no idea how these two sets of causes may be interrelated. Take for example this "manufactured" illustration of a foreseen event:

A man is seated on a great rock which abuts as the apex of an acute angle into a flat plain. He is elevated, say, a thousand feet above the plain. Two highways intersect on the plain where the point of the rock ends. The man sees two cars approaching the intersection. He sees, because he can look down each side of the rock, but the drivers cannot see each other. They are equidistant from the intersection and driving at the

same rate of speed. The spectator at once anticipates a collision. His voice will not carry and he has no ordinary means of warning the drivers. He may throw a boulder down in front of one car to slow him down. He may shoot a gun, if he has one. In any event, he will feel an intense wish to communicate with the drivers.

Here, the physical situation of foresight is very clear. It is also easy to turn the warning into a "psychic" happening, by suggesting that the spectator is able to warn one of the drivers by *thought*. The thought may not be recognized as a warning at all—no more than a boulder bounding across the road might seem to be anything more than the beginning of a dangerous slide. Scores of possibilities occur which could be made to apply by changing the circumstances of the event.

So both physical framework and psychic elements may enter this hypothetical situation. Moral factors, also, might be added. The question of susceptibility to suggestion enters in, in the case of a psychic warning. One driver may "get" the warning, the other not. Why? To complicate the matter further, it could be imagined that the death of one driver or both might under some circumstances be regarded as a blessing, even though fatal accidents are generally admitted to be tragic happenings. An almost infinite series of "balances" could be supposed, in theory, to affect this apparently simple event.

Let us propose, for example, that one of the drivers is angrily brooding about an injustice done him. His feelings give him a hostile polarity. How will this affect the reception of a warning from the spectator? Then suppose that he remembers some philosophic counsel he has read and admired, and puts aside the feeling of resentment. Has he contributed a modifying factor to the oncoming "event"? If this new mood opens him to a warning suggestion, that momentary act of control of his feelings may turn the disaster into a "near-miss."

What, then, are the factors of "finality" in a coming event? When is "the die cast"? A warning

dream of a catastrophe may come to one out of twenty persons who would normally be affected. Why that one? Or why his wife, who makes him stay home? Or why does he decide to disregard the warning? What of the Cassandra-like sufferings of one whose warning is not heeded? All these things are values, and possibly "forces," affecting and growing out of events that are to come.

We can surely argue that the future is always a partially shaped future—that when it is fully shaped it is no longer the future but the present, and then the past. The same event may be fully shaped for one man and not fully shaped for another—depending upon his personal causal relations, physical, psychic, and moral, with what is to happen.

One thing seems clear: fairly elaborate assumptions have to be made about the nature of man and the continuum in which he lives, if we are to make sense out of foresight of the future. We have to say that there is in human beings some sort of "watchtower," from which a man may be able to look out over the obstructions of present happenings and to see the forces that are moving to combine in some future event. We have to say that there is also a selective power to "see" the future event that has some relevance to the one who sees.

This may sound like an enormous claim, but what will you argue to the woman who saved her husband's life by warning him?

All sorts of interesting questions arise. Is there some way to keep the windows of the watch-tower clean? Or is it really important to have such vision? Some very great men have done their work without supersensuous vision. "Psychics," moreover, are not necessarily wise and good. There may be a dynamics of psychic activity corresponding to the gymnastics of physical activity, with no more relation to moral or humanitarian issues than the latter. Yet gymnastics is a field of legitimate education. What about psychic dynamics?

Since values in education at once bring in moral considerations, we are naturally drawn to consider the relation between the psychic and the moral, or the psychic and the spiritual. Are there moral laws which affect the operation of psychic dynamics? The affinity produced by love is known to play a part in psychic rapport or communication. Would what a man sees out of his watch-tower be in any way determined by what he loves? A Navy wife has a dream about her husband's danger, but a Tolstoy has visions about all Europe! Both the arc of vision and the radius of perception might very well depend in part on the scope of a man's ethical interests. Yet what he could do about his foresight would in turn depend upon the responsiveness of those whom he tried to warn, and *their* ethical comprehension. Again we see the possibility of endless interdependent schemes or systems of physical-psychic-spiritual relationships—in fact, the term "system" seems far too mechanical to cover the sensitive correlations that might be involved.

Finally, there is the larger problem of how there can be some sort of "inner" individual in human beings which is able to operate at the "watch-tower" level, even though the conscious mind is unaware of these processes and obtains their fruit only as somewhat vague premonitions or by the imagery of dream. We leave any attempt at a hypothesis to others, for although it seems obvious that some such theory is needed, this project makes too great a demand on our speculative resources!