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THE PRESS DOES NOT DISTURB US

THIS expression, "The press does not disturb us," occurs in the text of the first of Albert Schweitzer's new series of broadcasts concerning the threat of continued nuclear tests and the atomic war to which they may lead. (Printed in full in the *Saturday Review* for May 24.) Probably some MANAS readers will not have heard that Dr. Schweitzer has spoken again on this subject, a year after his first notable address (of April, 1957), in which he called upon the major military powers to abandon their testing programs. That less, if possible, notice of this year's addresses by Dr. Schweitzer (from Oslo, on April 28, 29, and 30) was taken by the popular press than of last year's is not surprising. The news value of a great man's unpopular declarations quickly diminishes as he repeats himself. And Dr. Schweitzer is repeating himself. He is still against the tests.

But when he spoke of the indifference of the press, Dr. Schweitzer was not referring to the neglect of his own utterances in the newspapers of the United States and of other countries whose leaders believe that they have an important "stake" in continuing nuclear testing. He had reference to the situation of Japan. Japan, he says, is an "interesting case." He continues:

> Japan . . . suffers heavily from the effects of nuclear tests. The radioactive clouds created by the Soviet tests in North-East Siberia and by the American ones at Bikini in the Pacific Ocean are carried by the winds over Japan. The resulting radioactive poisoning is the worst possible. Very heavily radioactive rainfalls are quite common.
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> The radioactive poisoning of the soil and the vegetation is so powerful that the inhabitants of various districts ought to abstain from using their harvest for food. But they have no alternative but to eat rice infected with strontium, an element particularly dangerous to children.
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> The ocean surrounding Japan is also at times dangerously radioactive, and thereby the very food-supply of the country—in which fish has always played an important part—is being threatened because of the large amount of radioactive fish unsuitable for consumption.
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> As every new nuclear test makes a bad situation worse, the Japanese government, when hearing of plans for new tests to the north or south of Japan, has presented its country's urgent appeal in Washington or Moscow, beseeching the authorities to give up their plans. The answer was always the same—they regret there can be no question of doing so while as yet the powers have reached no agreement to that effect. As recently as February 20, 1958, this happened again in the capital of one of the nuclear powers.
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> We always learn about such appeals and their refusal through short paragraphs in the newspaper—just like any other news item. The Press does not disturb us with editorials drawing our attention to and making us share in what lies be hind such news—the misery of the Japanese people. Thus we and the press are made guilty of lack of compassion. . . .

Those words, "lack of compassion," might have served as well or better than the ones that were used as a title for this article. But we the people, the common people, the ordinary people who have no official standing or responsibility, are very new at this sort of thing. Suddenly—suddenly, in historical time— we are called to the bar of public responsibility and asked to answer for our indifference to human suffering half way around the earth. It is good that we are called, since that is the sort of responsibility ordinary people must shoulder, sooner or later. But it takes a little time—not more, one hopes, than the little we seem to have—to assimilate such responsibility. So, for the present, it may be more appropriate to blame the newspapers for their indifference to such matters. The newspapers, after all, are in charge of communication, and if they do not confront us with facts, how can we rise to the responsibilities which those facts present?

So, for ordinary people, there is the problem of getting acquainted with the facts. Do ordinary people want the facts? There are times when editors and publishers like ourselves get a little discouraged about this question. But why should a mere editor luxuriate in discouragement when Dr. Schweitzer does not allow himself discouragement?

For a while, now, people like Dr. Schweitzer have been addressing the entire world concerning great moral issues. The first, perhaps, in our generation, was Gandhi. Gandhi addressed the world, and, for the most part, the world heard him. This is something new in history—a great man speaking his heart to all the world. There is some appropriateness in the fact that this can happen in an epoch when ordinary individuals, miscellaneous men, unofficial people, are becoming responsible for what is done in their name by national governments. Such events mark a change in the affairs of mankind.

The time has come when we can no longer plead ignorance or incompetence. You can't turn your back on the Word when it starts coming through. Knowledge of responsibility is the incarnation of the Logos. So far as we are concerned, this is the Millennium. In any religion worth having, you get the kind of a Millennium you deserve, and we are having ours.

The great question to be answered, these days, for those who think that they have heard the Word, is, "How do you articulate this new knowledge of responsibility? How do you get it *across to people?"* If the press will not disturb us, what will?

Four men in a boat did what they could. They tried to sail a thirty-foot ketch, the *Golden Rule,* into the nuclear testing area in the Pacific. Their idea was that the seas are free and that they had a right to go there, regardless of the plans of the Atomic Energy Commission. This was their method of protesting the test. If getting people familiar with the idea that it is possible to make such a protest is a good objective, the method worked. Some other members of the Committee of Non-Violent Action Against Nuclear Testing attempted to go to Moscow to appeal to the Soviet Union and its people to renounce further testing. There have been demonstrations and marches in various cities of the world. The word is getting around.

An editorial in the *Nation* for May 17 examines the issue of nuclear testing on rational grounds. The occasion for the editorial was a criticism of the German physicist, Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker, for declining, on personal religious grounds, to take part in the making of nuclear weapons. The critic, Irving Kristol, asked (in the London *Spectator)* if there is "anything in life to be treasured more than life itself?" His point, apparently, is that if survival is the issue, we have to make bombs, and if we have to test in order to make bombs, then we have to test in order to survive.

The *Nation* responds with the opinion that there are things more important than life itself, but adds:

> . . . we do not think that dying in a duel with nuclear weapons will preserve whatever is treasured, nor do we think that anyone has the moral right to force others, including children and non-combatants, to die for a cause which in his eyes involves the ultimate choice.
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> There is not the slightest evidence that we must choose between death and communism, which is what is actually meant by those who exhort us to be ready to die. Nuclear war would not preserve freedom: it would destroy freedom and everything else worth living (or dying) for. To the extent that it left any human beings alive at all, it could only result in a form of society beside which the fascism of Hitler, Mussolini and our ally Franco would appear positively benign.
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> Death is not too high a price to pay for freedom; on this we are all agreed. But what value would justify the destruction of human life on this planet, not to mention the destruction of the culture of the last two thousand years? To have a meaning, this question must be raised in a manner that gives each individual a chance to answer it, not in a way that forecloses individual option. To many Americans, we

> suspect, life under a Communist dictatorship would still seem worth living; millions of Russians find it so. And those Americans who found the prospect intolerable would, as individuals have the privilege of committing suicide or, better, combining to resist it. In contrast, to reach for nuclear bombs is tantamount—assuming it were possible—to disorbiting the moon and causing it to crash into the earth in order to destroy the Kremlin. Obsolete slogans no longer provide automatic answers to the hideous questions posed by nuclear weapons.

Prof. von Weizsäcker, the German theoretical physicist, whose religious scruples prevent him from making nuclear weapons, has an article in the May *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.* His title is "Do We Want to Save Ourselves?" Speaking of the American decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he writes:

> All the participants in this terrible game acted in awareness of their responsibility and under its heavy pressure. America was leading a war for freedom—for its own freedom and the freedom of the world. Was it permissible, was it necessary, to add to the terrible weapons already used in this war, a still more terrible one? The simplest solution was chosen when it was decided to build the bomb, and again when it was decided to use it. I believe, however, that recent developments show that *sooner or later the choice of the easiest way must be abandoned.* But that means changing the whole political and military context in which these ways are the easiest. For, without such a change will it ever be possible to choose and, once chosen, pursue a way that is different?

Three things, Prof. von Weizsäcker thinks, may be considered as possibilities. There can be an all-out third world war which will either end our civilization or establish a single victor which may be able to assure peace. There can be "wars by limited means" for an indefinite period. Or, finally, "All war will be abolished, by silent or expressed agreement."

The first alternative von Weizsäcker rejects as offering almost certain disaster for all. The second alternative he distrusts as unreal. "Who can guarantee that in a changing world, with a changing military technology, the belligerents will remain within the prescribed limits?" He continues:

> Does this mean that I believe in the third alternative that war could be, as the usual expression goes, "abolished"? I do not know. The enormous difficulty lies in the fact that *rational* pacifism is based on an error. By rational pacifism I mean the opinion that if only men clearly understood the terrors of war they would put an end to it and to all war preparations. This implies that the continuation of war danger is due only to the blindness of politicians. Why, then, are there still blind politicians? The truth is that wars are only paroxysms of conflicts which smolder in the irrational depths of human nature. Wars break out because in truth men *want* them—even though they imagine they do not. They may be reluctant to let hatred, or lust for power, shoot up into open flames; but so well are they prepared for such evils that the evil of war can ultimately appear the lesser one.

What to do? Prof. von Weizsäcker has several proposals, but the heart of his view is rejection of atomic weapons. One of the aims of the eighteen German atomic scientists who last year refused to work in this field, he says, was to make plain to the countries which do not yet possess atomic weapons "how little such weapons could help them, and how much they could help the world by renouncing such weapons."

The issue is peace *with* freedom: How can we get it? He urges certain starting-points for considering this question:

> . . . those who want peace will have to make great efforts and sacrifices, not smaller than those people have made in the past to win wars. It can be said: Peace does not come cheaper than war.

As a last resort, there is the method taught by Gandhi, who showed that freedom can be won by means other than weapons. Prof. von Weizsäcker's analysis of Gandhi's work is persuasive:

> Gandhi did not teach an infallible method to win a political fight—not even as much as a universally valid rule of political morality. The avoidance of force was a moral obligation, accepted by him and his followers at the beginning of their struggle; he did so not only out of a deep religious conviction, but also with a clever appreciation of the possible. His success, then, was the consequence of a favorable situation—but so is all success.

If Gandhian methods are a last resort, *so is war:*

> Negotiations can succeed, but they can also fail. Treaties can be observed, but they can also be broken. This is why mankind has not been able in the past to renounce altogether the last resort to war. Gandhi's fighting methods are another such extreme instrument, another last resort—because there is more behind them than behind the usual moves in the political game. There stands behind them—as behind a war—the readiness to put at stake one's whole person, for better or for worse. We need more writing like this about our alternatives as private citizens. Even if a man decides that he prefers the last resort of war, he needs to know something about what he is rejecting. Men who don't consider with all the impartiality they can muster the alternatives to war—the kind of war that will be fought in the future—may discover, when it is too late, that they have lost their moral right to freedom, by failing to exercise it when they still had a choice.

REVIEW
CRITERIA FOR REVIEWING

IN the Fall *Partisan Review,* Howard Nemerov undertakes to evaluate, in some ten pages, nine contemporary novels. At the outset, he remarks that the reviewer is apt to be too "keen, suspicious, diagnostic." The critic, he says, should "know a good deal, but he writes at a clever time, in which the power of technique to deceive and give the appearance of art is enormous; witness the quantity of 'masterpieces' given the world weekly by reviewers. By the same reasoning, it is a time for which all the tricks have been run through rather often. It may be that literacy is eating itself, competent work being more available to more people than ever before, while art becomes ever more rare until it is widely (though quietly, very quietly) suspected of being impossible." Mr. Nemerov further confesses, in his introduction, that "much of what I have to say is simply negative, not critical rage but no particular response at all beyond the mild pleasure in professional competence."

Toward the close of this review, however, Mr. Nemerov makes interesting comment on Lawrence Durrell's *Justine:*

> Durrell gives a sense of the mystery of personality; perhaps precisely because he, or his narrator, does not have that professional concern for "real characters" which is so often considered to be the mark of a talent for novel-writing. On the contrary, "For the writer people as psychologies are finished. The contemporary psyche has exploded like a soap-bubble under the investigations of the mystagogues. What now remains to the writer?" Possibly, as in this novel, what remains to the writer is the discovery again of a certain austerity belonging in former times to allegory; a spiritual heightening and exaggeration of the forms of things, away from the purely novelistic convention of "individuality" (which, exhausted as it is, begins to produce either mere collections of details or, quite simply, monstrosities) and toward the perception once more of the wholeness of things.

Finally, Nemerov sums up his praise of Mr. Durrell by saying that this writer has the poetic power "to reveal his people's necessities as rooted in the nature of things more than in the nature of novels. An illusion, perhaps, but the illusion on which the finest things solidly rest." Yes, novels whose chief claim to the attention of the public is a superlative technique leave us colder than cold. We are therefore apt to turn to books which allow the reader to increase his supply of affirmative insights. Often, except for a few paragraphs, these books are quite ordinary.

Mac Hyman's *No Time For Sergeants* has been around since 1954, reaching our attention only recently when a reader passed along his pocket edition. Those who may have made our mistake—thinking that it would probably run strongly to a Martin-and-Lewis type of slapstick—may be interested to know that this book amounts to a rather subtle indictment af military psychology; Hyman conceals sharp barbs of critical insight by his good-natured manner of telling. His style has been not unfairly compared to that of Mark Twain and Will Rogers, and the story moves to a wonderful climax wherein two generals are forced to ask a private's advice and to follow his instructions.

The passage we like best, however, has to do with the question of "race" in the army. Private Will Stockdale is a Georgia boy who has had no opportunity to read the liberal press. He uses the word "nigger," which no one who reads the liberal press would do, and in the army is roundly called down for this. But in this case, Will, the one who says the bad word, is almost the only man who has no prejudice of any sort, while around him are others who say the right words but who have bias in their hearts. When Will did get the point, he got it better than any one else, because he was beyond the sense of prejudice in the first place. So, in this instance, we may forgive the disrespectful word:

> I happened to glance in the office we were setting outside of and seen that the Lieutenant this fellow wanted us to talk to was a *nigger,* which was the most surprising thing because I hadn't seen many niggers since we left home. I turned to Ben and

whispered, "Ben, they's a nigger in there!" but Ben only looked hard at me, and about that time the fellow come out and said that the Lieutenant would see us now.

And then the nigger said right out, "Didn't you fellows understand what the Captain said about what lack of oxygen will do for you at twenty thousand feet?" and didn't even *sound* like a nigger the way he talked. I don't guess I had ever seen anything like it before.

I just *stood* there for a minute. I mean it's kind of a shock to a man to have a nigger set there and start talking and not even *sound* like a nigger, so when we got outside I wanted to go back in and talk with him a little bit as I hadn't seen no niggers much lately, and never none like that, so I was right interested in how he *got* that way. I wanted to chat with him a bit because he sho seemed nice and was just as friendly as he could be, and there ain't nobody any friendlier than a friendly nigger.

"Don't call him a nigger," Ben said. "He's an officer! Didn't you see that?"

"Sho, Ben, I seen that; but I just didn't think about it, I guess, because he was colored and I hadn't seen no colored folks for a while and it made me kind of homesick and . . ."

But then Ben yelled out, "Quit saying *colored."*

Anyhow, the fellow setting across from me leaned over and said, "Hey, Will, what would a Georgia boy think of a nigger officer? trying to joke some more with me.

So I come back with: "I wouldn't think nothing of it because I ain't ever seen one."

"Well, look right over there and you can see one right now," he said.

So I looked around and they was all waiting to see what I would say, but I looked right on past where the OD was setting, and then went back to eating again, shaking my head.

Then this fellow said, "Don't you see that one right over there?"

"No, I don't," I said.

"Setting over there at the table by hisself," this fellow said. "Look . . ."

So I looked around at the OD again and kind of strained my eyes and then I shook my head again. "I see the Lieutenant all right," I said. "But I don't see no nigger."

"What's the matter, you blind? You mean to sit there and say you don't see that nigger?"

So I looked real hard again like I was trying to make him out, and then I shook my head and said, "Nope, I don't think so. But, course, I don't usually notice the color of things no-how."

COMMENTARY
"RATIONAL PACIFISM"?

PROF. C. F. VON WEIZSACKER(see page 2) says that *"rational* pacifism is based on an error." By rational pacifism, he explains, he means "the opinion that if only men clearly understood the terrors of war, they would put an end to it and to all war preparations." His further explanation suggests that "wars are only paroxysms of conflicts which smolder in the irrational depths of human nature."

This seems accurate enough. It's all in the way you use the term "rational." If by "rational," you mean a superficial comprehension of human nature, identifying the word with the meaning associated with nineteenth-century rationalism, then you can surely say that rational pacifism is based on an error. Back in 1910, or thereabouts, Norman Angell wrote a book called *The Great Illusion* in which he showed that it had become impossible for a modern nation to profit by a war. There have been hundreds of books, since, to prove the folly of war from almost any "practical" point of view, but nations seldom go to war for practical reasons.

Wars will probably go on until men are able to feel the hurt in themselves when they hurt another man. War is like anger. It involves emotions which take possession of human beings. To stop war, therefore, you need human beings who cannot be possessed by emotions. They can have emotions, of course, but they cannot be possessed by them. Would this be another kind of "rational" pacifism?

If we generalize from this proposition, we come upon the need for basic attitudes which resist any sort of emotional conquest. This will be difficult for Western man. For many Westerners, religion is a kind of emotional conquest. That, at any rate, seems to be the meaning of "conversion." It is no accident that the first aggressive atheists of Western civilization gave one of their reasons for being against religion as their hatred of religious wars. They could see no way of stopping them without making an end of religion.

Religious wars are not the issue, today—they are not the issue, that is, unless you regard the crusade against atheistic communism as a kind of Christian *Jehad,* and the Communist drive against selfish Capitalism as a religious war in reverse. But however you evaluate these matters, it remains true that the same emotions which used to bring about religious wars are also bringing about modern wars. *They* haven't changed, even if their names have changed.

This is probably our trouble. We blame the names for things, instead of the things themselves, which cause the wars. Then, when the names change, we get mixed up and blame the wrong things. The *Nation* editorial quoted in this week's lead shows how mixed up we are.

These are days, in short, when the pacifists are going to have to listen to the psychologists, or some of the psychologists. The psychologists are making us acquainted with the "irrational depths of human nature." They aren't the first, of course, to do this. Gotama Buddha dealt with these problems with great wisdom; the psychologists do not have his wisdom, but they have our vocabulary, and they seem to be getting some wisdom as they go along. That is why the philosopher-psychologists, who are already unpopular in some circles, are likely to become more so. The more irrational the human nature, the more painful it is to have it looked at.

But peace, as Dr. von Weizsäcker says, "does not come cheaper than war." The thing we have to find out is the currency in which you pay for it.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

RUSSIAN EDUCATION—I

NEARLY every magazine published in this country has discussed the educational implications of Russia's achievement with the Sputniks. The general consensus seems to be that the ease with which Russia's first satellite made its ascent points to the danger in a casual approach to the training of American youth. Many voices are calling for legislation to rush to the rescue so that, eventually, American-trained young men will be able to better Soviet scientific standards.

Our concern, here, however, is to see that another aspect of a comparison between Russian and American education be noticed—one which is quite possibly of greater importance than scientific eminence. For we hold that the natural discipline which comes from harder and more extensive work in school is more apt to produce happy children than a program which seeks to please rather than teach.

Among those calling for reform is Admiral Hyman Rickover, who proposed the setting up of model high schools which would at least allow children with ability and latent determination to stretch their capacities as rapidly as possible. But most educators, especially those associated with the influential Teachers College of Columbia University, speak out strongly against such suggestions. Dr. A. Harry Passow of Columbia, in a recent interview in the New York *Times*, claimed that it is a perversion of democracy "to set aside certain youngsters and give them privileges which automatically set them apart as an elite group of society. The amount of pressure that such a system puts on a young student is neither desirable nor necessary. . . . With all the things there are at stake, we just don't want to put all this pressure on our kids." The *Bulletin* of Council for Basic Education (April) takes an opposite view, saying: "Some people would say that the prevalent doctrine that we must not put pressure on young people bears a close relation to our present educational ills."

The issue we are interested in, of course, is only incidentally related to current discoveries about the temper of Russian youth. In general, European countries seem to regularly produce well-behaved, well-disciplined, and happy young people on a school diet containing a much more "substantial work load." Writing for *Modern Age*, Winter 1957-58, Prof. Harold Clapp considers "Some Lessons from Swiss Education," remarking that "discipline and serious work do not damage the young, even in this generation—that there may even be a relationship between these things and the low rate of juvenile delinquency and crime in Switzerland." He adds: "That democracy can be served in schools without being equated with mediocrity. That unless we strengthen our school programs promptly and mightily, our children are going to be hopelessly outclassed in the forums and market-places of the world." But does the sort of educational discipline required in Soviet Russia necessarily thwart or destroy capacity for initiative and imagination?

Beginning at the top, so to speak, we must first consider the charge that such detailed planning as that pursued by the Soviet Ministry of Education induces so strong an authoritarian control that teachers are inclined to become mere automatons. Andrew MacAndrew, asking in the Feb. 20 *Reporter,* "Are Soviet Schools Better Than Ours?", remarks that there are *some* admirable results to be gained from rigorous supervision—benefiting the child as well as the country whose interests he will presumably some day serve. Mr. MacAndrew feels that one must look at Russia's innumerable, detailed "guides to the teacher" with an open mind in order to understand all aspects of the spirit of today's Soviet education. He explains why:

> For each subject, a booklet of about fifty pages details how much ground has to be covered in what time and what should be taught before or after what. But this does not convey an idea of totalitarianism, nor is there anything necessarily undemocratic in

such thoroughness. The reason for all these minute directions seems not to be interference with the freedom of the teacher but, as is explicitly stated, to co-ordinate the acquisition of knowledge, especially in inter-related branches. In the math teacher's guide, for instance, he is constantly reminded that by such and such a date he must have explained such and such a particular point of geometry to his pupils, who will otherwise be quite unable to grasp certain aspects of optics upon which his physics colleague is about to embark.

And dotted throughout are such reminders as this: "In the light of polytechnical training, great attention must be given to combined practice sessions with the teachers of physics, chemistry, drafting, and geography."

The same promptings are addressed to the teacher of chemistry (to think of the biologist), to the teacher of geography (to keep the historian in mind), and so on. And then there are always the "polytechnical" sessions and combined excursions, which seem to reflect a pedagogical rather than a political preoccupation.

The position of the present Soviet educational authorities is that the study of various subjects should be properly coordinated and that the delicate matter of determining the amount of fundamental general knowledge a student should have before he specializes cannot be left to the whims of immature youngsters. Although this stand may be debatable, there may a1so be some discussion about how an extremely elective system in which one is allowed to study optics without geometry, electricity without algebra, astronomy without trigonometry, and journalism without spelling can be either effective or necessary for the maintenance of a democratic form of government.

As we recall, Robert Hutchins, Alexander Meiklejohn, Stringfellow Barr and other American educators have long been advocating this sort of synthesis as a goal.

Further, these gentlemen seem to be about as far away from being Communists as it is possible to get—even though they are "radical" on matters of civil liberties. In nearly every university where attempts are made to afford the greatest freedom in electives—as in "Readings for Honors" courses based on the Oxford Plan, etc.—the professors from various departments who collaborate invariably discover that they have heretofore been so specialized in their own fields that they barely know how to talk with fellow professors who teach other subjects. While they would hardly care for some sort of state intervention to correct this academic "isolation," they would probably admit that the Russians seem to have done a fairly good job in relating different departments of education. The problem of how we might accomplish a similar synthesis without formal edicts from a "Ministry of Education" is something all American educators should scratch their heads over for a while.

One thing is certain. Soviet young people, from kindergarten through college, work a great deal harder than our children do at the business of getting an education. The evidence of this is on every hand. *Life* for March 24 subtitled a feature "Russian Schoolboys Point Up a U.S. Weakness," and while *Life*, as would be expected, considers the chief "weakness" our inferiority in the Sputnik department, the research done on a comparison of Russian and American school "work-loads" is interesting. While deploring the "rigidity" of the Russian system, *Life* admits that there are some "stern virtues" also. *Life's* method was to contrast the school life of two sixteen-year-olds, one Russian and one American:

There is no blinking at the educational results. Academically Alexei is two years ahead of Stephen. As one example, he has read Shakespeare and Shaw in literature class while Stephen has only just finished reading Stevenson's *Kidnapped.* In the austere atmosphere of Moscow's School 49, Alexei Kutzkof spends six intensive days a week on a formidable array of subjects. They include Russian literature, sixth-year English, fifth-year physics, fourth-year chemistry, electrical technique, mathematics, technical drawing, machinery and astronomy.

Alexei also has a firm foundation in literature and languages. He has studied all the great Russian writers, including Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, and in his English classes English is spoken more often than Russian. Though the range and depth of the studies is impressive, there is one catch. Russian students learn a great deal by rote and seldom strike out to

explore any subject on their own initiative beyond the material printed in their textbooks.

Alexei's teachers are well trained. They run their classes with a firm hand. Discipline has relaxed a little since Stalin's death, but pupils are still careful not to act up. If a student gets less than an A in behavior, school authorities can suggest pointedly that he reconsider his plans for applying to college. How would American college students react to such a rigorous program? Well, when school has been so very easy for such a long time, it is admittedly quite a task to usher in an era of discipline. But not impossible. A special supplement on "American Higher Education" in the St. Lawrence University *Bulletin* for April reviews attempts at Amherst to toughen up the courses with mandatory requirements. This step at Amherst followed a long period of evaluation, when those responsible for Amherst policies resolved that *they* should do more deciding about what is good for the students. The *Bulletin* reports:

> When the self-testing was over, Amherst's students began taking three sets of required courses in their freshman and sophomore years: one each in science, history, and the humanities. The courses were designed to build the groundwork for responsible lives: they sought to help students form an integrated picture of civilization's issues and processes. (But they were not "surveys"—or what Philosophy Professor Gail Kennedy, chairman of the faculty committee that developed the program, calls "those superficial omnibus affairs.")
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> How did the student body react? Angrily. When Professor Arnold B. Arons first gave his course in physical science and mathematics, a wave of resentment arose. It culminated at a mid-year dance. The music stopped, conversations ceased, and the students observed a solemn, two-minute silence. They called it a "Hate Arons Silence."
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> But at the end of the year they gave the professor a standing ovation. He had been rough. He had not provided his students with pat answers. He had forced them to think, and it had been a shock at first. But as they got used to it, the students found that thinking, among all of life's experiences, can sometimes be the most exhilarating.

FRONTIERS

Science and Moral Values

THE career of Trigant Burrow came at a most interesting time in the intellectual and cultural history of Western civilization. Dr. Burrow was a distinguished psychotherapist who was born in 1875 and died in 1950. His life, therefore, bridged a period of extreme transition in cultural attitudes. His interests, which became evident early in his career, centered upon the psychic ills of the human race. He was one of the few men working in this field who found the courage to point out that the healing of the individual psyche is hardly possible without accomplishing at the same time drastic changes in the psychic life of the community.

His way of expressing himself reflects the modes of thought which were considered to be "enlightened" during the major portion of his life. What men both before him and after him have called "soul," he designated with the word "organism," as the key idea representing the human individual. His judgments about man and society deal with what he believed to be the needs and potentialities of the "organism," and what is natural and good for the "organism." In his later years, he even found by physiological experiment that the body responds in particular ways to psycho-emotional attitudes, confirming, apparently, the validity of the organismic approach to mental health.

This emphasis on the organism was natural enough. After centuries of barren speculation about the "soul," grounded on theological assumption, the effort of scientists of every sort was to get back to indisputable facts, and what greater fact than the physical body? Burrow's choice of a physiological focus, therefore, should be interpreted as a determination to be faithful to nature in his investigations, and by no means a stubborn attachment to what moralistic critics often condemn as "materialism." His views, no doubt, can be interpreted as evolving from materialistic assumptions, but his motives, his ends, and even his methods are so plainly idealistic and humanitarian that the word "materialism," used as an epithet, is wholly misleading.

More than one critic has complained of Burrow's style as obscure. It is obscure. He has a vocabulary all his own. But his ideas, when rendered into more basic English, reveal very simple contentions. The following explanation of them (which of course risks the layman's tendency to oversimplify and even distort), is drawn from various of Burrow's writings and from papers by his colleagues.

All discussion of human health is normative. That is, it assumes that health is of a certain character. Burrow starts out by assuming a natural, organismic unity of the human species, in which the responses of the organism to the field of experience constitutes health. (There is a background of thinking comparable to what is found in Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* for this assumption.) In Burrow's words: "The basic behavior of man, like that of the other animal orders, represents a condition of homogeneity and solidarity."

The trouble began (Evil entered the scene) when the human consciousness began to substitute symbolic entities for the realities of experience. Man began to relate to the symbols instead of to the actualities. The symbols were often poor and distorted representatives of reality. A notion of the self developed which led men to think their interests were opposed to the interests of other men. This anti-organismic idea of the self Burrow called *"I-persona"*—the "mask" which falsely identifies the human individual:

> Where formerly our common interests had been primary, now our separate interests were primary. Instead of the common consciousness which once united us, a partitive consciousness now divided us. With the insinuation of this partitive self, the *common* self-interest of the species was shifted to the personal self-interest of each individual, and henceforward interrelational conflict replaced the organism's unity and coordination as a phylum. This is the breach

whose global extension we see today in the irreconcilable ideologies of East and West.

Complex institutional reflections of the partisan self-interest of individuals, Burrow maintained, have so confused the definition of health that both doctors and patients must make Herculean efforts to cut away all the socially-approved distortions of a natural life in order to conceive of true normality. Burrow and his associates and students have spent their lives in an attempt to recreate their basic attitudes in terms of what they believe' to be natural, "organismic" response. There is unmistakable heroism in this attempt. The center of this work, carried on since Burrow's death by his surviving associates, is the Lifwynn Foundation, 37 East 37th Street, New York City.

It is impossible to summarize a work of this sort. Even illustrations will of necessity be fragmentary. However, a letter by Burrow to an old friend, written in 1941, will convey something of this pioneer psychologist's philosophy and generosity of spirit. He wrote:

> As to what you say of religion, I am afraid I cannot go with you, and I like so to go with people of your sort. I have thought a good deal of these aspects of man's subjective experience, but only in a desultory sort of way. If, as I see it, religion is just another name for devotion, I can't quite bear "thinking" about it—objectivating it. Devotion to science is different. This is objective devotion. It is devotion to things as they are. With science, there can't be too great awareness. Objective observation is synonymous with science. But it does seem to me that with religion, as with love or peace, contentment or health, once we look at it, there is nothing there. It is like trying to juxtapose self-consciousness and spontaneity. They simply do not mix. (You remember Emerson's Eros?—
>
> They put their finger to their lip
> The Powers above:
> The seas their islands clip,
> The moons in ocean dip,
> They love, but name not love.)
>
> I hope that in disavowing these dissident mixtures I do not appear to be growing coy. Coyness and senescence would, I am sure, seem to you an equally inept combination! . . .
>
> You ask, "How are we going to cure a disease which you apparently feel afflicts the whole of humanity?" Freud once asked the same question, "Does Burrow think he is going to cure the world?" But after all, why not? Of what earthly use is science if it serves the need of anything short of the whole world? Where, pray, would we be today if the early bacteriologists had taken the position that infectious diseases must be eradicated from, let us say, the families of Pasteur and Koch, or that only the communities embraced by the Latin Quarter or the Canary Isles must be rendered immune to infection? Think what has happened with tuberculosis in the mere flash of a momentary fifty years! And there is no disease more communicable than nervous disorders.
>
> Yes, Margaret, let's cure the world. It's so much easier than attempting to cure you or me, or any other Tom, Dick or Harry in the midst of our sick and soul-infected human species. I hope God will forgive me, but I'm all out for the world at large. Anything less than the race of man seems partisan to me, and I'm sure that your own hope envisages no less a quarry All that is needed, all that has ever been needed is that man know clearly, demonstrably what the matter is—what structure and what mechanism is disordered or impaired. Once the real focus of a disorder is clearly established, man pursues the remedy indefatigably. Nothing stands in his path. It will be this way increasingly with man's attitude toward his own disorders of behavior—his insanity, his greed, his competitiveness, his cheats, his wars, his sentimental dependencies, in short, his subjective devotion to things as he would like to see them rather than his objective devotion to things as they are. You will see . . . .

These are the words of a man of undaunted courage. Dr. Burrow may sound "optimistic," but there is surely no hope on any other ground than the one he proposes. Whether he was right in his location of "the real focus of disorder," may be questioned, perhaps—and should be questioned, since diagnosis is an element in the practice of scientific medicine—but, for human beings, the self-correction he proposes is the only practicable course.

How does this sort of therapy work? Well, it probably works in much the same way as the therapy of other men who are able to understand the problems of their patients. An illustration of the method of one of Dr. Burrow's associates, Dr. Hans Syz, will perhaps suggest how the broad conception of the general social good enters into the treatment. In a paper entitled, "An Experiment in Inclusive Psychotherapy," Dr. Syz describes the case of a seven-year-old boy who was suffering from "severe tic-like movements of face and shoulders, had shown spells of antagonistic and destructive behavior, and was generally difficult to manage." Dr. Syz worked with the boy and his mother, a woman of forty-three:

> The interrelation between the mother's over-anxious and irritable tendency and the boy's dependent and, at the same time, rebellious attitude was taken up immediately with the mother and a beginning was made in explaining to her the unfavorable influence of her reaction-tendency upon the boy. Their attitudes were considered as interactive variations of a basic theme. In addition the mother's attention was drawn to discrepancies and flattering self-deceptions embodied in her behavior trends. For example, what she considered her thoughtfulness and love for the boy was reformulated in terms of concern for her own convenience and emotional gratification. Her egocentric or self-defensive tendency was brought up for observation together with the essentially identical trends she criticized in the behavior of her son. This could be done without giving offense, as the discrepant behavior trends were not focussed upon as specific to the mother or to the boy. They were immediately related to similar authoritarian tendencies observable in *other* parents and in the social setting generally. The therapist did not emphasize what errors the mother made, but endeavored to observe together with mother and boy familiar events from an altered viewpoint—in their relation to a quite generally distributed but not generally recognized inadequacy of adjustment. In this way, without the therapist giving specific advice, the mother and in a limited way the son were given the opportunity to observe the inadequacy of their own adaptation, and to sense the possibility of more constructive interrelations.
>
> To give a trivial example: During the interview with the mother, a boy (not her son) brought into the room a piece of paper he had taken from the registrar's desk. After he left, the mother remarked with some irritation that she would not allow *her* son to steal. This incident was immediately utilized as material for observation and the mother was asked whether in her irritation she was not acting at the moment in the same way. This remark was elaborated in simple terms indicating how in a reaction of anger one assumes a false authority over people, and in this way takes something to oneself which belongs to another. The prevalence of such an intrusion on the part of people everywhere was also touched upon. This interpretation startled the mother somewhat but she was able to grasp the gist of it without indications of resentment or marked self-reproach. *(Experimental Psychopathology*,1957.)

The value of this sort of therapy, which is social as well as personal—and must be so, as Burrow regarded human problems—is quite obvious.

This article was intended to serve as a notice of a new book, A *Search for Man's Sanity*, comprising the letters of Trigant Burrow, just published by the Oxford University Press ($8.75), but while the letters make a fascinating portrait of Dr. Burrow, it seemed more important to use our space to give some account of what this man stood for and worked for; accordingly, we have drawn on various materials for this purpose. Concerning the book, it might be said, simply, that all readers of Trigant Burrow will value it for the intensely human account it affords of a man who wrote so seriously and impersonally that his personal warmth and sense of humor seldom got across.

We have two more illustrations of Burrow's views. The first concerns political attitudes and exhibits Burrow's indifference to conventional "side-taking." He wrote:

> When people speak of "normality," they really mean a social reaction average that is based upon a wishful, nonobjective premise. Their "normality" bears no relation to an objectively established biological norm. To cite ideological examples within the states: a communist is a person who assumes the right to infringe upon the rights of other people. He demands the right to the property of others, and he

> will make himself very disagreeable if his idea of what is right *(his* right) is questioned. The capitalist is a person who exercises the right to employ adroit deals through which he also acquires for himself the largest attainable amount of other people's earnings and, like the communist, he acquires them from the largest possible number of people. Such is the capitalist's idea of what is right—*his* right. In the phylobiological reckoning, the contrast between communist and capitalist is a distinction without a difference.

The foregoing is a note which appears in *Feelings and Emotions,* edited by Martin L. Reymert (McGraw-Hill, 1950). Another note concerns the familiar categories of theists and atheists:

> It seems to me that the men and women who have laid aside wishful fantasies and beliefs and have set themselves to study the universe of observable phenomena without fear or favor are the real servitors in the world of thought and feeling, and that it is the self-righteous "believers" who, if any, should come in for challenge. Thinking along these lines, it appears high time that those of us whose work centers in a disinterested devotion to the laws recognizable in the external universe should demand the respect for their work and aims that is their due. As the term "atheist" is used today, it is synonymous with "infidel" (literally, one who is unfaithful), whereas it would be more consistent to apply such a term to those who adhere to wishful emotions and beliefs rather than to stable scientific principles.
>
> I would therefore suggest that in place of the usual appellatives "theist" and "atheist" we substitute the terms "credulist" (the unquestioning devotee of wishful tradition and the "I" persona) and "genicist" (the searcher for causes). The credulist (the Christian Scientist, the Buddhist, the Catholic, the Baptist, etc.) assigns a *first cause* to an allegedly external agency, more or less local, that he calls *God;* the genicist seeks to understand and abide by the intrinsic law or ruling principle universally resident within the world of external phenomena But, for the phylo-biologist, this law or principle resides no less within the species man and is appreciable by him within his own processes.

The inspiring thing about Trigant Burrow is the truly scientific spirit of his determination to find his way to the truth, regardless of current dogmas and prejudices. His orientation is manifestly ethical: his whole life is witness to this. It is also witness to his attempt to find in "nature" the foundation for moral values. Whether or not he actually found in "nature" the values he adopted, or in himself, we leave to other debaters. The conclusion we draw is that men of this quality are bound to find them *somewhere,* and we see no reason why their search for values should not be pervaded by the attitude of the scientist—the scientist's devotion to impartiality and his unwillingness to be a partisan of any party or culture which excludes some portion of mankind. Perhaps it may be said that moral values are to be found wherever there are human beings; that human beings are a part of nature, and that a man's relations with nature (including other men) can be profoundly ethical, if he sees them to be so, and that nature is in some sense responsive to this regard of a higher consciousness (the ethical consciousness of man). Certainly, moral awareness was the primary reality in the life of Trigant Burrow, and it would be grossly unscientific to neglect this fact in behalf of some more traditional notion of what constitutes a human being.