VOLUME XVI, NO. 47
NOVEMBER 20, 1963

THE BEST OF HUMAN LIFE

QUITE possibly, the inquiry to be attempted here should not take the form of an essay but should seek those imaginative evocations upon which both the poet and the reader of poetry depend. But since one of the conclusions to be presented, or argued, is concerned with the deepening self-consciousness of our time, and since self-consciousness provides the field for rational understanding, an essay may serve.

Disenchantment and wonder are the keynotes of the age. The disenchantment is often hidden, the wonder muted and private, but these states of feeling come close, we think, to characterizing the inner attitudes of many men. It is as though you wake up in the morning, pausing while memory rushes to deliver reminders of familiar setting and role, and ask yourself, Why am I all mixed up in *this* situation? And then, perhaps, you reprove yourself for raising what seems a silly question. How could it possibly be answered in the terms of the insistent longing which asks? This feeling of primeval alienation, of being lost, marooned, exiled, or sent away from home—how can we explain it except by some self-diminishing hypothesis which, in order to make sense, must accuse us of wanting to escape from the "real" world where we do all those things it is necessary to do in order to stay alive. And then, if we accept the hypothesis, the wonder dies.

You might reason, however, that there have been periods of history, and times in the life of every man, when the daily awakening brings challenge instead of disenchantment. These would be periods of genuine engagement. Then, when you wake up, memory presents relationships with which you eagerly re-engage. The wonder is then not a questioning but an enthusiasm for what lies ahead. A man goes to work, and he feels embodied and at home.

In the West, these morning visions have been various, but nearly all of them have had something to do with making a better world—better for one man, for some men, or for all men. A vision gives you something to relate to, something to incarnate in. Where there is no vision, it is said, the people perish, and when the vision shared by many blurs or fades, the feeling of disenchantment begins to attack individuals, then groups. And if no new vision is born, the people perish.

It may sound presumptuous—or at least unimaginative—to say that we have reached a stage in human development where no new vision seems possible. Yet in some sense this must be so. Unless you take free utopian leave of reality, you are obliged to admit that very nearly all the "better world" theories have been tried and found wanting. You can locate practically every sort of socio-political-economic theory in operation somewhere in the world, today, but their operations are not impressive when compared with the claims made in their behalf. At any rate, the visions behind them seem somewhat shopworn to most of the men of the present. Men with dreams of a better world for themselves have become rich, but they have not become happy, or better men. Men with dreams of a world of freedom for others and themselves created epoch-making constitutions, but we live in an epoch thus created, and it is filled with dissatisfaction and hazard. Nor are any glowing opportunities for self-fulfillment on the horizon—not, at least, in easily recognizable forms.

So, that instant of disengagement in the morning, before the memories come trooping in, tends to extend itself. The memories are neither friendly nor inviting. Some other sort would be better, we think to ourselves. But this interval of suspension—of being simply ourselves, and not the relationships which are being examined,

wondered about, and judged—may be a priceless boon of psychological freedom. It is then, perhaps—whether it comes in the morning, or any time—that we choose our identity and our world.

This is not so fanciful an explanation of historical change. Somebody had to *think of himself* as free before it was possible for the propositions of the Declaration of Independence to get put down on paper. Some men, in this case the *philosophes* of the eighteenth century, had to withdraw in their minds from old engagements, and to imagine themselves in new ones, before the great political revolutions could take place. Such decisions are not, of course, made in a vacuum. They are prompted by clues of strong feeling which say—I am not this, I am *that.* In the eighteenth century, the awakening men of the age were saying, "I am not an obedient chattel of the king; I am a man who is entitled to a voice in his destiny; I have the ability to design my society, in concert with other men with like aspiration and will." These men saw themselves behaving in a new way, realizing ends which had not been attainable before, or even thought of, and they saw the means to create the social order which would support their dream.

Here, in this primary enclosure of egoity, this delivery room of self-images, are born, it may be, all the myths and all the theologies and metaphysical systems which have sought to give meaning and explanation to the human condition. It is the place where a man says, I am not what those other men of the past sought to make of me. Here, the individual speaks to himself as a whole being. It is the resonating chamber of individual *logos*, where the word of self-affirmation is first heard. Here the hero with a thousand faces is conceived by a parthenogenesis of self communing with self, and here the embryo of a new man quickens with the life of mind-born development. And here the initial and irrepressible I-am-that-I-am passes from its state of endless potentiality into particular forms of finite realization. Here, in full prenatal catalogue, are ranged all the roles of all the gods and men—all the Fathers and all the Sons, floating germinally in the amniotic sea of the Holy Ghost. Here are Jehovah and Zeus, Lucifer and Prometheus, Christ and Hercules. Here are the Artificers, Demiurges, Fabricators and Liberators—all the archetypes of being. But before these, in the ultimate yet recurring moment of vision, is the wild and startled eye of the self, held back by frustration, pressed on by wonder. "I am," comes the manifesto of a center of conscious life, and then the melancholy voice, "But *who* am I . . . ?"

Western man has been through a long cycle of heroic answers to this question. *Take a hand in destiny!* has been the cry. We have been world-finders and world-shapers. We have girdled the earth with a net of wires, filling the air with the dominion of instant speech. We have split the atom and bid fair to split the planet. We have worn to limp ruin the seven-league boots of empire, from Alexander to Cecil Rhodes, from Cortez to Adolf Hitler. We have boxed our tyrants with constitutions, polished our lethargies with Equality, and enshrined our mediocrity in technology. We have turned every virtue into an ideological compulsion and drafted each longing for justice and freedom as flag-bearer of political reform.

The Gods of the West, like Julian's paling deities, are diminished and forlorn. The walls of our self-assurance, turned brittle prematurely from the haste of a progress that is now running scared, may soon come tumbling down. We imagine a Joshua behind every bush, and in the name of brave resistance to evil magnify little men with angry slogans into Davids who already have their slingshots twirling. How vulnerable can our Goliath—Leviathan or Juggernaut—get?

Of course, the stately mansions we have built still stand. Our cars are faster and more powerful and the music the hifi plays gets better all the time. Before too long we may be able to light up the dark side of the moon, and if anxiety wears away at our sanity and a delinquent indifference eats the

foundations of what our forefathers wrought, there are all those new chemical techniques for learning the secrets of euphoria. Given time, we may be able to split the nucleus of the *psyche,* and with such an armament for the war on psychological want tomorrow's Skinners will no doubt be able to establish a Walden III and put us back together again in moods adjustably immune to the threats of the way we live now.

This, at any rate, is one reading of the *mythos* of our time. It is not the cosmetic version recited by the Madison Avenue clergy, nor has it much resemblance to the reports delivered every four years by the champions of our political institutions, who would doubtless tell us to ignore such wicked whispers of defeatism. There are times, however, when the sound of an apology for what is does nothing but sicken the soul. There are hours in a man's life when he has no duty save the duty to listen to his heart and to remain in brooding meditation in that vault of self-discovery where all the myths of his being and his meaning are born. Here, and only here, will he encounter the transfiguring reality of human life. Here is the fount of creativity, the original Pierian spring. Here a man rebecomes what he was before he became whatever else he has been. And here is the court of last resort in the interpretation of what is in relation to what might be.

Is it not clear that there can be no fane more sacred for human beings than in the presence of this jet of bare subjectivity? That here, alone, is the spirit of man truly free? There is only one myth that we can believe in; all the rest are embroidery and verbosity. It is that man is the maker of myths, the maker of meanings. This is what Plato taught when he ranged the disembodied souls before the throne of *Ananke,* in the Myth of Er, where they chose their future and then were bound by their choice. It is what Pico declared when he gave the Western world the Renaissance image of self-creating man. It is even what Mr. Skinner deviously proposes when the managers of his Pavlovian Utopia decide upon the formula for creation of the man-to-be. *Somebody* has to do it. Some self must make decisions. Decision-making is always the climactic moment of every theology, every philosophy, every psychology.

This is the naked, first empirical fact of human consciousness. Without decision-making there is no history, no progress, nor any theory of progress. The man who insists that choice is all delusion is simply a primeval egotist who appoints himself myth-maker to the universe. *He* will give us our pantheon; *he* will define causation and tell all the little lambs who made them. But myth-maker is too shy a title; actually, he has cast himself as God. In the universe of consciousness—what other universe have we?—to know is to be.

We cannot, alas, leave the matter here. To stop now would be easy. It has been said before, and we have just said it again: Men are gods. They choose for themselves. Let us have ourselves another democratic, self-fulfilling, self-determining revolution! Let us have a newly impassioned revelation reaffirming the dignity of man, complete with careful blueprints from the experts who will tell us how to preserve all that we are, all that we have, and to preserve, also, our hope of being and having still more!

But this, the tired rejoinder comes, is where we came in. We've been through all that. No, we're not through it; we're in the middle of it, and we know about those promises. The almanacs come out every year and the figures on our progress are so overwhelming that we can't understand them any more. We just don't *feel* good.

What nobody seems willing to talk about openly is the second empirical fact of human consciousness—not, this time, a "naked" fact, but a fact bewilderingly veiled in equivocation. Some men choose better than others. Some men actually do choose better than others, and some men *think* they choose better than others, and still other men feel competent to choose *for* others.

And then there are all degrees of willingness to *let* other people make the important decisions. How would you like to make up a myth to explain these complexities?

All we like sheep have gone astray.

That's one of the myths that have been made up to cover this problem. In order to make it persuasive, its inventors had to suppress the first, the *naked,* empirical fact of human consciousness, and this they did by changing human decision-making into a single act of "faith." You believe; that is, you delegate your decision-making to people who know better, and *then* they'll tell you what to do, and *then* you'll have no more pain; you'll have it here, perhaps, but not *there.* And *there* is for eternity.

Workers of the world, unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains.

This is another of the myths that have been placed in service during the recent past. Again, you give up your decision-making to the experts; they, you are made to understand, have found out how to do away with pain *here,* instead of *there.* Those other experts were false prophets and priestly deceivers. Pie in the sky . . . all that.

Fortunately, we have a myth to sweep away the confusion of these claims and counter-claims—Dostoevsky's myth of the Grand Inquisitor. The issue of Dostoevsky's myth is not a luminous solution for all human problems, but an ethical imperative: You never hurt anybody else because he doesn't accept the myth you accept and believe to be true. To be human is to do your own decision-making. You may get help—probably you'll need help—but you have to make the final decision yourself and recognize that the responsibility is really *yours.* You can't go home again to the bosom of the Father. You can't wait for Godot; he's not coming; He isn't there.

For all us experts who know the right myths, Man Thinking is not man thinking, but Child Thinking. The issue of Dostoevsky's myth is an educational principle: the child's thinking is no good for the child unless he does it himself. You can't save the child from ignorance or disaster by-doing his thinking for him. You will only warp his being and arrest his development by doing his thinking for him. You don't know enough to do his thinking for him. Nobody does. His thinking is his thinking. We know this from our experience of teaching and in the schools. We know it so well that we know that education does not exist when this experience is not honored. When the children do not think, they are victims of fraud and psychological mutilation. When we keep children from thinking, we lure them away from the sacred place inside themselves; and then, when they finally rebel, many of them become nihilists because the frame of their decision-making has been tragically distorted. We know this about children; it is true also of men.

We say that we want to go after our problems in a scientific way. We say that science is the means of obtaining certainty from experience. Well, let us take our image of man from scientifically verified experience. The first fact, then, in our experience of being human is that we are all decision-makers. The second fact is that we are imperfect decision-makers. The third fact is that we improve our decision-making by having the freedom to make mistakes and to learn from our mistakes. The fourth fact is that every major or collective attempt to shield individuals from their mistakes by controlling their decisions about their own identity as decision-makers has ended in crashing failure. The fifth fact is that the only workable theory of progress for human beings is concerned with progress in decision-making, and that progress in decision-making depends upon the application of knowledge about human learning gained from experience in education.

Can we make or have a myth embodying these views? Perhaps we don't need a myth for this. A myth is a symbolic way of expressing the moral meaning of facts we don't understand in themselves, but which we have to deal with anyway. A myth is a device for remaining whole

in action, even though we are still partly ignorant of the world, and partly ignorant of ourselves.

A myth is an intuitive reading of the meaning of life. It tells us a story about who we are, what the world is, how the two are related, where we, and possibly the world, are going, and the rules for getting along, or getting ahead. It is, we might say, a representative fiction. In life, it works in a manner similar to the way that the abstractions of mathematics work for the scientist and the engineer. It saves, as Copernicus said, the phenomena. It makes the wheels go around.

Myths, like mathematical formulas, are of varying accuracy in their representation of the "real facts" of experience or life. Ptolemy's formula saved the phenomena, too, but not as well as the scheme put together by Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Tycho Brahe, and Newton. The important thing about modern astronomy is that it represents a more direct encounter with what we believe to be "the facts." When you know the facts, you can dispense with myth. When you dispense with myth, you take away the role of the theologians in relation to the matters dealt with in the myth. If you still need the myth, or some part of it, you keep on checking its interpretation with the experience of direct encounters as they become possible to arrange. You use telescopes. You improve your mathematical techniques.

Perhaps we could say that mathematics is a non-anthropomorphizing application of the myth-making faculty. It is the abstract science of objective relationships. All measurable relationships can have mathematical expression. The resources of mathematics are as extensive as the space of the universe—or, as no doubt we should say, the space-time continuum.

Ultimately—and this is at least conceivable—we shall know all about the objective universe, or all about some convenient segment of the visible universe. Then, perhaps, we shall come to call mathematics the song of the universe. It will be the means of celebrating what we know, rather than symbolizing what we don't know. It will express our knowledge in recognizable and communicable form—the perfect myth of physical or objective reality, needing no "interpretation." It will be the sound in space of the stars, the sun, and the planets—both the Pythagorean arithmetic and the music of the spheres.

Our proposition, here, is that something is now happening in consciousness that may be compared to Galileo's telescope in science. We are having a more direct encounter with ourselves. Some of the old myths are shining more brightly, while others are withering into dust. We are not really "proving" that some of the old myths were "true," but experiencing the truth that has always been behind the myths that distorted least the experience of subjective reality. Talk of the inner being of man is becoming less a matter of consulting the poets or the mystics or the metaphysicians, and more a matter of consulting or remembering what one has felt about himself. The converse of men as selves is beginning to gain the rich substance of commonly experienced meaning. It is like the substance of meaning shared by serious practitioners of the arts, or the values known without argument or dissent by people who work constructively for the principle of freedom. It is the sort of truth which is at once general and unique, abstract and concrete. In all such cases, the reality spoken of, shared and commonly known, is a reality made of the stuff of consciousness. It exists nowhere else. Yet it is the essence and the best of human life.

REVIEW
IN THE SERVICE OF MAN

How nice it would be if, in writing about the practice of science, all you had to do was to tell a little about the rules of scientific investigation and then give illustrations of the work of several "true" scientists to complete the picture!

You can do this, of course, and most of the time you can get away with it, because not many readers seem to notice that this simple account of the practice and progress of science is a falsification of the human condition. The fact of the matter is that any serious study of the practice of science requires a prior understanding of the nature of man—or, if this is too far-reaching a demand, at least an understanding that science is not an abstract technique for getting knowledge but a method that is pursued by a wide variety of human beings animated by a wide variety of motives, philosophies, and confined by differing temperaments, fears, and expectations.

Darwin supplied a clue to the sort of problem the definer of "science" encounters when he observed: "How odd it is that anyone should not see that all observation must be for or against some view, if it is to be of any service."

From this we can make a generalization: There are two kinds of scientists—the ones who want to prove something new, and the ones who want to maintain something old. There are, that is, the innovators and the inheritors; you could call them the radicals and the conservatives, or the Prometheans and the Epimetheans.

Already, of course, we are in trouble. This formula for choosing sides among scientists is obviously prejudicial. Why don't we say that there are the "responsibles" and the "irresponsibles" in science, as in other walks of life? Why don't we say that some scientists are properly "tough-minded," while others too easily let themselves be carried away by the will-to-believe? Well, we could say this, since it is also true. And it could also be said that the balanced human beings in the practice of science have been men with *disciplined* imaginations who embodied both radical and conservative virtues. We could say this, and then drop the subject, as though justice had been done to both sides, but then we should have to ignore the history of science, which is filled with instances of bitter conflict between the innovators and the inheritors—from the time of Paracelsus to the present.

Here, we shall make the point this history of science permits, leaving to others the task of adding qualifications and corrections.

What, broadly speaking, are the important controversies in which men of science become involved, whether among themselves or with others?

Basically, they are philosophical controversies. Galileo, a famous champion of scientific fact and truth, got into trouble with the Church, not merely because his heliocentric "theory" required a revision of the motion of the planets in relation to the sun, but because the removal of the earth from the center of cosmic things put into jeopardy the entire theological psychology. He was shaking the faith of the age in the sacred drama of salvation and had to be silenced to preserve the existing spiritual authority. (See *The Great Chain of Being*, Arthur O. Lovejoy.) Why are the Communists against Freud? Because the Freudian factors of causation in human behavior can find no place in the causal chains of Dialectical Materialism. Why do conditioning-and-response psychologists maintain such a snippy attitude toward J. B. Rhine and other parapsychologists? Because admission of ESP would oblige them to move into a radically different universe of psychological cause and effect.

Philosophy, in short, is prior to science and exercises a controlling influence on the practice of science. You take a philosophical position and then you decide, in the light of your philosophy, in

what direction of the universe to look, and what to look for. Philosophy dictates hypothesis.

And what dictates philosophy? Here we reach the barren lands of tautology. Philosophy dictates philosophy—that is, the inner inclinations of human beings, given certain circumstances, obstacles and avenues, produce statements about reality, process, and meaning. These statements constitute the content of philosophy.

This long preface seemed necessary to get a grip on a book we have for review, which is the life of a social scientist—John Collier. (*From Every Zenith, a Memoir,* 477 pp., published by Alan Swallow, Sage Books, Denver, Colorado, $6.50.) Here is a man whose science is continually getting out of hand and bursting into song. But he is also a man who brought his science down into the thick of affairs and put it to work in behalf of human society. It can be said, we think, that John Collier changed the world a little for the better. And that, surely, is what science is for.

In fact, some curious inhibition keeps on upsetting the intent of these sentences, since it does not seem right to identify John Collier simply as a "social scientist." In any age, there are areas of primary causation where a man inclined to be of service to his fellows can see a place to go to work. Collier, apparently, saw this possibility in the social sciences. In another epoch, he might have become a prophet. He is that anyway. But the point is that the creative spirits of the human race are never molded by the institutions to which they are brought by the accident of birth. They figure out what they want to do and then they *use* the institutions. Institutions, after all, are only the shadow, the deposit, of the characteristic actions of human beings. They cannot finally shape good men.

Collier was born in Georgia in 1884. From his mother he gained his "passion for the wild, the enhungered interest in astronomy, the wrath at any form of cruelty, the love of literature." From his father came "the identification with public affairs, and especially—though only later did I [he] name it—the awareness of what I may call 'community'—focal and world-wide community." The death in Collier's youth of both these rare parents was a devastating blow, yet after the months of recovery from the shock, he experienced, as he says, "a marvelous dawn." A paraphrase of Nietzsche describes the feeling which overtook him:

> *Keep holy thy highest hope; that hope is for the beyond-creation which is within the present creation.* I saw my life short or long, as one among the countless billions wherein the striving of the cosmic purpose moves, in joy that contains regret and pain, toward ends which are multitudinous yet are one, on the road which is the goal. . . . Wordsworth came, and then Walt Whitman; and the forest, below the hill where I stood, danced and soared with a terrible joy of the living earth. And whatever else has passed away, that terrible joy of the living earth has never passed. It is with me now, while with countless others in so many lands, I confront the imminent possibility that the living earth—the earth-soul, with all the souls of plant and man and beast, and all the cosmic purpose within these souls—may become annihilated unto eternity, and the cosmic purpose, with unknown millions of centuries yet to unfold on this planet, may be turned into nothingness through one group of compulsively related actions by technological man.

In 1902 Collier enrolled as a student at Columbia University, taking only graduate courses (without seeking credit) in literature. He studied under Brander Mathews and read Nietzsche, Goethe, and William Morris with Lucy Crozier. He went through the sociologists, Lester Ward, Spencer, Sumner, and read William James. He had a year in the Marine Laboratory at Woods Hole, and then, suddenly, at twenty, he returned South and became a social worker, heading a charitable organization in Atlanta. Mainly because he insisted that "charity" should consist in work opportunities (no cash handouts), Collier lasted only four months in this job. He equipped himself with a tarp, a compass, a hatchet, a frying pan and a waterbag, and spent the next six months wandering over the southern Appalachians. In the Great Smokies he met the Cherokee Indians, a

thousand of whom were hiding from U.S. troops who wanted to move them West. Now comes a period of such diverse experience that it cannot be summarized. Collier married, went to Europe, wrote for New York newspapers, and in 1908 joined the People's Institute, an outgrowth of Cooper Union, there pursuing studies of public entertainment and child life in the city. Collier became sophisticated concerning New York's politics and active in social work. He had a part in founding the New York Training School for Community Workers, and read deeply in psychology. Multiple social activities grew from his efforts. Yet most of these undertakings died with the aftermath of the first World War. It was then that Collier's disillusionment with the idea that the "occidental ethos and genius" was the hope of the world became complete. His next job was in California, where he came in 1919 to lead the state's program in adult education. This activity turned into a continuous lecture tour of California cities, but the "liberal" character of what Mr. Collier had to say on adult education led to campaigns against the program, with the result that its appropriation was killed in the state legislature. Collier then took his wife and children on a camping trip in Sonora, Mexico. Arriving at Taos in December of 1920, he was introduced to the Pueblo Indians by Antonio Luhan, the Indian husband of Mabel Dodge Luhan. Here began Collier's awareness of the unique human values embodied in living Indian communities. After a season of teaching at San Francisco State College, the General Federation of Women's Clubs arranged for Collier to work for the cause of the American Indians. He now entered upon a career of fighting the Indian Bureau. In 1923 he became permanent lobbyist in Washington for the Indian Defense Association. Ten years later, newly appointed Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, feeling pressure to choose for Indian Commissioner a man who was liked by missionaries and politicians, told Collier he was the only alternative and that he would have to take the job for the sake of the Indians. Collier accepted, was unanimously confirmed by the Senate, and immediately set out to establish policies which had been forming in his mind for several years. The result was the Indian Reorganization Act of 1933.

The rest of Collier's life is a matter of public record. It is a story told in this book, in his *Indians of the Americas,* and in a later volume, *Along the Gleaming Way.* It became a life with three dimensions: a lyrical philosophy of the life-web of community as the secret of the humane society; a social science turned to demonstration of one "tremendous fact: that adherence to the concept of shared social good is central to the creation of the human personality"; and an utterly free and original devotion to the art of life.

Three hundred years ago, in a desperate stroke for independent existence, the new-born sciences broke with the life of the spirit because, as historically manifest in religious institutions, there was no longer any life of the spirit, but only its confinement to anti-human dogma. Today, all science, and particularly psychological and social science, hungers for a renewal of this spirit at ancient or rather timeless springs. It falls to men like John Collier to bring to social science the life-giving transfusion of deep pantheist philosophy, and to help to begin a new cycle in the affairs of the men who think about and try to give service to Man.

COMMENTARY
THE CALL OF THE WILD

IN speaking of the interval of "suspension" of ordinary ideas of identity—moments filled with wonder, longing, and flights of the imagination—the writer of this week's lead article does not, we think, explore the subjective reality of this experience persistently enough.

It is as though, with a confidence that has no rational explanation, the individual says to himself—Is this really *my* universe, or do I belong somewhere else? It is as though he exclaims, with Shelley—

> A heavy weight of hours has chained and bowed
> One too like thee, tameless and swift and proud

—the "thee" of these lines being any of the demi-gods known to us in legend and myth, or one we make up ourselves.

What we are trying to say is that most of the time we do not show or feel sufficient respect for the "wild" aspect of our psychic life. These untrammeled wonderings may have a ground in reality. The stolid fat boy who forgets his all-too-solid flesh and thinks of himself as a lithe Hermes vaulting into the sky, may have a Hermes in him somewhere. The plain myopic girl who in reverie forgets her stunted peering across the room—she may have, back there, behind her eyes, in and in, the vision she feels but cannot use in the body now hers by accident of birth. These dreams are surely more than fancies of frustration, more than jests played by a compassionate egotism upon short-changed personalities. They are rather the seed of a measureless abundance in human potentiality. We need know only the story of Helen Keller to find this out.

What a burden it is to be born into an age which repeats only myths of the littleness of men—which takes these longings and these dreams and inverts them to suit the measured requirements of bureaucracies and slide-rule experts in marketing goods and services! The shriveling lies we tell the young, as though the young had no other purpose than to demonstrate the syllogisms of mediocrity—how much longer will they last? How much longer will men of undoubted intelligence hire out their abilities to assist in the systematic belittlement of mankind? What we suffer at their hands is worse than any Babylonian Captivity.

It would be better to believe in elves and fairies, in gnomes and trolls and Lokis, if we could somehow also regain our faith in Galahads and Thors, Sigurds and Odins!

The price would not be unreasonable, but it is of course not necessary to pay. Ours may be an age of forgotten gods and still-born heroes, but we are still the men we have always been, somewhere, inside. The project is to learn how to listen to ourselves for a while, instead of echoing our sainted forefathers and the hearsay of the present. It is a time for new beginnings.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

MORE ON THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE

OUR last notice of Betty Friedan's book of this title occurred in this column, and, since attitudes toward the man-woman equation have so much to do with the atmosphere in which children are raised, the discussion may be appropriately continued here.

First of all, in answer to three subscribers who wish to know whether we are "anti" or "pro" Friedan, the reply is "Neither." Mrs. Friedan—as shown on a small scale by MANAS correspondence is sufficiently challenging to encourage constructive ferment. It is also true that, perhaps necessarily, this author becomes something of a "hotgospeler," a polemicist on behalf of a particular point of view. There are other books, we think, which probe the question more deep1y (among them Florida Scott-Maxwell's *Women and Sometimes Men)* and deserve attention here, but for the present let us look at some critical comment on Mrs. Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique.* One reader writes concerning its exaggerations and oversimplifications:

> A point discussed in the review of *The Feminine Mystique*—the urge of the woman to find one answer to the question: "who am I in relation to my role"—is not confined to women alone. Man has been asking this question in every age.
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> To find a worthwhile goal in life, to link together our various forms of "work," is a difficult task for both men and women. It requires a good educational background, a balanced personality, and at times great suffering to be able to find a purpose in life—"a life-long interest beyond interpersonal relationships," as Dr. Lynn White puts it.
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> Twenty-five years of close contact with hundreds of women in their homes, to be sure, mostly "average women," and my own personal struggle "to find myself as a woman," resulted in some observations in regard to *Feminine Mystique.*
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> It has been proved by hundreds of women that their "biological destiny" had nothing to do with, or did not hinder them from, finding a meaningful purpose in life, along with rearing a family, just as men *do not give up looking* simply because they become fathers. There are few men who really attained "greatness," although through history men have enjoyed more freedom of choice than women, which proves that biological functions, or rather the difference in biological functions, has little to do with choosing a meaningful life. It is unfair to both men and women for the latter to carry the complete burden of rearing a family. I agree fully with Bertrand Russell that a woman should be paid as Mother and homemaker just as any other worker is paid for work performed. (*The World as it Could be Made.*)
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> This will immensely increase the importance of the woman's work, make it more meaningful and dignified, and also require her to become proficient in her job as mother and homemaker, if that is what she would like to do; and it will also give more time to the man to pursue his chosen work. The pay might come from the community, as is already partially done in Sweden. (*The Swedes Do It Better:* Richard F. Tomason, Harper's, 1962.)
>
> In my experience, women's frustrations are the result of financial dependence upon the husband. It is unnatural for one person to depend economically upon another. This puts both giver and taker in positions of inequality and causes frustration to both partners.
>
> It is also of paramount importance that the education of the woman *should not* be interrupted during the time she is rearing a family, because that is the time when she needs all the knowledge available to help her in the most important work any one could choose—that of watching and helping a child to grow. As things stand now, the ignorance of the average mother is the most tragic aspect of our society. The same can be said about the appalling inefficiency of the average woman as a home-maker. This unconscious, and sometimes conscious, feeling of inadequacy in her role as a mother and home-maker is responsible for a great deal of frustration among the modern women.

We shall be surprised if no one questions the Russell or Swedish proposal of "pay for mothers," by either community subsidy or the husbands. Yet the idea of compensation is certainly worth consideration, since it represents an attempt to

reduce various inequalities, recognizing their existence and seeking various means for improving the situation.

* * *

Another reader has called attention to a sort of "riposte" to Mrs. Friedan, written for *This Week Magazine* by another career woman, Jean Libman Block. Here are some of Mrs. Block's points:

> Under the glare of logic and facts, Mrs. Friedan's image of masses of women strait-jacketed into domestic shackles does not stand up. Neither does her proposed solution: commitment to a professional career requiring at the very least a college education. America is too big and diverse for any such constraining pattern. Our individual tastes, talent and needs are too varied.
>
> The great irony is that we gripe while women around the globe fight tooth and nail for the very freedoms of choice that are already ours. So let's put an end to lamentations, bury our self-pity and set about our task of each woman realizing her own potential as she sees best.
>
> It's false to claim that a whole generation of brainwashed child brides has been forced into a housewife trap as confining as a concentration camp. There is no one kind of woman and no single pattern of living.
>
> We live in a world of diversity and individual choice. Each woman has a host of choices: education, marriage, career or any combination of the three. What's more, she faces not just one moment of choice in a lifetime, but a whole series of turning points.

Beyond these phases of the argument, a further philosophical dimension can be discerned. The problem is not really so much whether it is "harder" to be a woman than a man, nor whether the environmental circumstances of women are steadily improving; it is whether women know any more than men do about becoming "whole" persons. This task, to which all intelligent human beings—male and female—have addressed themselves, seems to involve one necessary emotional stance, that of *seeing opportunity* in the very circumstances which seem to others to *deny* opportunity. In psychotherapy, as Herbert Fingarette points out in *The Self in Transformation*, only the patient is able to think *as if* he were indeed responsible for his condition, and can therefore liberate the creative forces to surmount its limitations.

FRONTIERS

"Realms Beyond the Senses"

IT may seem paradoxical that the age of greatest technical advances is also the age in which interest in the "unseen" and "unknown" is increasing—both for the general public and among scientists. A discussion titled "The Mystery of Our 'Sixth Senses'," by Rutherford Platt in the *Reader's Digest* for September, concerns this development. After referring to the late Alexis Carrel, the Nobel Prize winner who believed in a kind of clairvoyance, Mr. Platt offers a vaguely scientific theory as to why forms of extra-sensory perception continually claim popular attention. He writes:

> It has been suggested that the thalamus may be the seat of ancient sixth senses, smothered in civilized man yet not extinguished. They may occasionally flare brightly in primitive or unsophisticated people, in children, or in adults under great stress. Certain it is that these faculties are incited more freely when consciousness—our new brain—does not override their free play.
>
> As science lifts the curtain on this mystery out of our primitive past, we begin to understand that we are barely tapping our potentialities. The certainty that the sixth senses exist makes all the more worthy of investigation our long-dormant faculties of the mind.

One of the best contemporary surveys of ESP is provided by Gardner Murphy in *Challenge of Psychical Research* (a World Perspectives volume, Harper, 1961). Dr. Murphy, now of the Menninger Foundation, and head of the American Society for Psychical Research, does an admirable job of showing why the fascination of bizarre psychic phenomena can and should open the scientific mind regarding the nature of man. We quote from Dr. Murphy's Introduction:

> Half of the problem of achieving a "world perspective" is the problem of integration. How may the eager, restless gropings into many odd corners be induced to yield a coherent and unitary view of our world? How may synthesis, co-ordination, insight, meaning be achieved? Most of the volumes in this *World Perspectives* series are concerned with perspectives in this sense.
>
> There is, however, another task of equal importance. This is the response to new voices, undeciphered symbols, odd discoveries for which no place can at present be found, the investigation of that which defies today's order and rationality the resolute and unfrightened recognition of what appears out of place, irrational, meaningless, an affront to reason. In the history of discovery, there have always been the blur and the horror of that which refuses to be assimilated; observations which, however carefully repeated and checked, fall into no predetermined place in the jigsaw puzz1e which we conceive to be nature.
>
> Psychical research, or parapsychology, consists of observations recorded in a form which aims at order and intelligibility but which cannot by any stretch of the imagination be subsumed under the science of today. Shall we accept that which cannot be assimilated—telepathy, prevision, apparitions of the dying and deceased, the movement of objects in a manner unknown to the physical sciences?

Challenge of Psychical Research is comprised of eight chapters dealing with "experimental telepathy," "experimental clairvoyance," "precognition," and "psychokinesis"—and ends with a section on evidence for the survival of the personality after physical death. There are many areas of ESP, Dr. Murphy feels, which cannot presently be discussed intelligently, but he does *not* feel that they are irrelevant to the nature of man, or that they should be left without continued investigation. In one place Dr. Murphy suggests an ideal attitude for the investigator—a combination of caution and open-mindedness:

> It is the hard core of telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and psychokinesis that we do *not* know how to cover at all even by stretching our concepts from normal psychology. It is for these reasons that they are regarded as the core data of psychical research or parapsychology. The other phenomena are rejected because no good evidence is known that could be presented to the reader *or* because no reason can be offered for believing that they belong in a separate category of the psychical, rather than belonging to general psychology. We are 1ikely to be wrong at any one of these points. If these other classes of data prove to offer us something interesting, capable of investigation, and capable of

> pushing us into concepts which do not belong at all to the psychology of today, then we will have to accept them as part of psychical research.

Dr. Murphy does not stop here, nor can he avoid the philosophizing which serves, in his conclusion, to introduce work he has planned for the future:

> A good many readers will wonder why so much "fuss" is made about the special challenges of wonders that are associated with that which goes beyond the existing disciplines. Is not the whole world full of wonders? Is not every physiological or psychological event largely inexplicable? Are there not miracles moment by moment? These are questions of definition. It is true that we understand very little, but we are beginning to systematize; indeed, the systematizations of the last 300 years since the time of Galileo have given us a rather good world view, and a rather good conception of the unity of the living system in which physiology and psychology are intimately fused. It is where something occurs that is *not* a part of this intimate fusion—it is where something occurs that appears to *transcend* the ordinary known relations of the organism to time, space, matter, and energy—that we have a breakthrough into something which at present we must call unknown, tying it to the known as best we can, but ready always to emphasize the unknown and see whether *new principles*—utterly and genuinely new principles—may be necessary in order to give a rounded interpretation. In this *World Perspectives* series, psychical research may turn out to harmonize and integrate with other new perspectives. It is more likely that it will be a "thorn in the flesh," necessitating some basic rethinking in basic new research, and playing a large role in the functional shift to a new way of looking at life and mind.

Dr. Murphy, it seems to us, worthily continues the attitude which gave William James his broad perspective on psychic and religious phenomena.