

BROAD VIEWS

THERE comes a time in the development of a civilization or a culture—as in the life of individuals—when it begins to show an interest in what may be called "broad views." This tendency may be similar to the preoccupation with "art" manifested by a wealthy businessman after he has made his pile—or, for that matter, his preoccupation with "religion," when he is no longer active in the commercial struggle. On the other hand, it may be like the genuine and natural elevation of the spirit which comes to a man after a lifetime of intensely constructive activity.

Something like this tendency, at any rate, has been noticeable in the United States during recent years. Perhaps the country is growing into some sort of maturity; or, which is as likely, the succession of national crises since the second decade of the century—first war, then depression, then war again, and now, finally, ominous threat of another great conflict—has precipitated a kind of pseudo-maturity in which the urgencies of fear have heaped more responsibilities upon us than we know how to bear with intelligence and dignity.

The new advocacy of "religion," for one thing, has a suspiciously pragmatic aspect. Politicians and industrialists who have no personal interest in religion make honorific references to "God" with increasing frequency, and it is doubtless some odd version of social responsibility which causes the outdoor advertising concerns to cover otherwise vacant billboards with the pious counsel, "Attend a church of your choice every Sabbath." Not longings for spiritual insight, but a practical estimate of the organizational binding power of church affiliations is behind this new appreciation of religion.

One could say of these would-be pillars of society that, having completed successful careers in making money, or gaining fame, they now would like to expand into what they regard as Well-Rounded Persons, but because they are by habit and experience only specialists, they tend to suppose that

the Well-Rounded Person is a man who knows what is good for other people—for "the masses"—and so, like amateur psychoanalysts, they begin to prescribe proper doses of religion, and, perhaps, "Americanism," also, as in their judgment what the people "need."

Any religion dealt out in "doses," of course, is spurious, and the same is true of Americanism, so long as it is "administered" by fuzzy-minded paternalists, instead of being a natural growth in appreciation of what opportunities for usefulness and freedom come to those who are Americans by accident of birth. Neither religion nor patriotism ought to be regarded as a specific for a pleasure-seeking population afflicted by restless insecurity. A truly religious man is a man determined to discover the meanings which may lie behind the contradictions and anomalies of human existence, and a patriot is one who shares in some measure the vision of the founders of his country, and who presses that vision onward to far-reaching social ideals. To attempt to "use" religion and love of country for any lesser purposes than these is to practice subversion on a grand scale—is, in fact, the method consciously pursued by the practitioners of totalitarian psychology. This is probably what Huey Long meant when he said that if Fascism comes to the United States, it will be called "democracy."

Actually, what we proudly call Democracy can survive only among people who learn to live their lives as whole men, avoiding the distortions which come from excessive specialization. So long as the United States was predominantly agricultural, the experiences of most of the population had to do with the elements of nature. Living in obvious and immediate dependence upon nature has a profoundly ameliorating effect upon the distortions in which men indulge themselves. It is difficult, for example, to conceal parasitism on a farm. Neuroticism, we suspect, has natural correctives in the daily round of duties which an agrarian society provides, although

this is becoming less true today, now that family-size farms provide only a precarious existence and the food of the great majority of the hundred and fifty million people of the United States is supplied by vast, mechanized agricultural operations. These "factories in the field" are presided over by men who study the commodity market reports every morning—the "windshield farmers," as they are called in California, who can barely drive around their enormous holdings in a day or so.

The separation of the American population into subdivided and specialized ways of life is clearly illustrated by the common speech of the time. There are those, for example, for whom the expression, "He's a good businessman," is the highest possible praise. Others would like to be known as "socially-minded," and if anyone were to inquire about their business capacities, they would feel considerably insulted. Still another segment bandies about the phrase "creative person." Often, this means no more than that the individual honored by this description has a gift for thinking up clever advertising slogans. Then there is the category of "deeply religious" people, who sometimes give the impression that persons unlike themselves might just as well have been left out of the cosmos entirely.

These are only a few of the specialties in which men pursue distinction. The largest category, perhaps, is that of the "businessman," who is, after all, a productive citizen and one who has followed with practical industry the ideals put before him at home and in school. The businessman has a clear idea of personal "success," and probably, in the United States, more businessmen have achieved something approximating "success" than anywhere else in the world. But while the businessman knows what *he* wants, his conception of the "good society" is usually based on arrangements which will allow him to get what he wants, and as quickly as possible. He has, in short, given very little serious thinking to what a really "good society" would be like, except in relation to some sort of commercial Utopia. When society begins to show signs of crumbling from internal weakness, or when the anxieties produced by threat of war affect his personal interests, he wonders what "ought to be done," but mostly he

gives utterance to complaints about government, the schools, the tax rate, and the "subversives" who criticize the status quo.

In contrast, the "socially-minded person" is often deeply contemptuous of the pursuits of "business." He is largely concerned with "changing the system," and sees no reason to admire those who are keeping the present system going. He is oppressed by the thought of the millions of small and large manufacturers, dealers, storekeepers, salesmen, construction engineers, technologists and others who work hard throughout their lives, and who feel that after putting in eight conscientious hours a day, they have done their part. To state the matter simply, the moral obligations of the businessman are established by the historic conception of the virtues—honesty, veracity, industry, sobriety, charity—as applied through the various human relationships which are determined by the socio-economic system under which we live. But now comes a critic, not of this practice of the virtues, but of the system itself. What good are the traditional virtues, he argues, when the system which governs their expression is intrinsically unjust?

The extreme of this argument is heard in the voice of the Marxist revolutionary who rejects what he calls "bourgeois morality" entirely, and is willing to use any form of deceit in order to undermine the structure of the present society. The convinced communist has eliminated any personal moral problem by transforming morals into a department of politics, and by joining a political party in which the only recognized morality lies in blind and absolute obedience to the party line. It is the "moderates" in the field of social-mindedness who still struggle with a personal moral problem in connection with the country and society of which they form a part. How can they feel themselves to be useful, constructive human beings, so long as they agree in some measure with the "radicals" that the present economic system is intrinsically unjust?

People sometimes wonder why there are so many people of apparently "radical" persuasion in education, in the professions, and in civil service. Plainly, the explanation lies in the disgust felt by the intelligent intellectual for commercial enterprise as

presently conducted. This further explains the witch-hunting temper of some businessmen and politicians who have no capacity to grasp the social criticisms coming from the members of our society who have deliberately avoided business careers for the reasons given.

There is the further problem of the man of social awareness who has not been attracted by education or the professions, yet has need of making a living for himself and his family. What view can he take of commercial enterprise? One solution sought by persons of this persuasion is a return to the land. Granting the obvious romanticism of this solution, it still holds considerable value for individuals who have an exceptional aptitude for hard work and who are sensitive to the natural mysticism of a life close to the soil. Others have taken up crafts and similar pursuits marginal to our highly technological economy. But rare and peculiar talents are required for even modest success in such enterprises, and there remains the question, Can there be a constructive approach to commercial activity—an approach which does not compromise the social idealism of individuals who want to devote their energies to human betterment?

This is a basic consideration—that of recognizing that so long as human beings live together in communities, certain services and goods must be supplied for the maintenance of the community. Food, shelter, clothing, transportation and communication—these, at least, are genuine necessities, and even the idyllic desert island community of our dreams will have to have most of them. And so long as we continue to use the technologies which are presently available for the manufacture of these goods and the provision of these services, many elements of the present pattern of economic integration will remain.

A free society will be the result of the lives of free and whole men, and the "system" which serves a free society well is only the consequence, never the cause, of the freedom that everyone desires. Actually, the task of developing or preserving a free system lies in making the best possible use of the freedom we already have—not in planning great changes and waiting for the day when they will be

instituted, in order to make us free. "Business," it is true, is shot through with inequitable practices and acquisitive tendencies, but there are businesses which perform fundamental economic functions as well as those which exploit human weakness, vanity, and self-indulgence. It is better to make bricks than liquor; house paint has a legitimate use, even if most cosmetics do not.

A man can *choose* a business; and the better businessman he becomes in his chosen activity, the less vulnerable he is to the sharp practices, the petty dishonesties and injustices which have so largely earned the contempt of socially minded people for the business community.

In a human society, changes do not come about from the application of revolutionary blueprints, but from the ingenious application of intelligent ideals by countless individuals who form the warp and woof of genuine culture. Reliance on a proposed "system" is a delusive way to seek reform; actually, faith in systems produces more and more powerful reaction, because it mistakes effect for cause and thus eliminates the sources of creative activity in individuals.

But intelligent idealism is possible only for whole men—for men who see no contradiction between being a good businessman and a "socially minded" human being; who understand that the creative act is the socially useful and educative act; and who seek their religion in an understanding of the hearts of their fellow men.

Letter from **GERMANY**

BERLIN.—In this battleground of cold war, the terror from the East creeps across the borders and catches its victims inside the Western Sector of the city. Any reporter, photographer, writer, or lecturer who reveals conditions inside the Soviet zone of Germany is on the "black list" of the SSD (State Security Police) and may be caught either when entering the Russian zone or by kidnapping him in his home district. This takes place at the rate of about four victims a month.

The danger for opponents of Russia is everlasting, but to catch them is—of course—not easy for the SSD, because people in Berlin have learned to move and behave "carefully" (the terror has been "effective" to this extent); on the other hand, the gangster methods used by the SSD (disguise, application of chloroform or hypodermic needle, cars with running motors ready to start at once) are the same as those used by ordinary criminals in every large town, and it is practically impossible for the town police to prevent these crimes.

Once caught, the victim is immediately sped to the Eastern Sector where escape is out of the question. There his fate will be: hearings to obtain "confessions," torture, secret trial, punishment by many years of hard labor in Eastern Germany or Russia—and eventually, death. The result is shocking: men disappear suddenly and are not heard of again. Such events symbolize the fate of all human beings in totalitarian countries—they do not count as men, but only as manpower, statistics, breeders, "voters," soldiers, or prisoners of State.

What can be done against such kidnappings? Individual caution and care will help, but can hardly prevent these inhuman conditions and happenings. The terror in Soviet Russia itself will end only with the destruction of the present political system, either from within or without; it is the task of writers all over the world to swell

the tide of criticism against its inhumanity, to show the inner weaknesses and abuses of this system. The terror inside Russia's satellites will end with the withdrawal of Russian troops and with the enforcement of free elections in those countries.

To illustrate the danger threatening Germans who dare speak their minds, some facts may be given about a man who vanished in November, 1950. Alfred Weiland lived with his wife and three small children in the Western Sector of Berlin. He earned his living with lectures at several people's universities and with articles for Western Berlin papers. Together with his friends he edited an underground newspaper, *Neu Beginnen* (New Start), which was mimeographed about every fortnight and a few hundred copies sold to readers in both West Berlin and the Soviet zone. The contents of this paper were critical of the Bolshevik system in Russia and Eastern Germany. Weiland came from the former Left Wing of the Communist Party in Germany, which rejected both Parliamentarism and Trade Unions, and so came close to Anarchism. His friends urged him to found a new illegal organization of former Communists who do not want to side with either the present Communists or Social-democrats, but Weiland kept back. He was present, however, when large meetings were held in private Berlin apartments, in which from 40 to 100 persons gathered to discuss the uniting of different radical splinters and sects. This occurred in 1946-47, but without coming to any result.

In his home, Weiland had a large stock of books which he saved before the Russians entered the city. They were books taken by the German Gestapo from Jews in Europe (Germany, France, etc.) and brought together in archives, being mostly of sociologic, Socialist, Marxist contents. When the Nazi army broke down and Berlin was plundered, Weiland learned from his friends the whereabouts of these archives and saved them (or part of them) before the arrival of the plunderers—Russians and Germans alike. But

Weiland was no scholar and made little use of the many thousands of books, often quite valuable (first editions, autographs of famous authors, and other rarities).

One day last November Weiland went to the post office, and—as some children, the only witnesses, related—when he happened to stumble, two men caught him at once and threw him into a car, his feet hanging outside the window. The car rushed wildly for the Brandenburger Tor—the border between Eastern and Western sectors—and the reports of bystanders tell of a heavy struggle inside the car. A blood-smeared splinter of window glass was found. Later on the same afternoon a shot rang out when the "people's police" pursued a political refugee who had broken out of the prison near the Sector border.

Whether dead or alive, Weiland has completely vanished. Years hence, perhaps, news of his punishment of hard labor will filter through the iron curtain, or perhaps his family and friends will never know what happened.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

"FROM HERE TO ETERNITY"

UNLESS YOU are a literary connoisseur, writing for the benefit of others of the clan, it is natural to hesitate at recommending 860-page novels. The allowance of that scarce commodity, "time," becomes a serious one for such projects. But the reviewer can at least say which ones of these voluminous books offered the most to think about, and James Jones' *From Here to Eternity* seems to qualify among them.

Jones is full of subtleties and paradoxes, as well as of the brutally unlovely. Here is a man who shows sympathetic understanding rather than scorn for soldiers who have decided on a thirty-year stretch in the army for a career, and yet whose greatest hero is a rebellious prisoner who believes in and practices his own brand of nonviolence!

This is a story of the Regular Army of the U.S., the pre-World War II Army, the army of peacetime years. We are thus reminded that professional soldiering has always been a part of life in the United States. The Japanese and the Germans did not compel us to reluctantly include some militarism in our national program and outlook—we have played soldier along with the "militarist" nations, though on a smaller scale, and the disreputable aspects of a permanent army—attitudes of callousness toward human suffering, the brutality of disciplines designed to make men "tough"—continued through the years, side by side with our professions of being a "peace loving" country.

When James Jones leaves us at Pearl Harbor, with the December 7 attack by the Japanese, he leaves us wondering at the lack of objectivity with which most of us still regard that attack. The Imperial Forces of Japan did not swoop down upon unprepared innocents. The Harbor, Hickam Field and Schofield Barracks were the outposts of our own militarism, and they were attacked for the most logical reasons—that they *were* military

establishments and because they were *there*, in rivalry with another militarism. Whether or not he so intended, James Jones provides pacifists with an excellent opportunity for saying, "Those who live by the sword, perish by the sword—this is the 'Karma' of believing in the necessity of war." For surely there was much in that peacetime army which deserved attack and destruction. The brutality of the Stockade for rebellious and misdealing soldiers matched more than a few of the attitudes and methods of German concentration camps.

Totalitarianisms of every variety thrive on the petty fears and the neurotic ambitions generated in men when their lives are controlled by absolute authority. Jones' story is of these fears and ambitions, as they worked themselves out in the lives of officers and enlisted men. But since Jones is something more than a cynic, his story also uncovers and develops another theme—the theme of the men who refuse to be degraded by The System. Private Prewitt has been in the army for six years, and intends to do a full thirty-year stretch, but he also intends to keep his individual integrity. He will not let himself be pushed around, nor will he keep silent in the face of the injustices which multiply so easily under a competition-for-privilege social order. Prewitt becomes the victim of an incredibly thorough campaign of persecution—incredible because occasioned by nothing more rebellious than his refusal to put on boxing gloves for the glory of his Company and Regimental Commanders. He is badgered into indiscretions, framed by the non-coms in league against him to advance themselves by breaking Prewitt into compliance. Finally he ends in the Stockade, where his continued refusal to knuckle under is met by actual physical torture. Prewitt finally fights the most sadistic torturer, nine days after his release, and kills him.

In the story, we come upon a theme worth pondering. Even as a fugitive from martial law, Prewitt is moved by another emotion than hatred when he thinks of the army and: his connection

with it. *He really wants to go back*, for the hard core of army life appeals to him, as it has to others. He is a victim of loving something he simultaneously cannot excuse for its faults. Perhaps the army was for Prewitt a symbol of a quality in human relationships which many or all men hunger to find—that association which is at root impersonal, which can make ultimate demands upon one's energies and capacity for sacrifices.

Could this also be one of the human secrets of militarism, applicable to the nations less devoted than our own to the gospel of Peace? How many Prewitts fought for their Fatherland under the Swastika, because the prevailing social atmosphere offered them no other outlet for their strange yearnings for consecration—yearnings which middle class dreams of moderate comfort and worldly success could not appease? How many Prewitts fought for Japan, and how many march under the hammer and sickle? These are not the men who are pressed reluctantly into service through government draft, though the latter are undoubtedly the majority in all armies. Such men, so seldom mentioned in our war novels, are not only a part of the picture, but perhaps also a key to some of those fundamental mysteries of the psychological dislocation which creates war-willingness. For there is that in armies and wars which will continue to be genuinely, though inarticulately loved, and no pacifist is fit for the task of opposing war until he has endeavored to comprehend that factor and why it is so important.

Jones' novel is probably the best tale of the American Army which has ever appeared. Unlike *The Naked and the Dead*, by Norman Mailer, Jones' story suggests that some men may actually find a better rather than the "worst part of themselves" in the army. But this thesis does not derive from an author's belief that there is something *intrinsically* good about the artificial disciplines of military service. Forming something of a snap judgment from the fact that Jones

presents the two strongest characters of his novel as believers in "the weird outlandish theory of reincarnation"—which they hold to be a logical necessity—we might conclude that Jones' sympathetic understanding of armies as social phenomena derives from a conviction that all men's experiences are occasioned by their inward necessity for learning; that we pass slowly through the confused expressions of our "soul" needs to find a greater, more consistent maturity.

Unmistakably, Prewitt is on a kind of psychological Odyssey. Every so often he stumbles *through* frustration to the living essence of some truth in regard to army or personal relationships. In the end, it must be admitted, he loses his bearings, but even though he is tragically shot to death as he attempts to escape M.P.'s, the flavor of the story is not merely, or even chiefly, negative. There is in Prewitt a growing knowledge about himself. He meets misfortunes, but the misfortunes do not make him miserable—rather more philosophical. Even the Stockade, moreover, cannot eclipse the comradeship of his barracks mates. Then, too, the uneducated Prewitt is nevertheless a capable philosopher, and if there is any excuse for the unusual amount of four-letter words reproduced verbatim from barracks-room language, it might be to show that even the most profane men do not lose their right to philosophize. At any rate, Prewitt undeniably possesses that quality without which no philosopher can lay full claim to the title—a sense of humor in respect to his own troubles. The following is a good sample, both of substantial thinking on matters of present significance and Jones' ability to write:

You did not ever really believe they would do it to you, did you? No, you didn't. Because you know damn well you could never have done it to one of them, having suffered as you have from an overdeveloped sense of justice all your life, not to mention being a hotly fervent espouser of the cause of all underdogs all your life (probably because you have always been one, I imagine).

He had even made himself a philosophy of life out of it. So that he had gone right on, unable to stop

believing that if the Communists were the under dog in Spain then he believed in fighting for the Communists in Spain, but that if the Communists were the top dog back home in Russia and the (what would you call them in Russia? the traitors, I guess) traitors were the bottom dog, then he believed in fighting for the traitors and against the Communists. He believed in fighting for the Jews in Germany and against the Jews in Wall Street and Hollywood. And if the Capitalists were top dog in America and the proletariat the under dog, then he believed in fighting for the proletariat against the Capitalists. This too-ingrained-to-be-forgotten philosophy of life of his had led him, a Southerner, to believe in fighting for the Negroes against the Whites everywhere, because the Negroes were nowhere the top dog, at least as yet.

But where, you ask, does it put you politically? What are your politics?

I think we can dispense with that question, he told himself. It is a wrong question, one that implies you have to have some kind of politics, and is therefore an unfair question because it restricts your answer to what kind of politics. It is the kind of question a Republican or a Democrat or a Communist would ask you. And anyway, you can't vote, you are in the Army, they wouldn't be interested in you.

Yes, I think we can reject that question. But if we had to answer it, truthfully, under oath (let us suppose that Mr. Dies and his Un-American Activities Committee called you up because you refused to go out for boxing) then I would say that politically you are a sort of super arch-revolutionary, the kind that made the Revolution in Russia and that the Communists are killing now, a sort of perfect criminal type, very dangerous, a mad dog that loves under dogs. That's what I would say you were. . . .

What a business. Grown men, seriously pushing each other around, over the burning question of whether or not a certain man should or should not go out for a boxing squad. It seemed so silly, suddenly, that it was hard to believe that absolutely serious results for you could ever come out of it.

Yet he knew that those results could and would come out of it for him. You can't disagree with the adopted values of a bunch of people. . . . When people tie their lives to some screwy idea or other and you attempt to point out to them that for you (not for them, mind you, just for you personally) that this idea is screwy, then serious results can always and will always come out of it for you. Because as far as they care you are the same as saying their lives are nothing

and this always bothers people, because people prefer anything to being nothing, look at the Nazis, and that is why they tie their lives to things.

Why don't you, he thought, tie your life to something, Prewitt? To a tree, perhaps. It would save us all a lot of trouble and discomfort. . . .

COMMENTARY **A HOPE CONFIRMED**

WITH this issue, MANAS resumes publication after a "summer vacation" of two months. We have decided to call this issue No. 27-36, so that the normal sequence of a weekly publication will not be broken, so far as the volume is concerned.

As previously announced, this suspension occurred through something of an "emergency," with respect to both the time and energies of the editors and the financial needs of issuing MANAS. It was a thing done with reluctance, and with the hope that a similar cessation will not again be necessary. Meanwhile, this period of relative inactivity has born a special fruit, in the form of a closer relationship between the publication and its readers.

It seems likely that many of the warm expressions from subscribers of appreciation and regard for MANAS might not have been forthcoming, save for the special occasion of writing in regard to the proposed suspension for nine weeks. Hundreds of readers wrote to say that while they would miss the weekly appearance of MANAS, they were glad to lend their support by encouraging the rest period. Further, nearly all subscribers so writing asked that no extension of their subscription be made as compensation for the missing numbers.

We make this somewhat detailed report, as it shows better than anything else we can think of the cooperative character of the MANAS enterprise, and the spirit of friendly support afforded by readers. There was also evidence that MANAS is very carefully read, for out of the entire subscription list, hardly more than five or six wrote in to ask why they had not been receiving the paper—in other words, the announcement of the summer suspension was missed by very few.

From the beginning, the editors have hoped that in MANAS might be found, for a considerable number of people throughout the

world, at least the beginning of a basis in thought for effective if unorganized idealism. The end of all thought, as Carlyle observed, is an act, but the world is so torn and agonized by actions taken without thought that there is certainly room for a publication which lays its greatest emphasis upon understanding, as the prerequisite to intelligent action. Letters received by MANAS during the past few months have in some measure confirmed this hope, and the editors take particular pleasure in the encouragements offered by readers.

CHILDREN ...and Ourselves

PLATO, and other "abstract and idealistic" philosophers, it seems to us, are paradoxically often our best educational guides in meeting community problems. Plato, for instance, speaks of the quality of Justice as if it were a thing in itself—a sort of inherent birthright of the human being, which unfortunately is sometimes buried under ignorant and mistaken views. Plato would say that we have to help our children to awaken their own wondrous power for discerning Justice—a task which is ours before all others.

This is a hard thing to establish, today. It is hard, in the first place, to make such assertions of abstractions sound meaningful because of the habit of thinking that Justice has no validity apart from legal procedure. Our sociologists have presented us with a most non-Platonic view of the matter, and we come to think that talking about "comparative mores" is more enlightened than talking about such imponderable ultimates as Goodness and Responsibility and Justice. It is also hard to talk about justice for another reason—most of us are "respectable" people, and those unrespectable people, the disreputable radicals, are the ones who usually make themselves heard about flagrant miscarriages of justice in our courts. For years, as an instance, Communists pressed the labor organizations to fight for equal rights before the law for members of the African race, yet no one wants to associate himself with Communists, nor believe what they say, because it is so easy to suspect ulterior motives. But this can also make us prefer to believe that not much *real* injustice happens in our society anyway, and our vigilance relaxes accordingly.

There is doubtless good reason for distrusting most of what the Communists say, but there has never been a good reason for failing to investigate *facts* in matters where Justice is at stake, nor a good reason for failing to take a strong position

when the facts have been studied, regardless of what sort of subverters we may have to temporarily stand beside.

We have to help our children to develop a passion for justice, and we have to do it before they have been deluded, as we have let ourselves be deluded, by our attachments to Respectable People and Respectable Society. And the chances are we shall need a good many examples of the ways in which powerful people and institutions can be cruelly and horribly unjust, even in a "free land." Else we shall not build a sufficiently realistic background for our children, and these children of ours may become simply indistinguishable examples of that vast majority of well-intentioned but inadequate people who blissfully believe that injustice *can't* happen here, and that what happened to Owen Lattimore, Vashti McCollum, the Hollywood Ten and the Trenton Six was mostly just "radical propaganda."

Lattimore was used as Senator McCarthy's scapegoat, while that politician was seeking to ride to prominence by hating Communists more, and more loudly than anyone else. Accused of being "America's number one Communist" while he was on an economic mission in Afghanistan, apparently because of his annoying refusal to believe that Chiang Kai Shek was the rightful ruler of the Chinese people, Lattimore faced an uphill fight against accusations based on innuendo. Had he lost, his professional and literary career might easily have ended. Before the House Committee on Un-American activities he was challenged with charges presuming to reveal his Communist sympathies, *without* being allowed to know the sources or complete nature of the slanderous reports. The whole political mechanism of "anti-Communism" worked to discredit him, simply because he held differences of opinion on foreign policy, and not because there was a single rational ground for believing him to be a Communist Party sympathiser. The parental reading of Lattimore's *Ordeal by Slander* can provide all the drama

needed for a compelling recital of a successful quest for Justice.

"The Hollywood Ten"—writers sent to prison' because of their refusal to testify before a Congressional investigating committee—were different, in that some of them, at least, had evidenced a type of sympathy for Communist objectives that Lattimore had never demonstrated. But their right to their own private views should be unquestioned by any who regard freedom of minority opinion as a cornerstone of the Bill of Rights. These men went to prison. We have heard directly that one of them, now free, is unable to get any sort of job under his own name, so effective has been the hate and distrust of him occasioned by the fact that he was indicted and convicted. Here is another failure of justice not anything like the supreme tragedy of the execution of the innocent Sacco and Vanzetti—yet still a story youngsters could well learn and grow indignant about.

"The Trenton Six" case is that of innocent Negroes, convicted of murder by a prosecution currently trying to save face in connection with an embarrassing unsolved killing. Abundant witnesses testified that all six men were nowhere near the scene of the crime. The "suspects," however, were "only" Negroes, and confessions under torture had been obtained (which they all repudiated, incidentally, as soon as they reached the protection of the courtroom). Here were men who were deliberately used, as so many pounds of flesh, to cover up police inefficiency, and who would have been executed as criminals if a few discerning champions of justice had not appeared on the scene. In this case, an order for a new trial was secured, and the original conviction has been found "full of errors" by a higher court. Aroused private citizens spearheaded the attack against the flagrant injustice of the first packed, all-white, jury. We need to be sure that there are always such men, and a sufficient number of the general public to appreciate and encourage them—which is another reason why such grim stories are worth

learning how to tell our children. (See *Nation*, July 21.)

The story of Vashti McCollum has already been summarized in MANAS for June 27, and this account can be especially effective for achieving the purposes we have in mind. Mrs. McCollum's young son was involved in all the unfair attacks and humiliations suffered by the McCollum family after the courageous mother had dared to challenge the teaching of sectarian religion in the public schools. Youngsters can live through part of this drama very sympathetically, with themselves in the McCollum youngster's role.

Then there were the professors who dared oppose the Regents of the University of California by refusing to sign a loyalty oath. Dismissed, they yet hung on without adequate funds, one of them even continuing to teach the students who needed him without any remuneration; they finally won their battle in the California Supreme Court. However, the U.S. Supreme Court has reversed the decision again, and the scales of justice have tipped dangerously.

These are real quest-for-justice stories, or, if we prefer, real tragedies of the present day. Our children need to know them, in some appropriate form. They do not need to be drenched endlessly with such themes, but they do need to hear the stories and know something of what they mean, so that their own natural capacities for being impassioned in the cause of justice can come to fruition—and so that local cruelties of prejudice and unfair gossip can be combatted by each in his own way.

FRONTIERS Facts and Theories

IN 1896, at a meeting on the fiftieth anniversary of Louis Agassiz's arrival in the United States, William James told an audience of admirers of the great zoologist:

"Go to Nature; take the facts into your own hands; look, and see for yourself!"—these were the maxims which Agassiz preached wherever he went, and their effect on pedagogy was electric. The extreme rigor of his devotion to this concrete method of learning was the natural consequence of his own peculiar type of intellect, in which the capacity for abstraction and causal reasoning and tracing chains of consequences from hypotheses was so much less developed than the genius for acquaintance with vast volumes of detail, and for seizing upon analogies and relations of the more proximate and concrete kind. . . ."

Agassiz, some may say, while a prodigious worker and a great teacher, foundered on his rejection of the Darwinian theory of evolution. To his death in 1873, he held fast to the conception of special creation of the world's species, maintaining that the types of plant and animal life were absolutely immutable. The evidence for evolution was all there, in the geological record familiar to Agassiz, yet he could not, would not, recognize it. He remained a theist so far as the origin of things was concerned, while becoming so fine an *observer* of natural facts that he inspired an entire generation of American scientists to greatness and near greatness.

It is customary to deplore Agassiz's limitations, as brilliantly characterized by William James, and to contrast his avidity for detail with the magnificent structure of reasoning erected by Charles Darwin, leading to Darwin's famous conclusion: "Man is derived from some member of the Simiidae," now deeply engraved on the modern consciousness. But suppose that Darwin was wrong—what then of our comparison? If, as later scientists propose—men such as Frederic Wood Jones of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Adolf Schultz of Johns Hopkins—man is

derived from a far older line of ancestry, independent of the anthropoid apes and the entire monkey tribe, then we have to compare simply Darwin's system-building propensity with Agassiz's refusal to construct daring hypotheses which go against Holy Writ.

Let us first admit that Darwin's affirmation of evolution was a great advance over Agassiz's "immutability of types." But no one, following Agassiz's method of endless direct observation, could ever contribute to the dogma of the ape-origin of man—now held in serious question—while Darwin's champions and successors, moving from hypothesis to claim of unquestionable "fact," have filled the minds of three generations of students with the belief that man is nothing more than a straightened-up ape. Man, James Harvey Robinson assures us in *The Mind in the Making*, "started with no more than an ape is able to know." After elaborating in some detail how the human species in its infancy "must have" behaved, Prof. Robinson remarks:

Of mankind in this extremely primitive condition we have no traces. . . . Man in "a state of nature" is only a presupposition, but a presupposition which is forced upon us by compelling evidence, conjectural and inferential though it is.

By Robinson's time, the doctrine that man is "derived from some member of the Simiidae" was well established in the minds of all "educated" people; the Darwinian Theory of the Descent of Man had become one of the great institutions of learning. Accordingly, Prof. Robinson writes with great assurance concerning matters of which "we have no traces."

Agassiz would have been unable to do this. Agassiz was the sort of scientist who could found no "school" of institutionalized opinions.

He warned his students against seeking a personal following for their ideas and often left them to instruct one another in the results of their own researches. It would be a mistake, however, to construe these remarks as a particular criticism of Charles Darwin. The founder of evolutionary

theory was modest in the extreme concerning his discoveries and often feared that he might be mistaken in some phases of his inquiry. Actually, it was Thomas Huxley and other less accomplished "public relations" experts in behalf of the ape-origin theory who generated the powerful "party spirit" of the evolutionist movement and who were quite willing to use rhetorical devices to win the debate for "scientific truth."

The real mistake, it seems, does not lie in system-building propensities—there could hardly be scientific progress at all without the synthesis of daring hypothesis, the elaborate theoretical structure, for example, of the Einstein Theory—but in the urge to *convert* other people to the "truth" for the sake of "progress" and "civilization."

Agassiz, for one, might have been more open to the evolutionary hypothesis had he not been born into a culture so thoroughly "converted" to the Christian dogma of special creation. Why should the eternal truth need crusading armies and proselyting priests? It seems more likely that armies and priests are needed to coerce human beings into accepting false doctrines, and that the zeal of the fanatic is convicting evidence of the weakness of his beliefs.

Eventually, the problem breaks down into the form of argument presented by Dostoevsky in the chapter on the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov*. In order to have "civilization," the Inquisitor told Jesus, the people must be protected from their own follies and lack of capacity. They must be told what to do and what to believe. We, said the Inquisitor, speaking for the institution of his Church, have given weak and sinful mankind peace and happiness. We console them in their misery and guilt; we promise them final bliss and ask in return only their faith and blind obedience. You—Jesus—would require of them more than they can bear.

This is always the claim of the paternalist, the "leader," the "provider" and the party-building

evangelist. He creates cohesiveness for his society out of the ardor of partisanship. He has so much faith in his God, his scientific theory, his nationalist credo or his revolutionary program that he has practically no faith at all in human beings. So he builds a closed system of belief instead of an open system of inquiry.

The difficulty, of course, is in being able to recognize a closed system when we are caught in it. The idea of the national State, and the superstructure of military power which goes with it, is probably such a system, yet it seems that nothing short of an atomic cataclysm will be able to break down the partisan delusions of modern nationalism. Nevertheless, human beings need some sort of "system" to have any society at all—they seem to need, that is, some kind of unity of ideas. They need a common purpose in order to work together, a common hope in order to share each other's dreams, and the sense of a common origin in order to confirm and reinforce the feeling of fraternity in their undertakings.

Is it possible for a society of men to unite upon ideas which do not make enemies of all those who reject them? Can there be religion without dogma, science without aggressive assertion, patriotism without militarism? History makes pessimistic answers to these questions; but history also suggests that truth, peace and even actual survival depend upon realizing these possibilities.