

THE ROOTS OF VALUE

THERE is no putting down the ancient inquiries into the sources of good and evil, virtue and vice, righteousness and sin. The human mind refuses to leave these questions alone. The purpose of this essay is to call attention to three roots of moral value which are winning recognition in contemporary thought. Cultivation of these roots is increasing, and perhaps they will slowly replace roots which seem unlikely to survive the chaos of our era and the analyses of the critics. As a recent issue of MANAS (Oct. 28, 1959) has pointed out, criticism still comes much more easily than affirmation, but "new reference-points" are emerging. "The vision of human greatness is not lost, it is only beginning to be understood." The new reference points are not entirely new because the vision of human greatness has never really been lost, although it has been very badly mauled and muddled by cynics, pessimists, and dogmatists. We may be recovering, in a new context, our idea of heroism. Nevertheless, there is as yet no contemporary orientation. This is what we seek.

Alfred North Whitehead places this topic in perspective. Combating the tendency of theorists to make an easy distinction between fact and value, he reminds us that

Our enjoyment of actuality is a realization of worth, good or bad. It is a value experience. Its basic expression is—Have a care, here is *something that matters!* (*Modes of Thought*, 159.)

One might not choose the term "enjoyment," but Whitehead's point remains: we can't escape the normative. To insist that nothing matters is to adopt a self-defeating stance. The stance matters. Far from having reached the end of the road, the distressed souls and the pseudo-sophisticates who say, "I don't know, I don't care, and it doesn't matter," are giving us a meaningful and relevant

point of departure for a contemporary investigation of what really does matter.

We might also remember at the outset that the experience of evil is, sometimes, in a back-handed sort of way, more revelatory of what really matters than an experience of goodness. We should not forget the smashing impact upon us of such experiences as broken promises, hatred, or common garden-variety meanness, especially when we are on the receiving end of these things. To be "cut" or "snubbed" is, in one sense, a small and petty thing concerning which Marcus Aurelius has some excellent advice; but in another sense, it is a large and terrible violation of common human decency, and few people can absorb it with equanimity. To snub a person is to say that he matters very much by making a special point of pretending that he doesn't matter at all, *i.e.*, he isn't even there,—a suggestive paradox which need not be explored at present.

What are the roots of value, capable of sustaining meaningful conduct in our era?

(1) We are in the presence of value when *human needs* are being satisfied or left unsatisfied. A starving child is not just a fact. Here is *something that matters*. It is bad for a person to starve; it is good for him to be fed. Examples are likely to be dangerous because they can distract us from the fundamental point. But consider the ministrations of the Samaritan to the man who had fallen among robbers. Or consider the needs of the wretched prisoners in *Darkness at Noon*—the simple goodness achieved when their need to communicate with each other is satisfied, and the evil attendant upon the various ways in which they are violated. This is the root of value with which many anthropologists and psychologists are concerned and to the understanding of which they are making enormous contributions. The values

of a culture are the ways in which the people of that culture meet their needs and thereby give meaning to their lives. If a formula would help, it would have to be something like the following: To say that an act is good is to say that this act satisfies, or contributes to the satisfaction of, a human need. To say that an act is bad is to say that it frustrates, directly or indirectly, the satisfaction of a human need. The empirical investigation of human needs, what they are, the various ways in which they can be satisfied, their plasticity, their possible universality, hierarchical arrangements of needs, does not concern us here, though it seems clear that there are few more important or more interesting lines of research. Happily, much is being done.

In our materially affluent society we seem to have something to gain by distinguishing between needs and wants. Assaulted by seductive advertising techniques on every hand, we do not always need what we want (new cars?). Likewise, we do not always want what we really need (castor oil?). Methodologists demand a precise criterion for distinguishing needs from wants, and this involves some problems. Nevertheless, the distinction is a useful one and should not be abandoned.

(2) We are in the presence of value—something that matters—when we experience decision in ourselves or observe it in others. This is the root of value so much stressed in existentialist literature. It may also be called autonomy, or self-direction, or commitment. It is the exercise of freedom. Freedom atrophied is a dreadful thing. Freedom exercised is a magnificent thing. There is something awe-inspiring about a moment of decision. William James describes such moments as "the workshop of being, where we catch fact in the making." More than this, says James, "we seem to ourselves to make ourselves and grow." (Surprisingly contemporary, coming from a volume, *Pragmatism*, 287, 288, published in 1907.) Several of the sacraments symbolize the

importance of certain decisions, but it is not what is decided, nor the symbol that is the value—it is the decision itself. Traditionally, decision has usually been discussed in a religious context under the headings of *conversion* or *vocation*. Now we see it stripped of preconceived metaphysical and theological trappings, and this, perhaps, is a condition under which the value itself can be more objectively assessed.

There is a brilliant scene in Sartre's play, *The Flies*, in which Orestes decides to take his life into his own hands. It is not what he decides to do that counts, but the fact that he makes the decision. Up to this moment he has always looked beyond himself, to Zeus, a symbol of law and order, for guidance; but now he says in a new tone of voice, "There is another way . . . from now on I'll take no one's orders, neither man's nor god's." (Vintage ed., 92.) He makes the decision, and the decision makes him. This creative moment is marked in the play by his comment, "What a change has come on everything, and, oh, how far away you seem." He is speaking to Electra. She, too, senses the difference and ceases to call this man Philebus, peaceful soul from Corinth, and recognizes him as the Orestes of her dreams. "So at last you have come, Orestes, and your resolve is sure." Zeus, at this point, knows that he is defeated, for, as he explains later to Ægisthus, "Once freedom lights its beacon in a man's heart, the gods are powerless against him." (104.)

We encounter drama enough, and equal value, in the decision of a Negro woman, sitting on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, to continue sitting there when asked to give up her seat to a white passenger. (*Stride Toward Freedom*, 43-44.) But such highly charged examples are not required. We encounter value when any decision, large or small, is cleanly and autonomously made. Probably it is better to stress the small decisions, for they are more frequent, and the lives of ordinary mortals are made from them. There is value, too, in the staying power that is required to

stand by a hard decision with no backsliding and no excuses.

Anyone may disagree with the decisions and the acts of another person, but this is to take issue with the content rather than the form. The assertion being made here is that decision itself is a source of value. One of the reasons why existentialism has appealed to so many people emerges at this point. Existentialism has helped us to recover an intuition of value. In a pragmatic and utilitarian culture, we have looked too much at acts and their consequences and not enough at the source of these acts. Existentialism has reaffirmed the old idea that people achieve dignity when they take their lives into their own hands, make their own decisions and see them through without shame, without excuses, with fear and trembling no doubt, but no hiding in a group, no flight into heteronomy. Is there good or evil in the courageous, lovable old priest in Cronin's *Keys of the Kingdom* who prays in a certain situation, "Just this once, Lord, my will, not thine"? There should have been a mighty cheer in heaven!

(3) We are in the presence of value whenever we see a person who *knows what he is doing*, a person possessed of awareness of the significance of his acts. Fatso Judson, the brutal stockade guard in *From Here to Eternity* utterly lacks this quality. He dies wondering why Prewitt has attacked him, and he wonders why because he has lived without awareness of the significance of anything he does. Another jailer—the one who attended Socrates—is a little discussed figure who seems to have an awareness of the events in which he is entangled. Socrates himself, from whom the phrase is borrowed, is aware of *what he is doing*.

We should not expect to get an adequate definition of this phrase. It stems from the Socratic assertion that the unexamined life is not worth living. There is a tremendous passage in the *Protagoras* in which Socrates says rather bluntly to a young intellectual enthusiast, "I wonder whether you know what you are doing?" The lad, quite obviously, does not, but he is

sensitive to the question in a way in which many of us are not or refuse to be. If this question gets through to a man and he chooses to respond to it with full seriousness, he is likely to become a new man. To cultivate this awareness lifts one's conduct out of the realm of the impulsive or compulsive into the realm of the rational. This sort of awareness is not merely a matter of being able to identify an activity (I am playing golf), nor is it a matter of knowing how to do it well (the right stroke in each situation). Socrates would have said that it is a matter of *knowing the value* of the activity. Our purpose, however, is to focus attention upon the *value of the knowing*. What matters, then, is awareness of how much or how little the activity matters.

Warner Fite, in *Moral Philosophy* (now reissued under the title, *The Examined Life*, Midland Press) erects an entire moral theory upon this concept:

The moral life, as I conceive it, is the examined life. Given the examined life, I say that nothing else is needed.(3.)

Morality is knowing what you are doing; it is not then a question of what you do . . . the reality of the knowing constitutes the objective moral quality. . . . (177.)

Take any action you please. Then put consciousness into the action. You cannot say how the action will be transformed and no law can prescribe how it ought to be transformed. But this you can say: those who understand will mark the presence of moral quality and for them it will have moral dignity. (185.)

Fite's position may be one-sided, but without his side what would be left in human conduct would be hardly human.

Spinoza leads us to the root of value by means of his distinction between *action* and *passion*. He uses these terms in their classical sense, in which they oppose each other as active and passive modes of conduct, not in the popular sense in which, sustained by Hollywood, they tend to be identical. By action, Spinoza means conduct of which the agent has a clear idea of what he is

doing. By passion, Spinoza means conduct of which the agent has no clear idea. He is confused, and thus he suffers. According to Spinoza, the search for clarity leads toward comprehensive system. This is precisely what is denied to us in our era, and thus, in varying degrees, we suffer.

Awareness yields perspective. How far should it go? As deep and as far as our consciousness can carry it. One does not come to the end of the significance of things.

It appears that a dubious eclecticism has gotten the better of this analysis. Three roots of value have been affirmed and partially described, but they rest uneasily with each other. The exercise of freedom, as Sartre points out, involves a kind of aloneness, while the response to human needs involves a closeness between people. Awareness of what we do suggests a detachment and distance from our action, which decision and commitment deny. At best the question of priority intrudes itself. Which root is the tap root? Which takes precedence?

Here we struggle on the ragged edge of an emerging moral theory. Each root is fundamental. Each takes precedence in different situations. There are no rules. If this leaves us with hard decisions to make and no clear guidance . . . well, that is the way it is. There is no easy way. The easy ways are either too subjective or too objective. Morality is not so simple. Pascal was right: "True morality makes light of morality."

Though we cannot arrange the roots of value, some of their interrelations can be exposed. Wherever we start, we find ourselves involved with other roots. If we focus on human needs as the source of value, we find that needs can be modified through awareness and decision. If we focus on decision as the source of value, we find that awareness must enter into the decision if it is not to be merely impulsive or compulsive. And if we focus on awareness as the source of value, we very quickly find that awareness includes awareness of human needs and forces decisions upon us.

To reflect upon these roots of value and there may be more—is in no sense to deny the *foliage* that springs from them. Their diverse developments can be described and catalogued, but we must not confuse the foliage with the roots, nor deny that there are roots. To quote Whitehead once more:

There is no one behaviour system belonging to the essential character of the universe, as the universal moral ideal. What is universal is the spirit which should permeate any behavior system in the circumstances of its adoption. (*Modes of Thought*, 20.)

It is this spirit that we are beginning to explore.

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REVIEW

READINGS ON "FREEDOM"

PERIODICALLY—and, we hope, with increasing frequency—it seems time to supply our readers with a current reading suggestion on the subject of Freedom. Recent discussions of this subject in *MANAS* will be found in the following issues: Oct. 14 (Frontiers); Oct. 21 (lead article); Nov. 18 (Frontiers); Dec. 2 (lead article). Freedom is obviously the central value which makes important the consideration of a wide spectrum of issues—those relating to the individual *as* individual, to moral decision, to questions concerning the mind and philosophical psychology, and all matters having to do with the State and its power to affect, change, or arrange the lives of individuals.

Since Freedom is essentially a subject which requires philosophical evaluation, if anything definitive is to be said—and since making "definitive" statements in philosophy is about the most hazardous activity that human beings can undertake we shall confine our efforts to what clarification seems possible concerning the *elements* of any workable definition of freedom.

For example, in Erich Kahler's *The Tower and the Abyss* (George Braziller, 1957) there is an investigation of the meaning of values. It is at once evident that values can play no part in human life unless there is freedom to *select* them:

A value involves a *choice*, it *calls for a choice*. An old Indian adage says: "The world has been created for the sake of choice and for him who makes a choice." And in the Biblical story of Adam man becomes veritably man by making a choice.

Like some other contemporary writers, Prof. Kahler takes the primary experiences of man in consciousness as fundamental realities:

While we are . . . conditioned in our thoughts and acts and while our feeling of freedom may be deceptive, the feeling in itself is alive and, like all living things, is acting and reacting. The feeling is not a hollow mechanism moving on a wholly predetermined track; its vital energy surges from the incommensurable sources of life and is in constant

process of creation, capable of influencing events and conditions and of changing given directions. Our subjective feeling of freedom with the energies and potentialities it expresses is an agent in the shaping of events. To conclude from scientific findings that we are just mechanically pushed automata and that our stakes are inevitably set by objective necessities or contingencies would mean the elimination of essential factors which are in the play, which count in the play. Thus, free will appears to be included, built in, in a system of indetermination, which is infinite in its creative possibilities. . . . The problem of free will is nothing else than a specific form of the problem of life proper.

Prof. Kahler makes another important postulate: "The primary characteristic of the human structure as an individual is *indivisibility*, implying coherent unity, wholeness." He adds: "Groups, in this view, are considered mere assemblages or associations of individuals, an interpretation clearly distinguished from former views which attributed separate reality to "universals," spiritual and trans-individual entities. . . . Thus, when we speak of man as an individual, we are implying that to divide him is to destroy him as a human. As long as he remains human, he must maintain his individuality."

The thing that we should like to emphasize, here, is the fact that this approach to questions essential to human welfare refuses to submit to "scientific" canons of "reality." Kahler's selection of what is important to discuss depends upon the immediacies of human experience. His work, therefore, has many of the virtues assigned (in *Frontiers* for Dec. 9) to the work of the novelists. This rejection of the Procrustean requirements of the practitioners of science—a notable liberation of the mind—did not of course begin only in our generation, but Prof. Kahler's book seems to us an important milestone in the shift of serious inquiry from the scientific to a *human* frame of reference. Unfortunately, the human frame of reference does not yet command the attention it should, and *The Tower and the Abyss*, which ought to have been heralded as an epoch-making study of the human situation, has been sadly neglected since it appeared in 1957.

The following paragraph, from a review article in the *American Scholar* (Autumn) gives in a few words a general view of *The Tower and the Abyss*:

Mr. Kahler called his book, "An Inquiry into the Transformation of the Individual." His statement of the problem and his conclusion will be disheartening to anyone who believes in the ultimate reality of the individual self, a belief on which all claims for freedom for the individual must finally rest. Without drawing directly on Emile Durkheim's studies, Mr. Kahler makes much the same analysis of modern society. Modern society is losing its sense of shared values because of the enormous growth of "collectives," that is, groups brought together by the increasing rationalization of all areas of social life, especially, but not only, the productive. Man's relation to other men becomes increasingly a matter of his function in society. The result, to use Durkheim's famous phrase, is "anomie," the loss of a common conscience, the destruction of community. But if the increase in rationalization in modern life and the corresponding growth of collective groups threatens the security, perhaps even the identity of the individual by cutting him off from any sense of shared life, Mr. Kahler's "possible utopia," the emergence of a way of life in a community, "an entity in itself, apart from the individuals" who compose it, threatens to submerge the individual completely in some abstract entity called "Man," not much different from Rousseau's general will, where the empirical individual is finally lost sight of. Mr. Kahler does not blink at his own logic; he decides that our concern for the concrete individual person is now a thing of the past. He forces us to consider the drastic possibility that history is at one of its great turning points and that our old assumptions about the nature of the individual and the meaning of freedom may no longer make sense.

We have quoted the *American Scholar* reviewer, John W. Ward, somewhat at length for the reason that his version of the content and implication of Erich Kahler's book will help us to bring into focus a somewhat different view. It is possible, we suppose, to show from the text that Kahler does indeed "give up" on the prospect of a life of free individuality for the future, but this is not, we think, what he intended.

The book is, first, what Ward says it is, a definitive account of the multiple forces which have been subdividing and fragmenting what ought not to be subdivided and fragmented—individual man. Science and technology and statistics are the evil geniuses of this process of depersonalization. Science and technology and statistics are practiced on man in order to make use of him. But these three are neither equal to nor interested in dealing with man as a free, creative, moral—and individual being. They deal with only parts of him—the parts they can use in their business. The rationalizing social process, that is, the dehumanizing process, is applied to only bits and segments of the human being. The State treats him as a taxpayer, a potential law-violator, a Loyal or Disloyal citizen. Industry treats him as both a necessary part of the manufacturing process and a necessary part of the consumption process. The publishers treat him as a consumer of goods valuable to *their* customers, but valuable only in statistically large numbers, so that the individual, as such, is totally unimportant to them. There are other subdividing processes to which the individual is exposed, but these are of a subtler character, and Prof. Kahler's book should be carefully read to obtain the full impact of his analysis of the reduction of man from a whole individual to a collection of bites taken out of his being by these various processes.

We might, however, borrow an illustration of one such process. The institutions of the rationalized society are quite incapable of taking cognizance of genuinely *human* issues. Before the rationalized society can deal with such issues, they must be subdivided and reduced to morally neutral questions. Prof. Kahler writes:

Pending the grave decision on the development of the hydrogen bomb—which, according to a statement of competent physicists, "is no longer a weapon of war but a means of extermination of whole populations," whose use "would be a betrayal of all standards of morality and of Christian civilization"—Mr. Lilienthal, then Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, found himself prompted to protest that "Neither he nor any of his colleagues is opposing

any weapon, no matter how terrible, on moral grounds or on principle." Mr. Lilienthal was on the point of resigning and he could at least have refrained from taking a stand in this conflict of loyalties of which he was presently to be relieved anyway. But for him there apparently existed no conflict. The power of his functional responsibility was so strong that he explicitly denied any regard for human criteria, as if they were a disgrace.

We know, of course, how J. Robert Oppenheimer, America's most distinguished physicist, was punished for daring to inject a "moral issue" into the question of the development and use of thermo-nuclear weapons.

The institutions of a rationalized society insist upon regarding all moral issues as *settled*. They have been settled according to the same "truths" which have been used to justify the structure of the rationalized society, so that, when moral issues are raised they can be quickly processed by the instruments developed for that purpose, simply by reference to precedent. The obligation of the "good" citizen is *not to disturb the precedents*. Accordingly, when a man like John Martinson (MANAS, Dec. 9) goes to court to try the issue of whether or not the Government has the right to make a soldier out of him, both judge and lawyer (Martinson's lawyer) make plain the desirability of trying the case on technical grounds. (One might say that the lawyer may be excused by the fact that he couldn't practice law at all, if he held out for moral issues in court, and this may be true; but then the conclusion must be that the lawyer, too, is a victim of the rationalized system, the same as the defendant.) Thus Martinson's voice, the voice of a lone individual, is the voice of a lost cause:

We decided to fight a conventional case. My lawyer prepared a lengthy and proper brief citing many cases to show that I had not been afforded "due process of law." . . . And the case was lost. Now if the case had been won I probably would have a different view of the matter. One thing seems clear to me, however. If you fight on principle and lose you have the consolation of sitting in prison and saying, "Well, it was a good fight anyway." When you fight strategically and lose it doesn't help much to say, "Well, I guess we were outsmarted."

In about the middle of his book, Prof. Kahler summarizes what he has tried to do. He writes:

I attempted to show the situation of the individual in our time and the various forces that tend to disrupt him from without and within. I surveyed the different forms of collectivization and totalization of human beings which split the individual *from without* into a functional and a human part, and showed how the functional part keeps growing through the rising power of the collectives, while the human part shrinks in importance and effectiveness. We observed a corresponding movement evolving *from within* the human psyche and the human mind, which, partly as a consequence of the outer situation, partly in opposition to it, worked toward a fragmentation of the human being and of his experience. We saw how the scientification and technicalization of our world and of our life brought about that impersonal collective consciousness inherent in our institutions and techniques, tending to objectify all human relations and make man and all his outer and inner manifestations an object of impassible scrutiny and analysis. We saw how this technical, impersonal approach and the overcrowding of the surfaces of our world, with its new violent incongruities and contrasts, produced a new *human insensibility* and at the same time fostered *observational sensibility*, a sensibility which had originally arisen from a revolt against middle-class civilization and its rationalistic, commercial and mechanistic spirit. Cultural uneasiness and discontent, a growing alienation of the intellectual and particularly of the artist from his society drove the artist into *l'art pour l'art* and, through the exclusive concentration on artistic techniques, into the development of an ever more rarefied sensibility. In concurrence with increasingly acute psychological and scientific analysis, this sensibility wound up in decomposing the organic object and the organic person, indeed, the underlying texture of our feeling of existence. In the scientific and the practical, as well as in the artistic sphere, we observed the same process, an immense and glorious expansion of man's scope and, at the same time, a bursting, a disruption, a sweeping away of the very basis of his existence: the human personality.

This, then, is the situation and the network of correlations which I wanted to demonstrate in this study. Our task appears to be to counterbalance the perilous effects of otherwise irresistible and unpreventable developments. We are in a state of transition from an individual form of existence to a

supra-individual form of existence, the character of which is still in the dark. But whatever this new supra-individual form of existence may be, *it should not be a mere collective, but a new comprehensive community, a human community.* . . .

The most frightening aspect of our present world is not the horrors in themselves, the atrocities, the technological exterminations, but the one fact at the root of it all: the fading away of any criterion, the disruption of the contents and substrata of human responsibility. There is a fatal correlation, a vicious circle in which we seem to be caught: Without a human community there is no human responsibility of the individual, and without such responsibility, without true morality in this purely human sense, no human community can maintain itself.

This is a book about the circumstantial decline of the individual. We strongly recommend that it be read in its entirety, for no book that we have come across in recent years is so comprehensive in its analysis of the processes which exhibit, if they have not caused, this decline. Its content, it seems to us, is far more important than anxious accounts of the threat of nuclear warfare, fall-out, and the entire catalogue of menacing effects of our modern, technological and military civilization.

Let us return to John W. Ward's characterization of *The Tower and the Abyss* as a book in which the author "decides that our concern for the concrete individual person is now a thing of the past." Prof. Kahler does indeed assemble almost overwhelming evidence for this conclusion, and as an alternative he has, like Erich Fromm (in *The Sane Society*) only the French Communities of Work to offer as an illustration of what might be done. But what really happens in this book, it seems to us, is the struggle of the writer to recognize, beneath the dreadful ordeal of the collectivization of modern society, some vague striving on the part of human beings for a higher life—for some means of association in community which reaches beyond the limit of individuality as it is usually championed, yet does not, in this transcendence, trample upon the sensitive reality of the human person.

The form of Prof. Kahler's study is empirical. That is, it draws upon history and recent social and psychological phenomena as the data for its generalizations. It cannot, therefore, seek a synthesis which might grow from the larger assumptions of religion or metaphysics. But throughout the text there is so clear an appreciation of, even a reverence for, the whole individual, that this reviewer finds its unspoken vision of greater importance than all the discouragements so carefully described.

Such books, because of the limited character of their assumptions, are always bootstrap operations. They do not have access to the incantations of religious inspiration and as a result their conclusions—containing their hopes—always seem weak. Prof. Kahler's hope is expressed in the dream of "community," as opposed to the dehumanizing "collective" of our time. And while his text is sober, his ardor disciplined, he is able to find justification for anticipating a "mutation" in the form of human life:

This trend, manifestly present in the most diverse currents of modern life—economic, technological, political, scientific, educational, psychic and artistic—appears so overwhelming that we are induced to see in it a true mutation, a transformation of human nature. Humanity seems to be in a state of transition from the individual form of existence to some new and larger, some supra-individual form of existence. . . . We seem to be heading for, indeed, we are actually engaged in a form of life in which the group and not the person is the decisive factor; we live in a world in which the collective and not the individual is the standard unit. . . . We have to acknowledge this trend of events and we have to face it. Only then shall we be able to counteract its destructive effects which have recently come to outweigh the productive ones and which threaten to destroy the human quality in man, if not the physical existence of humanity. Plainly speaking, we are confronted with the crucial question: will the future belong to a *collective* or to a *community*, that is to say, to a grouping controlled by merely technical necessities, by its autonomous, in fact automatic course, or to a grouping controlled by man and for the sake of man?

COMMENTARY
IN LIEU OF . . .

THIS year, the flesh is willing, but the spirit is too weak, to write a Christmas editorial. We know the things that might be said—that whatever men do to pervert the Christmas spirit and to cover up the beginning-and-ending, death-birth-regeneration meaning of the Christmas season, the current of renewing life nevertheless flows. Some people *do* give with their hearts; for some the anthems uplift and thrill as of old; the simplicity of a great birth remembered still warms, touches, and inspires a few.

These things are true, but we cannot find the heart to say them. What is there to say, instead?

We had thought to write about the new spirit of questioning and wondering on the campuses. About how, after years of relative desuetude, college students are beginning to find issues again—now, the issues of war and militarism. The Nov. 28 *Nation* has an article, "Campus Rebels Find a Cause," which tells the story of the revival of student activism. There is Frederick L. Moore, Jr., a University of California freshman who is hunger-striking against compulsory ROTC, supported by more than a thousand other students. There are the forums being held by Northern California students—a development sparked by the Acts for Peace group of Berkeley—in which students and faculty debate such questions as "Should students challenge or support our country's military response to the problem posed by Communist totalitarianism?" There are similar activities going on at some Eastern colleges—a sign-carrying protest against ROTC at Dartmouth, for example, and off-campus courses in non-violent approaches to international problems, offered by several of the University of Wisconsin faculty. There is the Ivy League revolt against the loyalty affidavit requirement of the federal student-loan program.

Then, in Northern California, a number of service clubs—Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.—recently

went on record as favoring more open discussion of non-violent alternatives to war.

Well, this is not much of a substitute for the profound meanings of the season. But, say what you will, it seems possible that our world does not deserve the subtle inspiration of a nature cycle that is somehow tinged with divinity. It may be that we need to provide a decent *scene* for an honest Christmas observance, before we can recapture the spirit it should embody. And if the anti-war movement is practically political by comparison, it is at least evidence of a willingness to stop hating and hurting, even if, as yet, we are not able to love.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

THE CHALLENGES OF DEPRIVATION

WE don't presume to tell teachers what to do about this, but parents, at least, have an obligation to let the children know something of the unnecessary suffering in the world. Of course, the maiming and killing of war has become so routine—and therefore so remote—that the young are seldom able to relate themselves to this form of man's inhumanity to man. But there are other areas which can be reached by the developing conscience of a teen-ager, encouraging him to stand against injustice when he encounters it.

Most high school students throughout the United States, except for communities of the South and Southwest, believe that racial segregation is a Bad Thing. They are also under the impression that Americans are generally good-hearted and fair enough to want to work toward a democratic social ideal. What they are not apt to know, unless we tell them, is that experiments in genuine social equality still bring cruel and unjust reactions to its defenders. The *Christian Century* for Sept. 9, for example, tells the heart-rending story of the persecution suffered by the staff and students of the Highlander Folk School in Monteagle, Tenn. Highlander has been in existence for twenty-seven years, pioneering in conceptions of social service. There, for all this time Negroes and whites have lived, studied, and worked together, but with the pressure attending our latest battles over the segregation issue, the segregationists have pounced on Highlander. The attorney general of the Eighteenth Judicial District of Tennessee openly announced that he was "out to close the school." Segregationist Governor Griffin of Georgia supported the campaign against Highlander by calling it a communist training school, despite the fact that an FBI investigation had found all such charges without basis. Here is the way in which the attorney general and the police proceeded:

A raiding party surprised the staff and student body when they were having a party to celebrate the end of a summer workshop. Mrs. Septima Clark, Highlander's director of education, was arrested and charged with possession of intoxicating beverages. Three young men were arrested at the same time on charges of public drunkenness, interfering with an officer and resisting arrest. A statement issued by the school says: "All the charges are false. Although a small quantity of liquor was found, it was in a private home and was not in the possession of Septima Clark. Highlander has never served intoxicants to its students, there was no drinking (public or otherwise) during the workshop, and no liquor was used on school grounds. None of the young men had had a drop to drink, none of them resisted arrest, and none of them interfered with any officer, unless inquiring into Mrs. Clark's constitutional rights amounts to interference."

The Highlander Folk School has a dozen attractive buildings located on a 200-acre farm near Monteagle, the whole having a monetary value of approximately \$100,000. The arrested persons are out on bond and will be required to appear before the November grand jury. Hearings have been held and others will be held on Attorney General A. F. Sloan's petition that the school be padlocked as a place where intoxicating beverages are sold, stored and consumed and "where people drink and engage in immoral, lewd and unchaste practices." The *Chattanooga Times* editorially warned that the attorney general "has flimsy evidence to proceed against Highlander with the ultimate aim of revoking its charter. . . . Action should be firmly grounded on sufficient evidence with any penalty no more than is just for the violation which is clearly proved. . . ."

The charges of being a public nuisance deceive nobody. The school's actual offense, as everybody knows, is that it teaches and demonstrates integration. In recent years it has conducted citizenship training classes which teach citizens their rights and duties. Mrs. Septima Clark was discharged from her South Carolina school post in 1954. She says: "I have spent all my life teaching citizenship to children [Negroes] who really aren't citizens." Many students at Highlander return to their communities to teach Negroes how to pass literacy tests to qualify as voters. They train whites and Negroes to work together in community development.

The friends of the Highlander intent all over the United States are trying to rally support to

fight the underhanded conspiracy. This is a real battle, and a victory, which is not impossible, will be of inestimable value to the forces of liberalism in the United States. Our youngsters, we think, need to know that the struggle is going on.

Another kind of integration is being attempted in England at the present time—an integration which fortunately will not be opposed by any bitter fanatics. A committee has been formed to institute an "Atlantic children's village" to bring destitute children from all the main Western countries together as "citizens of a free world." The *Manchester Guardian Weekly* for Oct. 15 gives this information:

Children can and must be educated in the idea that besides becoming good citizens of their respective countries our iron age demands imperatively that they should become proud citizens as well of the Atlantic Community.

The recent N.A.T.O. celebrations in this country and abroad have shown that N.A.T.O. and her affiliated organisations are separated by a wide gulf from the main stream of national life and that the great ideals and hopes which they represent have not yet touched the heart of the nation. We believe that a great educational effort is needed to transform the dead letter into a living reality; that in view of human inertia and the weight of old traditions this effort must in the very first instance be directed towards the children and that our village will be a real but also symbolic expression of this faith.

England, unlike the United States, knows something of the privation directly due to military destruction. The same issue of the *Manchester Guardian* reports a movement to dramatize conditions under which so many European refugees are now forced to live:

As dusk fell over South London on Tuesday night a chill wind blew across the bare wasteland by the site of the old Crystal Palace.

Five men and a girl who had been squatting around an open camp fire cleaned up the last scraps from a tin of bully beef, took their final sips of tea, and prepared to bed themselves down for the night in a rough, wooden hut that they had built with their own hands that afternoon.

The six companions were up soon after dawn yesterday for it is not too comfortable trying to pass the night in a sleeping bag on a wooden floor a few inches above bare, damp ground. Later in the day these six Londoners were expecting a distinguished visitor—Dr. P. Weis, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, who is making a special trip out to the Crystal Palace site while he is here on a visit from Geneva. They are the first six volunteers in a plan which is to be put into operation elsewhere in Britain and in fifteen countries on the Continent to publicise the World Refugee Year.

Until the end of the week London's six synthetic refugees will be enduring at least some of the hardships which are the daily lot of thousands of displaced Jews, Poles, Czechs, Hungarians, and all the others. The camp site at the Crystal Palace is based on the actual conditions to be found at camps in Austria and Germany, but it might equally well be France, Greece, Italy, and Turkey.

Here are three instances of high-minded struggle, altogether different from one another, but each a reminder that not everyone enjoys the easy privileges of fortunately situated young people in the United States. The spirit animating the two British experiments and the defense of the Highlander Folk School is a spirit which speaks clearly to the conscience in each human being, young or old.

FRONTIERS

An Evening with Arlo Tatum

ONCE in a while we get around a bit, and this time we got around to the right place at the right time. A group of "war resisters," chiefly pacifists, some of whom also happen to be interested in MANAS, last month found an opportunity to meet with Arlo Tatum, executive secretary of the War Resisters International, and suggested that we might find value in attending. Mr. Tatum is a pacifist "who has seen the world," and it was at once apparent that he held a discerning finger to the pulse of nearly every organized effort to combat militarism on the earth.

Having spent two years in prison by reason of his protest against the failure of the U.S. conscription law to recognize individual conscience without religious reference, Mr. Tatum has a special sort of qualification denied to some of us who are chiefly theoretical in our pacifist philosophizing. But Tatum is also the first to point out that American prisons are a perfect joy-ride in comparison with their European counterparts, and it is the CO's abroad—save for those in England—who suffer the greatest and most extended privations because of their convictions.

One might easily wish that every MANAS reader could have similar opportunity to meet in a group small enough to make extensive questioning feasible, with a man whose work makes him a living encyclopedia of the facts and efforts in world-wide war resistance. For the general perspective which emerges from this globe-circling view is inspiring, whether or no one is committed to conscientious objection. There are in every country numerous persons, many of them known to Mr. Tatum, who have placed their futures on the block in order to defy the psychology and mechanics of militarism. (China is the only country from which no definite information can be gained.) Even in Soviet Russia there are "CO's," and the Russian treatment of

conscientious objectors is apparently often no worse than our own.

In both Russia and the United States, official recognition of a conscience which inhibits war participation is limited to those of religious background. The Soviets have a system of alternative service, and it is no harder to attain the status in Russia, apparently, than here, though the Russian CO must first present his case before a military tribunal. The "World Peace Council," however, is largely a Soviet political tool, and, according to Mr. Tatum, of little value to the pacifist cause outside of Russia itself and the Communist satellites. Yet in one of these—Jugoslavia—some members of the Council were shocked by Russian aggression in Hungary, and dared to criticize the action as hardly defensible by anyone committed to working for world peace.

Among European CO's was one in Jugoslavia, an unprepossessing man who looked, according to Mr. Tatum, as if he might fill some ordinary job in an ordinary way. But this fellow was not ordinary. He decided that he must become a conscientious objector to war when serving as a captain in the Jugoslav army. He was sentenced to be hanged, and was hanged, by the neck—but not until dead. After his body was cut down and left on the ground for a while, a surviving spark of life revealed itself. When it was discovered that the former captain still lived, he was thrown into prison, where he served a substantial sentence. But when the WRI became acquainted with this most dramatic case, prison officials were deluged with mail intended for the encouragement of this most courageous man. He was finally released and was spirited out of the country before he could be re-sentenced.

Most European nations, and America as well, play a vindictive cat-and-mouse game with the man who refuses military service without a fundamentalist religious background. After a two-, three-, four- or five-year sentence has been served, both charge and sentence may be repeated. Fortunately, there are means—not

publicized widely for obvious reasons—to facilitate the escape of such persons, by an underground route, between sentences.

The most enlightened countries in regard to respect for individual conscience in war resistance are England and the Scandinavian nations. The English CO is not required to assert a definitive belief in some religious orthodoxy, and may represent his own conscience and intentions strictly as an individual. In Sweden a major university is carrying on an extensive program of research regarding the effectiveness of non-violent techniques of conscientious objection to military measures.

There have been few conscientious objectors in South American countries, though this now appears to be partially due to the fact that the concept of war resistance is a new thing there. Mr. Tatum was amazed, after finally agreeing with a lone Brazilian enthusiast to print in Portuguese and send to a mailing list of teachers and professors in Brazil an anti-war pamphlet, to discover that from this random mailing ninety men became full-fledged members of the WRI.

Mr. Tatum also reported that he had been successful in persuading prospective participants in the next WRI conference (planned for 1960) that some country outside Europe should be chosen for what promises to be a most important meeting. The place is to be India, a happy decision for all those who wish to encourage reflection on the importance of Asian participation in any "peace" program of the future.

In the United States, the WRI is represented by the War Resisters League, an organization without religious coloring. This organization is active in behalf of conscientious objectors who have difficulty with the law because of their lack of a sectarian "authorization" for their scruples against war, and it provides a platform for pacifist unity on the basis of humanitarian rejection of all military activity. The War Resisters League is distinctively identified by policies which are almost unique, organizationally speaking. It

supports and furthers projects which have little or no hope of adding to its own prestige or bringing in members, but simply because, in the opinion of the directors, these things need to be done. The WRL is in part responsible for the launching and continued publication of *Liberation*, a radical pacifist monthly magazine of considerable influence, and its workers are known to have given vital help to the leaders of the successful bus strike in Montgomery, Alabama. WRL leaders also shared in the planning and execution of the Omaha Action project. It is fair to say that the War Resisters League, Room 825, 5 Beekman Street, New York 38, N.Y., is an organization which implements free human energies devoted to its general purposes, rather than confining them or consuming them largely for organizational ends.