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SOME ANCIENT ECHOES

IN one of the closing chapters of *Where the Wasteland Ends,* Theodore Roszak speaks of the kind of "knowing" which may come to a man when he begins to realize that some simple statement has under-meanings and overtones—that there are *resonances* in what is said. These riches of meaning are what Paul Valéry identifies as belonging to the "poetic state." Their value, he maintains, exists at the expense of the "finite significance" of the words, which usually relates to some utility, while the poetic implications reach after independent content. Roszak writes at length on this distinction, showing that the elimination of the ambiguity of language is an obligatory procedure in the sciences—as science is presently conceived—and that when this reductive process is identified as the technique for reaching "truth," a devastating impoverishment of thought results. Others have pointed out that the application of Occam's razor—the rule that only necessary causes should be considered—has led to an over-simplified, mechanistic conception of nature, by reason of the expectation that world processes can be explained by one class of increasingly mathematical abstractions having to do with the behavior of matter.

The language of mathematical abstractions is only one of the languages by which human beings communicate, and limitation of "significant" communication to the language of science has had a withering effect on our lives. But it is not enough to say this. Nor to propose that poetry is another language, for poetry has a thousand dialects and is itself subject to intoxications and vanities. Perhaps a passage from Ortega's *Meditations on Quixote* will be helpful here. Ortega is considering the impact of the Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte on literature and thought, for Comte was the founder of a secular religion—the religion of the unambiguous, positive meanings of science. The effect of Positivism, Ortega says, was to elevate the negation of all heroism to a heroic form, and to impose a harsh determinism on all life.

> The natural sciences based on determinism conquered the field of biology during the first decades of the nineteenth century. Darwin believed he had succeeded in imprisoning life—our last hope—within physical necessity. Life is reduced to mere matter, physiology to mechanics. The human organism, which seemed an independent unit, capable of acting by itself, is placed in its environment like a figure in a tapestry. It is no longer the organism which moves but the environment which is moving through it. Our actions are no more than reactions. There is no freedom, no originality. To live is to adapt oneself; to adapt oneself is to allow the material environment to penetrate into us, to drive us out of ourselves. Adaptation is submission and renunciation. Darwin sweeps heroes off the face of the earth.
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> The hour of the "roman experimental" arrives. Zola does not learn his poetry from either Homer or Shakespeare but from Claude Bernard. The subject matter is always man, but since man is no longer the agent of his acts but is moved by the environment in which he lives, the novel will look for the representation of the environment. The environment is the only protagonist. People speak of evoking the "atmosphere." Art submits to one rule: verisimilitude. But does not tragedy have its own verisimilitude? Is there not an esthetic *vero* or talisman—the beautiful—and a likeness of the beautiful? The answer is *no* according to positivism: the beautiful is what is probable and the true lies only in physics. The aim of the novel is physiology.
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> One night Bouvard and Pécuchet buried poetry in the Cemetery of Père Lachaise—in honor of verisimilitude and determinism.

It is impossible to speak of the heroic element in man in scientific language. The scientific language involves quantification, and we know of no way to give the hero a number, save according to some symbolic scheme. It is impossible in scientific language to speak of the moral

struggle—we cannot render the combatants of this struggle into finite, definable terms. All that men aspire to longingly, that they dream about transcendingly, that they yearn for spiritually, is beyond the unambiguous language of measurable relationships and Galileo's primary qualities. Language is itself of course a finite affair, which is the reason for using language with resonances. The resonances promise meanings which burst free from the words. They are meant to liberate the reader's mind, not drive it into grooves. They say, "Make what you can of this; it may have transcendent potentialities." There is a kind of parallel in a simple "prose" statement by Ortega, of which Julian Marias says in a note:

> In 1932 Ortega writes: "I *am myself plus my circumstance.* This expression which appears in my first book and which condenses all my philosophic thought . . ." But this does not mean, of course, that the truth of a philosophy is contained *in* that or any other similar expression. Ortega adds that the twelve hundred pages of Hegel's *Logik* are a preparation for bringing out the full meaning of the sentence "The idea is the absolute"; in other words, that this expression has no meaning without them. The proposition which sums up a philosophy is not separable from the totality of the philosophy, but its mission is "to liberate" the intellective energy accumulated in the whole doctrine. Ortega's philosophy is not contained *in* the thesis "I am myself plus my circumstance," but that sentence can only be understood when it serves as a condensation of that philosophy as a whole and its formulation brings this doctrine suddenly into focus, thus making possible its true comprehension.

So a sage might declare, *Tat tvam asi* (That thou art), yet a lifetime or many lifetimes might be occupied in realizing what it means. There are the words, the grammatical meaning, and there is the full, many-dimensioned, realized meaning which, once gained, would make a man a sage or even a Buddha.

We might note that Roszak was anticipated by Thoreau when, at the end of his review of the *Natural History of Massachusetts*, he wrote: "It is with science as with ethics,—we cannot know truth by contrivance and method; the Baconian is as false as any other, and with all the helps of machinery and the arts, the most scientific will still be the healthiest and friendliest man, and possess a more perfect Indian wisdom."

What is "a more perfect Indian wisdom"? To know what Thoreau means by this it might help to read all he wrote, but be more necessary to live a Thoreau-like life. "Indian wisdom" was a symbol for him. It is language used for its continuing reverberations or resonances. We shall not exhaust its meaning by more precise definition, but might destroy it utterly. However, Emerson's biographical sketch of Thoreau, which comes at the beginning of the small volume we have been quoting, suggests what "a more perfect Indian wisdom" might be like. In his account of Thoreau, whom he knew probably better than anyone else, Emerson wrote:

> His robust common sense, armed with stout hands, keen perceptions, and strong will, cannot yet account for the superiority which shone in his simple and hidden life. I must add the cardinal fact, that there was an excellent wisdom in him, proper to a rare class of men, which showed him the material world as a means and symbol. This discovery, which sometimes yields to poets a certain casual and interrupted light, serving for the ornament of their writing, was in him an unsleeping insight; and whatever faults or obstructions of temperament might cloud it, he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. In his youth, he said, one day, "The other world is all my art: my pencils will draw no other; my jack-knife will cut nothing else; I do not use it as a means." This was the muse and genius that ruled his opinions, conversations, studies, work, and course of life.

Thoreau was able to find within the environs of Concord most of the natural phenomena he read about in books. Of this Emerson said: "I think his fancy for referring everything to the meridian of Concord did not grow out of any ignorance or depreciation of other longitudes or latitudes, but was rather a playful expression of his conviction of the indifferency of all places, and that the best place for each is where he stands."

Emerson went on walks with Thoreau, and tells how he waited twelve years to identify a bird which he knew only by voice. Once, after he had just missed this bird, which dived down into a bush, Emerson spoke of his long search:

> I told him he must beware of finding and booking it, lest life should have nothing more to show him. He said, "What you seek in vain for, half your life, one day you will come full upon all the family at dinner. You seek it like a dream, and as soon as you find it you become its prey."

What did the love and study of Nature mean to Thoreau? Emerson writes:

> His interest in the flower or bird lay very deep in his mind, was connected with Nature,—and the meaning of Nature was never attempted to be defined by him. He would not offer a memoir of his observations to the Natural History Society. "Why should I? To detach the description from its connections in my mind would make it no longer true or valuable to me: and they do not wish what belongs to it. His power of observation seemed to indicate additional senses. He saw as with a microscope, heard as with ear-trumpet, and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard. And yet none knew better than he that it is not the fact that imports but the impression or effect of the fact on your mind. Every fact lay in glory in his mind, a type of the order and beauty of the whole.

As to Thoreau's poetry, Emerson is quick to admit it showed a lack of lyric facility and technical skill. He believed that Thoreau simply would not bother with these niceties, "perhaps scornful of superficial graces." Then Emerson says:

> But if he want lyric fineness and technical merits, if he have not the poetic temperament, he never lacks the causal thought, showing that his genius was better than his talent. He knew the worth of the Imagination for the uplifting and consolation of human life, and liked to throw every thought into a symbol. The fact you tell is of no value, but only the impression. For this reason his presence was poetic, always piqued the curiosity to know more deeply the secrets of his mind. He had many reserves, an unwillingness to exhibit to profane eyes what was still sacred in his own, and knew well how to throw a poetic veil over his experience.

Finally, of Thoreau's "religion":

> Whilst he used in his writings a certain petulance of remark in reference to churches or churchmen, he was a person of rare, tender, and absolute religion, a person incapable of any profanation, by act or thought. Of course, the same isolation which belonged to his original thinking detached him from the social religious forms. This is neither to be censured nor regretted. Aristotle long ago explained it, when he said, "One who surpasses his fellow-citizens in virtue is no longer a part of the city. Their law is not for him, since he is a law unto himself."
>
> Thoreau was sincerity itself, and might fortify the convictions of prophets in the ethical laws by his holy living. It was an affirmative experience which refused to be set aside. A truth-speaker he, capable of the most deep and strict conversation; a physician to the wounds of any soul; a friend, knowing not only the secrets of friendship, but almost worshipped by those few persons who resorted to him as their confessor and prophet, and knew the deep value of his mind and great heart.

Emerson, apparently, understood Thoreau's language and grasped his intentions. He knew about that "other world" of which Thoreau spoke—it was Emerson's world, too. It is the world which poets happen upon, and sometimes deal with well, each in his own cipher. Roszak speaks of the classic forms of this language:

> The peculiar degeneration of consciousness from which we suffer—the diminishing awareness of symbolic resonance—is especially a crisis of language. In our culture, almost uniquely, we have inverted the hierarchical relationship between rhapsodical declaration and literal prose, between matters of myth and matters of fact. Rhapsody and myth—the prime linguistic carriers of symbolic resonance—have long since ceased to be regarded as sources of knowledge. . . . in the modern period, most of our keenest minds had come passionately to believe, like Dickens' Mr. Gradgrind, that "in this life, we want nothing but Facts, sir; nothing but Facts." What else could follow from this but a culture whose realities are restricted to flat, functional prose, unambiguous quantities, and Baconian inductions. As a result, the one-dimensional language of the logician, scholar, and critic—and eventually of the technician and scientist—has been promoted to a position of omnipotence among us. Has there ever

> been such a culture of explainers and clarifiers, expounders and logic-choppers?

What is it to know in all dimensions, and not simply in the objective mode? Any answer, like the question itself, would be a vanity and impudence, yet an answer of a sort is given in the eleventh discourse of the *Bhagavad-Gita,* which is an account of the revelation by Krishna of his "divine form," that of embodied deity. Arjuna, having requested this vision, is blasted by the overwhelming sight of the endless correlations of power and the forms of existing things—"the whole universe animate and inanimate gathered here in one, and all things else thou hast a wish to see." Terrified, and ashamed of his presumption, Arjuna begs Krishna to resume his "natural" form, that of an ordinary human being. Krishna does so, but Arjuna will never forget the blinding image of "the All," since it was reality beyond imagining.

This experience might be thought of as the archetypal vision of "knowing," with all lesser symbols and symbolic representations serving as stepped-down approaches to the universal resonances of meaning Krishna made possible for Arjuna by endowing him, briefly, with the divine sight. The language of symbols is the speech which deals with the ranges of representation, according to the insight and imagery available. To "believe" in this language, in the archaic sense, is to have the feeling that there is something of all the universe in human beings, enabling them to see, as Blake proposed, "a world in a grain of sand," or all Nature in the neighborhood of Walden, as Thoreau was confident could be done.

Myth, as a recent writer has put it, is "an imaginative description of reality in which the known is related to the unknown through a system of correspondences in which mind and matter, self, society, and cosmos are integrally expressed in an esoteric language of poetry and number which is itself a performance of the reality it seeks to describe." The use or comprehension of such a language depends upon the deep presence in every one of us of the stuff of that reality, so that, by attending to myth, we begin to feel more and more consciously those correspondences in ourselves which are counterparts of what the myth describes. The action of the myth is always in some sense *our* drama—a kind of objectivizing of our latent self-knowledge. This, too, must be what Thoreau means when he says that the "true man of science" will know better by his "finer organization," and that he will learn "by direct intercourse and sympathy" instead of by inference and deduction. He will know by *being* and *becoming.* But he can be or become only what he already is, in essence or principle.

A writer quoted by Roszak remarks that the Nature studied by Goethe was not "objectively analyzed," but "subjectively penetrated." His was a continuum of sentience, not geometry. Roszak comments:

> "Objectively analyzed . . . subjectively penetrated." There we have precisely the difference, the world of difference, between the two ways of knowing a symbol. What our science forgets (or even denies) is that the continuum "subjectively penetrated" is indeed knowledge of the One: a knowledge primeval and universal, the basis of intellectual enterprise, artistic creation, and moral passion. And that is what distinguishes *really* knowing from *merely* knowing.

To live fully, Roszak suggests, is to live in this world of resonances, of reverberating meanings. The literal meanings are useful for the work we have to do in the world—the nuts and bolts of material existence—but that is not the meaning of our lives; it is only a small and contributing part or support.

Yet after several centuries of careful suppression of ambiguity in speech, as the supreme virtue in the pursuit of knowledge, how shall we know when to stop? If we depart from the dead letter, whether of devitalized scripture or scientific formula, how shall we know a limit when we come to it? The arbitration of poetic fancy seems an impossible task. Which is doubtless why Plato distrusted the poets as educators, speaking of them, in one place, as

dependent for their inspiration on a kind of madness. Well, there is poetry and poetry; this must be acknowledged, since Plato himself was a poet and myth-maker of extraordinary genius. There is the majestic poetry of hymns or scriptures, to be read in words or in the woods at Walden, to which Thoreau responded in kind, by saying—

> I hearing get, who had but ears
> And sight, who had but eyes before;
> I moments live, who lived but years
> And truth discern, who knew but learning's lore.

How shall we know when and where to stop? Which myths have verisimilitude, have in them the symbols we should take to heart? There is no external rule. There is no book of rules for falling in love. There are books of manners, but none except those filled with impudence about love. A man would not ask help for the saving of his soul; if he is a man, he knows he must do this himself. And so it is with the reading of myths and the living among the resonances of life and the works that set them going. No stern monitor stood over Rembrandt telling him what to draw and how to lay on his color; nor was Blake instructed by anyone save himself. And so with the men and women and children who learn for themselves the fundamentals of living. Learning the fullness of living is not different.

Yet there are modes of education which have a *tendency* to open the eyes, to awaken or invite the soul. These have been understood by many teachers and often repeated, even in modern books, as for example, most recently by Herbert Read in *The Redemption of the Robot,* which is a title something like *Where the Wasteland Ends.* But no book can tell more than a little. The precision we seek is in ourselves; and the "science" Thoreau spoke of, and practiced, there too.

REVIEW
"YOU CAN'T EAT MAGNOLIAS"

EVEN though it was nearly five years ago that we reviewed *North Toward Home*, by Willie Morris, the memory of this book remains fresh. It was thoroughly enjoyable, having a satisfying directness, a refusal to resort to abstractions, and a quality of coming to grips with things that seems lacking in much of what is published today. It wouldn't be right to say that Mr. Morris showed a greater interest in people than in principles, but perhaps accurate to suggest that he formed his judgments more on the basis of human encounters than by ideological assumptions. At any rate, his way of thinking seemed to produce first-rate writing.

Now, having gone through *You Can't Eat Magnolias*, published last year for the L.Q.C. Lamar Society by McGraw-Hill, we are beginning to suspect that many of the qualities we admired in Mr. Morris belong to other Southern writers. We won't presume to say why, but happily report the fact, adding that much in this volume is meant to help the reader understand what is "different" about the American South. *You Can't Eat Magnolias* is the work of twenty-seven young men, all but one of them born and raised in the South. ("Young" here means not far from thirty-five). The odd man spent a lot of time there and is able to say things the natives don't or can't. Several of the contributors are black. The Lamar Society, formed by these writers and a number of others late in 1969, is named for "a Mississippi statesman who had been a fire-brand secessionist but who, in the 1870's, became a spokesman for reconciliation between the races and regions." It is the intention of these writers to articulate a new conception of and vision for the South. For the general (Northern) reader, the book constitutes a minor revelation. A great many people who have seldom or never been further south than Washington, D.C., commonly feel that the South is a good place to stay away from. After reading, say, *Black Like Me*, you feel you couldn't possibly be comfortable anywhere down there. *You Can't Eat Magnolias* will help readers of this sort to recognize, willingly or not, that they have little justification for this "Northern" psychology and innocence. For today what we speak of as the Race Problem, and Racism, exist everywhere.

There are qualities of a distinctive identity in the American South. This is a recurring theme in these essays, and while no definition is final—or could be, concerning such a matter—the suggestion of Arnold Toynbee, quoted in the title essay by H. Brandt Ayers, seems to give the most light. "If," wrote Toynbee, "I had been a small boy in 1897 in the Southern part of the United States, I . . . should . . . have known from my parents that history had happened to my people in my part of the world."

History, Toynbee means, is "something unpleasant that happens to other people." In this sense, white Southerners have carried a unique burden. To experience vicissitudes—including defeat in war—brings people together. It has a fusing effect. If all goes well in a country, no one thinks much about "history." But when its impact is felt, questions are asked, explanations must be found, and justifications are sought. For good or ill, the South suffered an ordeal the North can hardly imagine. There seems a sense in which the writers responsible for this book have been purged of easy myths of rationalization, and that they have something valuable to say not only to themselves, but to the whole country.

Mr. Ayers, after quoting Toynbee, points out that recent events in Southeast Asia and in the northern ghettoes have brought a similar ordeal to the North, so that now, at long last, the two great sections of the country have hope of greater psychological unity:

> North and South we have now been reduced to the same historical dimension. Vietnam and the nationalization of racial problems have shattered the Yankees' innocent illusions that they have been ordained by God to trample out immorality and that His truth marches with them into every war. They have even discovered that His bounty is not sufficient

> to feed the incredible hunger of their cities. The South has been closer to the actual human condition, knowing for a long time that anything is possible: defeat in war, calculated injustice, poverty, hunger, disease, suspension of civil rights, even occupation by a victorious army. But the South has not always used well what it has learned. It has had to be reminded that a tragic history does not make it immune to the consequences of complacently perpetuating an unjust way of life.
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> Now that we are finally equal—only fallible humankind, no better—we can learn from each other if we are wise. There is a duality in the South which the nation could well heed. It is not the warring impulses to be both American and white supremacist Southern: that is dying and good riddance! It is the dual allegiance among Southerners to a spiritual as well as a material god.

You Can't Eat Magnolias embodies the desire to salvage, purify, and adapt to the present the historic agrarian ideal of the South, by controlling intelligently the spread of technology from the North so that it does not turn the smaller Southern cities into "disaster areas." There is also determination to complete the difficult task of equalizing conditions of life for the two races.

Terry Sanford, governor of North Carolina from 1961 to 1965, writes amusingly of the demythologizing of the Southern past. After the Civil War, he points out, the myths came easy:

> Consider the Georgia driver of a sight-seeing bus at Gettysburg who continued to recite Southern victories in skirmish after skirmish until one offended Yankee lady demanded, "Didn't the Union forces win anything here?"
>
> "No ma'am," he said, "and ain't going to as long as I'm driving this bus."
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> We still feel put upon. Just last year a National Farm Organization field man told a group of Alabama chicken farmers to join up and strike, for they were to be "the last slaves freed in the South." A tall farmer with highwater overalls unfolded and stood up and yelled to the crowd: "Y'all better hurry up! They've already freed the mules!"

Then Mr. Sanford speaks of the new awakening of the South, throwing into relief the fact that "racism is not an exclusively Southern dishonor, but a tragic national blight." He continues:

> But our progress is encouraging. The April 18, 1971, edition of *The New York Times* cited figures showing that the South has now moved *ahead* of the rest of the country in school desegregation. "Two years ago at this time, according to the federal government, 18 per cent of all black pupils in the South were attending integrated schools; today, 38 per cent are. In the North and West, during the same period, the figures remained almost static around 27 per cent."

More than once noted in these essays is the fact, referred to by Willie Morris in his Introduction, that of the twelve governors of the Southern states, in 1972 eleven were white moderates "who largely plead an end to race mongering and seek to concentrate on some of the problems the region has so long ignored."

Why has it taken so long for this sort of social intelligence to rise to authority in the South? The answer to this question must be complex, but a part of the explanation would be the infamous linkage, formed in 1876, between aggressive Northern capital enterprise and stubborn Southerners who were determined to turn their defeat into victory. Richard Goodwin calls this linkage a "crippling compact" between a few Southern leaders and Northern campaigners for the regime of the "robber barons." These politicians in the South would support the Republican candidate in the 1876 election "in return for a promise that the North would remain indifferent to any enforcement of the rights of black men." This is still, Goodwin says, the "Southern strategy," and it is "not simply in opposition to the blacks, but to the just and legitimate demands of the entire South."

> Those who oppose school integration also oppose every measure to give a decent education to white children. Those who identify poverty programs with race, and oppose them, are also stripping millions of white families of the opportunity to learn skills and get a job. Those who are offering the hand of friendship to the South are supporting economic policies which are depressing the economy, reducing

> real income and which strike hardest at the middle class and the small businessman.

Another writer, Thomas H. Naylor, a principal founder of the Lamar Society, says:

> Although in theory the reins of political power were transferred back to the South around 1877, in practice the region remained at the mercy of Northern business interests for nearly fifty years. The period between 1877 and the late 1920s was characterized by the exploitation of the South's natural resources by Northern capitalists seeking a short-term payoff without regard to the long-term implications of their actions. The allocation of land, timber, minerals, and human resources in the South during this period was determined primarily by forces outside the region.

This external economic control added to the alienation of defeat and established the "ideological isolationism" which make communication between the South and the North difficult if not impossible. In consequence, white conservatives responded to the 1954 Supreme Court decision and the Civil Rights movements with almost uniform opposition, and meanwhile a handful of politicians fed the fires of hostility to any federal measure.

Yet changes, some of which have been mentioned, are taking place. *You Can't Eat Magnolias* is notable evidence of the best qualities in the spirit behind these changes. This book has a strong moral coherence seldom found in such collections.

COMMENTARY
GROUND OF BECOMING

FROM time to time we are moved to quote from Pico della Mirandola's *Oration on the Dignity of Man,* since this work, first published in 1496, two years after the death of its youthful author, is the historic "manifesto of humanism" of the Italian Renaissance, giving that great awakening of the human spirit its primary meaning. Pico held it to be the unique distinction of human beings that they determine their own nature and quality—the doctrine, one could say, of the self-creation of man. This is both the obligation and the glory of being human. A man is in charge of his own becoming; philosophy labors to make this verity self-evident, while the task of education is to help young and old to shoulder the responsibilities involved. This is a *conception* of man—not an image, for his images are various.

Practically every article in this issue reflects the importance of recognizing man as the being who is responsible for himself. Thus Ortega in his *Meditations on Quixote,* Roszak in his quest for the keys to self-knowledge, and Thoreau and Emerson in all they wrote. Thus the Indian villager's struggle toward self-regeneration, and the American South in its expression of a renewed moral integrity. And thus the child who learns self-control. Teachers who know this law of human progress present choices, not decisions. Human responsibility is always in some sense common and cooperative.

How did Pico put it? Speaking mythopoeically in the voice of the Artificer of the world, Pico says:

> We have given you, Oh Adam, no visage proper to yourself, nor any endowment properly your own, in order that whatever place, whatever form, whatever gifts you may, with premeditation, select, these same you may have and possess through your judgment and decision. The nature of all other creatures is defined and restricted within laws which We have laid down; you, by contrast, impeded by no such restrictions, may, by your own free will, to whose custody We have assigned you, trace for yourself the lineaments of your own nature. I have placed you at the very center of the world, so that from that vantage point you may with greater ease glance round about you on all that the world contains. We have made you a creature neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, in order that you may, as the free and proud shaper of your own being, fashion yourself in the form you may prefer. It will be in your power to descend to the lower, brutish forms of life; you will be able through your own decision, to rise again to the superior orders whose life is divine.

This is Pico's stance and theme, and the ground of human becoming. It is the foundation of all worthy human achievement.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
HONEY AND WILD RASPBERRIES II

BEFORE I go on I should explain more of our situation so you can see how we have come to some of the conclusions expressed here.

We live and have the camp on a 140-acre farm. Our farm is four miles from the nearest small town. We swim in a lake about three miles from camp; there is a sandy beach and no pop stands—just woods. Unless we go to something special for an outing, we are on the farm at all times and the children have no access to commercial products. We grow all our vegetables, most of the fruit, and raise all our meat and poultry. The things we purchase are gotten mostly from other farms and organic sources if possible.

We have three meals a day and no snack periods. Each child sleeps in a small house by himself or with from one to five other children. The loners are generally older campers. The little houses are down in the woods and are a walk to meals or the barn, where all the other activities are held. The only irregular eating occurs among the four children who bake the goodies for the day, or bake the bread. The goodies bakers naturally lick the cooking bowls. It sometimes appears that they eat more raw dough than baked.

All in all, the children bring a healthy hunger to each meal, eat their fill, and then take off. Unless they arrive at camp with a supply of treats, which don't last a week, they eat well. I clocked the evening meal one night, from the time I yelled "dinner" and the kids ran from the barn, until they had finished eating, and the time was 12½ minutes!! I had spent three hours in preparing that meal.

Because of its isolation from the familiar fare of TV advertising and supermarket titillation, the camp is a more-or-less perfect proving ground. Most children coming to us for the first time have never tasted milk right out of the cow, an egg taken that day from under a hen, *real* whipped cream, vegetables fresh from the garden (most don't know that lettuce also grows in leaves, not always in heads), fruit picked off the trees or bushes. They think chicken is all white meat and breasts, and sometimes legs, and some wonder how you break an egg and get it out.

At the beginning of camp this year I put a basket of oranges on each table at breakfast time. The first week there were only a few oranges taken. When it became evident that I wasn't going to squeeze the oranges, use frozen juice, or chemical orange drink, slowly the kids began to peel and eat the oranges. In the end the only comment was, "The oranges weren't very big"! (How true!)

I noticed that some of the children who had routine growing-up problems like overweight, shyness, or pimples were the very ones who wouldn't eat most vegetables and sometimes the fruit. We do not run a camp for problem children or the underprivileged. Most of the children we get have parents who are teachers, professors, artists, writers, musicians, doctors. If we do get problems out of the ordinary we have to send the children home since we are not qualified to deal with them. At first, we tried to help the occasional problem child, but this only tore up the cohesion of the camp. So I am not talking about the problem type of child when I speak of sugar addiction. I am speaking of the general run of child where this addiction has taken root.

Of the particular children in this group, one was thin and hyperactive and over-talkative. Another was overweight but physically active; he over-ate when he was bored. The third was also overweight, but physically inactive and spoke in disjointed sentences quite frequently. With all three children the parents did not know of the excessive sugar consumption, or, if they did, they didn't attribute to it the hyperactivity, sleeplessness, sluggishness, or the incoherent speech of that particular child.

At the end of camp when the parents came to take the children home, they noticed and asked how we got the boys to lose weight, the little girl to go to bed and sleep, and accomplished various other changes in their daily lives. We tried to tell these parents what we had observed and why the camp had helped, and how our isolation from the main stream of commercial goodies made the problem stand out. One parent told us how they kept sweet things out of the house because of the weight problem of one child. However, what they had not removed from access for the child was "small change" and a corner grocery nearby.

When I use the word "addict" in relation to sugar, it is for want of a better word to describe the effect that over-consumption of sugar and starches has on many children, when it goes to extremes. Again, I have no word to describe the attitude of these children when the supply of concentrated sugar is denied, but still *visible*. At camp, so long as good, wholesome food was eaten, a balance was achieved. But the moment the grandparents visited or sent candy as a present, a panic button was pressed. They had to eat *all* they could get or that came to them. They did not particularly share it, but doled it out to themselves as the panic arose. At one point I was able to observe four meals uneaten after a large bag of candy was given to a child. Until her bag of candy was finished the child did not eat a proper meal. As the sugar problem became clear we were sometimes able to remove the candy before it arrived in view. But at other times the candy got by and had its effect before we could do anything about it.

We usually take the children to a country fair each summer so that they can see all the breeds of animals and poultry. However, this last summer we realized that we had this sugar problem and felt that the "Midway" at the fair would only aggravate it out of control. We thought of not going to the fair, or leaving the "addicted" kids (with me) and taking the rest, and so forth. Finally we decided to go, with an adult taking charge of each one of these children and trying to keep the train on the tracks. A former camper who had returned to help for two weeks offered to take the little girl with this problem. Since she was our youngest camper and a tiny little thing, the older ex-camper thought she would be manageable. We had told the older girl about the sugar addiction, and to herself she may have thought we were "daft." But that evening she described what she had been amazed to see happen. Each child had been given a dollar for spending money. They could go on rides or get whatever they wanted. The idea was to encourage as many rides as possible so that there would be little change left for sugar stuff. The little girl nagged, begged, wheedled and implored for candy, ice cream, cotton candy and whatever. In the end she bought a candied apple with her last quarter. She took a bite of the candied apple and "turned on." She moaned, sighed, smacked her lips, and finally danced around the older camper ecstatically hugging her candied apple. The older girl could not believe the change taking place before her eyes. The child had been obnoxious one moment, then pacified the next, once she had her sugar.

One of the boys with the sugar habit made no bones about his love of sugars and starches. He would wax almost poetic about the virtues of pancake syrup. It wasn't hard to accept his love of sugar when you observed his breakfast bowl filled with syrup and the pancake drowned at the bottom, acting like a super-blotter. When the other campers told him he was using too much syrup, he would just sit and stare at them and finally chuckle contentedly over his sweet.

One of the overweight boys took it upon himself to try to cut down on sugars or starches. As a consequence he lost quite a lot of flub and felt very proud of himself. All the walking at camp gave him constant exercise and a good appetite. However, on this boy's birthday one of his family sent him a ten-pound box of candy! We asked him if he minded our putting the box away

until he went home after camp and he readily agreed to this. In fact, all the other campers got cooperative when we explained the problem we had, and the fact that it would be hard for everybody to live with if left unchecked.

I'm not sure I have conveyed a convincing case about these children. There are many small incidents I have forgotten, or could not put down on paper. What remains in my mind is the problem of mass advertising on TV and in magazines, the supermarket displays, and the subtle or not-so-subtle general upping of the sugar content in many foods, all of which are mass-consumed by children and adults alike. The problems this creates will not always be recognized for what they are, but I believe we can look forward to many more hyperactive children and adults who are really on sugar kicks.

EPILOGUE

A short time ago I came across an article, "Refined Sugars and Disease"—a compilation of studies by two American and two British doctors. Here I will only repeat some very shocking statements these doctors made about the everyday eating habits of many children. There are, for example, *3½ teaspoons of sugar* in a small *6-oz, soft drink; 7 teaspoons of sugar* in the *average* seeing of *ice cream;* and *20 teaspoons of sugar* in a *4-oz. candy bar.*

These four doctors made the suggestion that instead of refined sugar people use honey, sorghum, molasses or genuine maple syrup.

In November, 1972, CBC broadcasted an interview with two doctors who were attending a medical conference in Montreal. One was a Dr. Hopper, a Canadian practicing in Toronto, the other an American from New York City by the name of Dr. Cott. They were interviewed because of the controversial aspect of their practice of using megavitamin therapy. Dr. Hopper had been working for twenty years with schizophrenics, using megavitamins. He had gotten good results in 600 of the people he worked with. Dr. Cott, a psychiatrist, worked chiefly with children who had learning disabilities. He was also using megavitamins. The examples that Dr. Cott described seemed like twins of the problems we had had with the sugar-addicts. He put his children on proper diets and cut out the high consumption of fats, sugars, and starches.

My conclusion is: If with a small operation like ours we can have in one summer three of these children with unbalanced physical systems out of the twenty-two campers, how is society in general going to cope in the future with an increase, not decrease, of excessive refined sugar consumption? As society drifts along on its sugary sweet cloud, our children are on a merry-go-round turning to music for which the words must be something like LOVE IS SWEET, SUGAR IS SWEET, SUGAR IS LOVE, AND LOVE IS SUGAR-COATED POPTARTS.

North Hatley
Quebec, Canada — VIRGINIA NAEVE

FRONTIERS

The Gramdan Movement

IN an article in *Sarvodaya* for September, 1971, Jayaprakash Narayan said:

> In a country where 80 per cent of the population still lives in something like five hundred and sixty thousand villages and other thousands of small townships, should not this question of community receive our serious attention? These ugly backward, neglected, disunited and disrupted villages are often described as village communities. But they are communities only in the physical sense, and are wholly lacking in the sense of belonging together, in the spirit of community or in the habits of thinking together and acting together.

The Bhoodan movement, begun in 1951, which later became the Gramdan movement, was launched by Vinoba Bhave as a means of restoring the villages of India along the lines of which Gandhi dreamed. Gramdan is a means of carrying out Gandhi's program of Constructive Work, which he deemed the most important undertaking of his life, since his dream of a Free India and of world peace depended upon the grass-roots regeneration of the people.

Erica Linton's *Fragments of a Vision*, published by Sarva Seva Sangh Prakashan, Varanasi (Benares), India, for the Society for Developing Gramdans, New Delhi (1971, $7.50), is probably the most complete eye-witness account of the struggles and accomplishments of the Gramdan movement to date. It does not on the surface seem altogether encouraging, yet the reader who has not been in India and knows little of Indian history has need to realize how great are the obstacles that confront the heroic efforts of the Gramdan workers. In the perspective of such facts and of history, he may conclude that seldom have so few done so much with so little. Mrs. Linton is the wife of John Linton, who was asked by his employers to go to India for several months on an assignment. She decided to go, too, and obtained from the British organization, War-on-Want, her own assignment to report on "past and present projects financed with its funds." (Actually, the good done with those funds seems very impressive, from what Mrs. Linton says in this book.) In a series of tours, she visited a large number of Gramdan villages in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bombay, Mysore, Kerala, and Orissa, and attended the celebration of a District Dan in Ballia, involving the commitment of more than a million people.

In these villages she saw the extreme of apathy and incredible poverty on the one hand, and on the other inspiring examples of reconstruction and eager cooperation. There were several cases of villages which had agreed to Gramdan as long as ten years ago, yet for lack of help had been unable to accomplish much of anything. Often there was cooperation between the officials of government rural programs and the Gramdan workers. It was sometimes evident that the new spirit born in the people as a result of the Gramdan movement enabled the government workers to make some progress.

What is Gramdan? Mrs. Linton has a brief paragraph to answer this question:

> Gramdan literally means "village gift." But in the sense in which Vinoba uses the term, it means the equitable distribution of the village's wealth. It implies that all the land-owners in a village transfer the ownership of their land to the village community; and that all landholders donate one twentieth of their land to the village community for distribution among the landless. It also implies the formation of a village fund to which the agriculturalist will contribute one fortieth of his produce, the businessman one thirtieth of his profits and the wage earner and the salaried one thirtieth of their earnings; and the setting up of the village council (Gram Sabha) consisting of all the adults in the village.
>
> The prerequisites for a Gramdan declaration by a village are that at least 75% of the resident land-owners of the village should express their willingness to join Gramdan by signing the declaration; at least 51% of the total land in the village, owned by all the resident landowners, should come under Gramdan; and at least 75% of the adult population of the village should opt for Gramdan.

Again and again Mrs. Linton found herself oppressed almost to hopelessness by the slow rate

of progress, in even the nominally Gramdan villages. She came to recognize, however, the sound sense in the Gandhian approach of concentrating on changed attitudes as the only means to any real benefit for the people. As she says in one place:

> Aid superimposed on a backward community from outside remains a relief operation, as summed up in the villagers' cry: "You must help us, what can we do, we are poor, we know nothing." It has become the stumbling block to progress. The emphasis will have to be shifted from projects to people if any kind of social change is to go hand in hand with material advance. Only if people are given a sense of responsibility can this come about. They have been conditioned into accepting help and looking for leadership from outside whether through the block office or direct aid from foreign voluntary agencies. Any failure of progress is blamed on these outsiders whom they expect to tell them what to do and how to do it, and to give them the wherewithal with which to do it. It has created two groups of people, those who give and those who receive. The knowledge that there is an outside source from which they can expect help whether in kind or in the form of leadership, is hindering rather than furthering development by its psychological effect on the people, for it has instilled in the minds of the villagers the idea that if they wait long enough more money will come from abroad. They only need to keep on asking.

Some help is absolutely necessary, of course, such as the financing of wells, without which there is no water for irrigation; but the development nonetheless depends on the people themselves, and the Gandhian workers understand this clearly. Gandhi knew that the regeneration of India must begin with the restoration of the self-respect of the people, and this means learning to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. It is a question of overcoming the debilitating effects of centuries of poverty and the wearing out of the basic strengths of healthy community life.

In his introduction to Mrs. Linton's book, E. F. Schumacher strikes a needed note. He speaks of the importance of better communications for the village movement, at the level of "intermediate technology," to support the struggle to self-support of the villagers. He concludes: "As I see it, this is the kind of follow-up now needed by the Gramdan movement: a much more intense orientation towards improved technological knowledge—at the intermediate, self-help level—and greatly improved communication of such knowledge and experience, for the benefit of all."