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THE MECHANICAL MAN

A FEW years ago Mr. Charles Chaplin produced a motion picture called *Modern Times,* a satire on the plight of the many millions of average men who become the "victims" of industrial machinery. Like many another feature of our times, the picture, mental or visual, of the man whose nervous system compels him to go through the motions of tightening a bolt on an assembly line after the work day is over, is good for a laugh. The Industrial Revolution created a new kind of slavery, the slavery of becoming welded to and dependent upon a particular machine and a particular mechanical operation. Now you can laugh at slavery so long as you know that the man who is enslaved can get up and walk away from his servitude. Or you can look a little down your nose at the man who accepts an endless mechanical routine as his daily portion, if you have found refuge in rural living. Mr. Chaplin's motion picture left room for any man, presumably, to leave the Ford Motor Company assembly line if he began to break under the strain. Yet not every one is even aware that he *can* get up and walk away. For these, slavery, even the just-eight-hours-a-day kind, is not funny. During 1933, in the period of the Great Depression, a man starved to death every $8^1/_2$ hours in the city of Detroit, automobile manufacturing center of the world. Even the workers who escaped serious economic deprivation lived for long years in fear, knowing, as they did, that a breakdown of the system could also break them as it had others. Their machine was their security, and to leave it, potential suicide.

These conditions, we say, are the inevitables of our increasingly populated world. More people means more specialization, since there is not enough land for each community of men to be self-supporting, and raw materials are scattered.

Man, during his eight hours of employ may simply have to be enslaved to a system, but is he not free when the time clock punches out the end of the day? Perhaps he could be, but he seldom is. Yet, there is another kind of slavery than the close linking of man to equipment. Behind the machines have grown the complicated social and government procedures which serve to regulate the system in its entirety. Moreover, each industrial plant or factory is departmentalized in its management and has a staff of specialists to deal with the similarly highly organized labor unions.

The individual worker becomes a political being, but only in a highly restricted sense. It is *not* politic for him to engage in any disputes with management which are not organized and sponsored by his union, and likewise not politic for him to refrain from any labor-capital struggle which his union has decided is necessary. The machine which he tends during working hours is one thing; the fact that he is a *part* of a huge and much more complicated machine made up of the pattern of arrangements between labor, capital and government quite another. He learns to be a follower, not only of the rigid duties incident to his actual work with his hands, but a follower of whatever decrees are issued by those who manage the total industrial process. If a Mussolini wins the favor of the unions, the union man becomes a Fascist automatically. He has simply been moved as a cog in a piece of political machinery. His factory work helps condition him to take the whole process for granted.

A most important piece of writing produced during the period of the recent war was entitled *The Responsibility of Peoples,* an editorial essay on the question of war guilt, first appearing in Dwight Macdonald's radical magazine *Politics.*

Macdonald showed clearly the fact that no specific individual man could be held fully accountable for the war crimes of the particular system to which he belonged: were all of the Germans who simply obeyed orders guilty of Dachau? And if all of the Germans, all of the rest of the modern world. For the single man is moved in war just as is a piece of equipment. When he enters the huge "machine" of a conscript army he hears only what he is supposed to hear, does what he is supposed to do and thinks to question nothing, questions not being expected or allowed. As Macdonald simply stated, "More and more, things happen to people." He recounted the case of the three hundred negro sailors who were lauded by an admiral in charge for their "heroism" and "self-sacrifice" after being blown to pieces while loading munitions ships at Mare Island (a California naval base). These men had no choice whatsoever about being "heroes," had undoubtedly been placed at their dangerous work because of their race. That fifty negros were subsequently convicted and given long prison terms for revolting against the same work (many of them survivors of the blast) proved the point. But the admiral *said* that these men had died as dedicated heroes, and it looked all right in print. The petty officials in the Nazi death-camps—while "fiends" rather than "heroes," in the eyes of America or England—had done what they were told. A revolt *against* what they were told to do would have brought them a worse fate than the convicted Mare Island negroes.

It remains for perceptive sociologists to see that the same conditions underlie all the motions of industrial life during peacetime, though in a less spectacular form. Everyone *tends,* at least, to become a single gear in a large machine of some sort, held in place by the rest of the machinery, or, in more accurate terms, by what that particular machine is supposed to do. Whether the individual man seeks advancement in management through the good graces of employers or advancement as a worker through pleasing labor union officials, his actions and opinions must be dictated by the particular sort of political machinery he seeks to placate. While he may do all this voluntarily, yet what, actually, are his alternatives?—especially if he has grown used to the psychology of conscription during wartime and sees nothing out of natural order in letting someone else tell him what he must do, and why he must do it?

The Mechanical Man is the symbol of our times. He may be reluctant and cynical toward his own docility, but he is always docile enough. The loudest propaganda always wins his allegiance because he *expects* to be led by those who make the most noise. He is the reason for the success of most of modern advertising, which operates on the principle of "conditioning" the public with phrases and catch-words until people move in a dazed condition to purchase without any clear desire for what they buy.

Our largest modern universities have done their share in producing the mechanical man. Most of them, today, train their students to "adjust" to the modern world, rather than inspiring them to remold it with bold and original thinking. One need not be a Detroit factory worker nor an army conscript to accept a passive role in society. He may be a young intellectual with a 4F classification, and still be discouraged from the idea of thinking and choosing for himself.

One of the greatest psychological tragedies of our times is that while we tend to recognize these multiple conditioning factors which influence the temper of man, we are nevertheless resigned to our fate. We know we are dependent upon mechanical devices, we know we are often robot cogs in political and economic systems we do not fully understand, we know we cease to have individual choice in a conscript army, and we simply shrug our shoulders. We may sigh bravely or snarl, but we accept without struggle. The process grinds out system after interlocked system, turns us over and plows us under, just as all the time we expected it would. We believe the propaganda of a political machine, discover a little later that the facts were misrepresented to us, and then allow ourselves to be propagandized again. Why do we do these things? There must be something about the mental climate of this century which encourages everyone to expect the worst. Possibly we do not really believe half the propaganda that we say we believe, but we go on acting as if we believed it, because we suspect that propaganda, not truth, is the best we can get.

There is only one clear answer to why all this keeps happening. We are influenced by the intellectual currents in our culture, as well as by centralized industrial and political developments, to worry about conditions instead of principles. A principle is not a party platform. It is the single man's definition of truth—which he will cling to in the face of any odds.

WHO IS "WISE"?

As I see it, the person who has developed some control of his greed, his vanity, and his fears; who has developed to the limit of his brain the understanding of man and the universe achieved by science; who thinks in terms of his fellow-men—the human race—not for today, tomorrow, or even the next hundred years, but for a future at least as long as our human past; and who at the same time uses all his influence, without violence or coercion, to prevail on his fellow-men to follow his example—that man only is entitled to the designation "wise. "

—A. J. Carlson, *Scientific Monthly*

Letter from ENGLAND

LONDON.—A document on the subject of unity and peace, signed by Dr. Robert M. Hutchins and others, has been received in this country from the Committee on Social Thought, Chicago. It has aroused interest, but informed comment is not noticeable. With the main theme of the appeal there can be no quarrel:

> The hope of unity and peace lies, paradoxically, in diversity. . . But the will to unite must come first . . . salvation for the human race on earth rests upon the recognition that all men and women are ultimately one, and upon the expression of this unity as the first principle of government everywhere.

All this is unimpeachable in sentiment. But the fact remains that the dire consequences of the decision to drop atomic bombs on 'Japan have yet to work themselves out in the countries concerned. All efforts to impart a little sanity to international relationships are unavailing because of the potent fears aroused by the dangerous possibilities of atomic warfare on a large scale. What meaning has social thought anywhere beneath this overwhelming shadow? And if it be asked why proposals before the United Nations for controlling atomic energy have failed to produce results, there is only one answer possible on the evidence before this country: "All attempts to control atomic energy have been frustrated by the intransigence of the Soviet Union." This is not the utterance of witch-hunters; it is contained in a sober document, emphasizing the seriousness of the threat of atomic war, issued and signed by a body of individuals comparable with that of the Chicago Committee. Among the signatories are Lord Russell (Bertrand Russell), Mr. Raymond Blackburn, M.P. (Labour), Mr. T. S. Eliot, and the Dean of St. Paul's (London *Times,* Dec. 22, 1947).

The lesson is that only full cooperation on a world scale can prevent the destruction of this present civilization and humanity. Even if there were no actual atomic war, we would do well to remember the picture that has been drawn of the effects of its threat:

> Not a single life has been lost in atomic warfare; nevertheless death has spread everywhere in the cold violence of anticipation, and civilization has been almost as fatally destroyed as it would be under the third assumption (actual warfare). . . . The very precautions men may take for safeguarding life against atomic warfare may also do away with every sound reason for living. (Lewis Mumford in *The Changing World,* Autumn, 1947.)

While holding out our hands to our brothers and sisters everywhere (as Dr. Hutchins and his associates exhort us to do), it would be treason to high ideals to turn a blind eye to the facts and possibilities of the world situation as it exists, or to imagine that the harvest of effects is unrelated to causes sown in the past. It has been said of the American cast of mind that "there is an impatience to obtain results, to secure recognition, and a corresponding reluctance to submit to discipline and to await the verdict of posterity." (Ralph Barton Perry, in a broadcast.) But are not these things common to human thought the world over in this feverish stage of historical development? Another example of the inveterate disinclination to measure effects by causes is the world hunt for food. Impatience to obtain results has violated Nature everywhere, in peace as in war. In their turn, ideologies (Fascist, Communist, or any other) are but the organized outcome of past erroneous social thinking, and, at the pitch of intensity reached by them, are bound to break out into violent eruptions in the social structure. Hard thinking must accompany goodwill if the foreseeable perils are to be overcome. Indeed, it may be necessary to build a new order of thought before real peace and unity are reached.

For one thing, and by way of illustration, how long is it going to take to rid Western thought of its vain assumption that rationality, political order and responsibility, Christian and humanitarian brotherhood, and personal initiative and free enterprise, are four traditions which make persistent appearance only in the Western world?

This is the ridiculous claim made by the reviewer of John Bowle's *Western Political Thought* in the *Times Literary Supplement* (Dec. 27, I947). He ends his article with the astonishing sentence: "Only one thing is unique in history—the Christian religion, with its marriage of historical and metaphysical claims." This is perverted Brahminism at its worst. just as selfishness and exclusiveness practically stifled Eastern spirituality, so their malign influence have brought the power nations of the Western world to the abyss.

The deadly struggle which we are witnessing in all fields of human activity has been made inevitable by the course of preceding events. Of today it can be said what Henry T. Buckle pointed out in his *History of Civilization* nearly a hundred years ago (1857-61), when writing of another cataclysm, the French Revolution:

> . . . the history itself has never been written; since they who have attempted the task have not possessed such resources as would enable them to consider it as merely a single part of that far larger movement which was seen in every department of science, philosophy, of religion, and of politics.

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

MINORITY MEN

THE reading of a book like Irving Stone's *Adversary in the House* (Doubleday, 1947) makes one reflect upon the common tendency to judge historical figures in the superficial terms of popular majority opinion. The Stone book brings home the evil of this tendency, for few great men have been so thoughtlessly ignored, or condemned, as Eugene V. Debs—of whom *Adversary in the House* is a fictionized biography—simply because he is known to have been a socialist leader.

Opposed in principle to "fictionized" biography, we nevertheless urge that this book be read, for both pleasure and instruction, adding the precaution that David Karsner's authorized biography should be read also, either before or after. For those who will find themselves somewhat amazed at the injustice and prejudice of their former ideas about Debs, Mr. Stone's book may easily become the doorway to serious reading on the struggles of Labor in the United States, and on the radical movement in general. The idea of "reading up" on the radical movement has a slightly indecent flavor to entirely too many people. The habit, in America, has been merely to approve the official hanging or imprisonment of "radicals" who become violent, or are only accused of violence or law-breaking, without the slightest inclination to find out what these men and women were trying to do, and why.

Much as we may like to think so, the world is not made up of Bad People and Good People. A law-abiding complacency is not the secret of the good life, and men who disturb the peace in the name of social justice ought always to be heard. The millions of respectable citizens who sighed with relief when the trap was sprung on the Chicago anarchists, accused of the Haymarket bombing in 1887, were the same people, in principle, who passively contributed to the bombing of the Los Angeles *Times* twenty-three years later, in 1910. And the same sort of people, again, think themselves quite innocent of any connection with the horrors caused by the Atomic Bomb. These events are all related. They represent the periodic explosions of mistreated *human* nature, the seismic reactions which afford a measure, in one way or another, of man's inhumanity to man.

Those who protest against the cold indifference of the well-to-do toward their less fortunate brothers are among the most valuable members of the human race. Many of them belong to that small minority who make some attempt at *explaining* what is wrong with our society. That we think their explanations and remedies faulty or inadequate is no excuse for refusing to hear what they say. Ignore a Bellamy and you get an Alexander Berkman, who shot Henry Clay Frick to attract the attention of the world to the plight of the workers of the Carnegie Steel Company. Imprison a Debs, and as a result the men who trusted him—who had begun to believe with Debs that education and principled action might lead them to better times—begin to look for a more "practical" leader. On the one hand, you get the communists, and on the other, a John L. Lewis or a Petrillo.

Is it possible to write about such things without an angry partisanship? It ought to be. There is matter for thought in the fact that many of the writers who become interested in the social conditions of depressed classes and areas do end up as partisans of the poor. That is one way in which "radicals" are made. How many of the rest of us would survive a similar experience—remain, that is, calmly indifferent to the squalor that exists, almost without exception, within ten miles of nearly every "nice" neighborhood in the United States, if we were to share in that squalor personally, not as an ordeal, but as a means to greater understanding?

There is one book, at least, of which we feel free to guarantee the impartiality—*Dynamite,* by Louis Adamic. This is a history of the use of violence by organized labor in the United States, from the days of the Molly Maguires to the racketeers of the 1920's. We say this book is impartial because we are confident that no one, regardless of his present sympathies or loyalties, can possibly feel self-righteous after reading it.

Another sort of book dealing with labor and socialism is Oscar Arneringer's rollicking life story, *If You Don't Weaken,* a volume so rich with generous humanity that the charge of partisanship becomes irrelevant.

The larger subject of the European radical movement is covered by Edmund Wilson in *To the Finland Station,* a profoundly absorbing study of revolutionary philosophy, and history, from Vico to Nicolai Lenin. No man—other than specialists—is entitled to have a serious opinion about the radical movement unless he has read this book. Fenner Brockway's *Inside the Left* is both biography and history; it is the life of an English radical for whom integrity always came first, and the history of the International Labor Party—a political group which should not be confused with the Labor Party now in power in England.

While other books on labor and socialism—the two are far from synonymous—are doubtless more systematic and "complete," the books we have mentioned have all some special merit which makes them worth reading as books rather than treatises. Unfortunately, some of them are hard to get. *Inside the Left* will probably have to be ordered from Allen & Unwin in London, and *Dynamite* and *To the Finland Station* are out of print. But it's worth an effort to get hold of these books. It's worth almost anything to learn to be at home in another world than that of conventional opinion, to get inside the minds and hearts of men who have been feared and misunderstood for generations.

A reading of *The American,* by Howard Fast, will help to show the crimes of which active, mass prejudice is capable. We know little about Mr. Fast. We have heard the charge of his communist connections and we suspect that he has glamorized the career of John Peter Altgeld considerably. But there are important and largely forgotten facts in this book about the great governor of Illinois who put justice above public approval.

Altgeld discovered that the eight Chicago anarchists were innocent, not guilty, of the Haymarket bombing, after five of them were dead—four by hanging, one by his own hand. He found that these men had been murdered by the State of Illinois, aided and abetted by public hysteria and incendiary editorials throughout the nation. He couldn't give Albert Parsons, August Spies, Louis Lingg, Adolph Fischer and George Engel back their lives, but he did the next best thing: he pardoned Neebe, Fielden and Schwab, the remaining three who were serving long prison terms. No one compelled him to study the files of this case, to denounce the conviction of the hated anarchists as a mockery of justice. Altgeld, unlike most politicians, could not live with himself until the judicial crime had been exposed. The people of Chicago rewarded this act of civic virtue with a campaign of vilification and misrepresentation seldom if ever equalled in American public life.

Background for the lives of Debs and Altgeld will be found in *Clarence Darrow for the Defense,* another book by Irving Stone, and by far his best. Darrow defended Debs against the charge of criminal conspiracy in the Pullman strike in 1894. "There may have lived sometime, a kindlier, gentler, more generous man than Eugene V. Debs," said Darrow, "but I have never known him." In the end, Debs had to serve six months in jail for violating an injunction obtained from a federal court. "Debs got off easy," Darrow commented. "No other offense has ever been visited with such severe penalties as seeking to help the oppressed." Darrow gave up a job paying $7,000 a year—as counsel for the Chicago and Northwestern Railway—to fight for the right of men to protest the conditions under which they worked. He remained to oppose and undo injustice the rest of his life. In 1900, when Altgeld was old and without money, Darrow took him in as a partner.

The essential tragedy in the lives of men like Debs and Darrow and Altgeld is typified by the violence which all their lives they fought against, yet which defeated them again and again. If it was not the violence of the men they were trying to help, it was the "legal" violence of the State on behalf of the "respectable" portion of the populace. Debs, finally, fell victim to the violence of war. He opposed America's participation in the first World War without the slightest regard for the consequences to himself. Accordingly, in September, 1918, he was convicted of violating the Espionage Act and sentenced to serve ten years in a federal penitentiary. Brought before a federal judge in Cleveland to receive his sentence, he said:

> Your Honor, years ago I recognized my kinship with all living things, and I made up my mind that I was not one whit better than the meanest of the earth. I said, then, I say now, that while there is a lower class I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free. . . .

The spirit of Debs' socialism is plain in the first announcement he made of his conversion to that political faith. "I am for socialism," he said, "because I am for humanity."

Darrow, like Debs, was a victim of violence not of his own making. When the McNamara brothers bombed the Los Angeles *Times,* Darrow went West to defend them, believing them innocent. In the course of preparing the case, he discovered they were guilty. It almost broke his heart. He made a settlement with the prosecution under which the brothers went to prison instead of being hung. But Darrow bore the onus of moral defeat. Labor turned against him, calling him "traitor." Soon Darrow was himself being prosecuted on the charge of attempting to bribe prospective jurors. After two trials which lasted ninety days, he was pronounced not guilty and permitted to return to Chicago, broken in health, penniless, and almost friendless. But Darrow regained his strength and lived to take part in two more celebrated cases before he died—he represented Leopold and Loeb in 1924, and John T. Scopes, the defendant in the famous "Evolution" trial in Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925, against William Jennings Bryan as prosecuting attorney.

Radicals, we are told, "go to extremes." It would be fairer to say, they are *driven* to extremes. Darrow, however, was not a radical in the conventional sense, for the extreme he went to was in giving himself to others. He had no particular political theory—he was just constitutionally incapable of blaming anybody for anything. So, throughout his life, he was, as Irving Stone put it, "for the defense."

Debs, like Darrow, loved his fellow man. One who reads the life of Debs may well ask himself: Given the same life, what would I have done? Would Debs be distinguished from me by his "radical" opinions, or by his greatness in everything he did, radical or not? This is a fair question. It is not too much to say that so long as men like Altgeld, Debs and Darrow continue to be born in the United States, the experiment we call "American civilization" is worth continuing. In such men we can find the roots of a future that may, once it is achieved, give justification to their unceasing struggle, and to our own efforts to keep alive and to extend the spirit of their lives.

COMMENTARY
M. K. GANDHI

THE death of Mohandas K. Gandhi at the hands of a political assassin left no blemish on the life of India's and the world's—great man. His violent end, coming at the close of an incalculably beneficent career, only confirms the popular feeling that Gandhi was a great spiritual teacher, for he is far from being the first reformer to meet this fate. Gandhi was an old man; his personal mission—so far as concerns political freedom for India—was accomplished. He had set an example in national and world patriotism for all who knew or heard of him to follow. He had declared his principles, many times, on all the issues confronting modern India. And he had, for years, applied those principles with originality and effectiveness.

So Gandhi's life, in the larger sense of his motives and personal capacities, was already complete. These could be augmented only by other men, by the people of India, and nothing that they might have done while he yet lived is in any way prevented by his death. It remains for India to fulfill the mission of Gandhi.

A role given to Gandhi by the Indian people, and in some measure accepted by him, was that of their "father." The reverence felt toward him was filial in spirit. For many millions, therefore, the bereavement is intensely personal, a feeling which is undoubtedly stronger than the sense of "national" loss. As the years pass, however, it may be recognized that the gift of Gandhi to India was something more than a wise, paternal guidance; it was something greater, even, for India, than his historic demonstration of the moral strength of the philosophy of non-violence, which was rather a gift to modern civilization than to India alone.

Gandhi was a great man, first, because of his indomitable will. More than anything else, he embodied the spiritual force of an awakened and concentrated mind, fixed on his chosen objectives. No one could enslave Gandhi. No one could "conquer" Gandhi. Gandhi was a living example of the unconquerable human spirit. He might be imprisoned, but he could not be made unfree. In Gandhi became manifest a quality of manhood which holds the secret of the only future worth striving after for modern man. That was his great gift to India—not the reverential figure of the "father," but the example of a free human being.

It seems unlikely that India will ever have another "father." This is an epoch in which India must grow to her own maturity and moral equilibrium, not adoring her sages, but by becoming like them—like Gandhi.

The greatest tribute that India could pay to Gandhi would be to follow his example as a man. This would be more, much more, than repeating his words and imitating his actions. The wisdom in his words and the purpose behind his actions will continue to live, not from religious devotion to them, but from a resolve like Gandhi's, on the part of many, each man according to his light.

From Gandhi the people of India may learn also the meaning of purity of heart, and unqualified self-sacrifice. But they will not learn it by making a "code" of his personal habits, nor even by a literal following of his exhortations. They will learn it from the principle of *honesty* which came before anything else in his life, and from the imagination which he exercised in applying it.

If India can learn these things from Gandhi, India may have opportunity to teach them to the world.

Readers in Europe and Asia

Restrictions on foreign purchases have made it impossible for many readers in other lands to subscribe to MANAS. Accordingly, we have adopted the policy of sending MANAS to persons living in countries where such restrictions exist, simply upon receipt of a request for the paper. Payments can be made later, when the restrictions are relaxed.

We hope to be financially able to continue this policy, which, so far as Europe is concerned, we take pleasure in regarding as a small contribution to what our Central European Correspondent last week called "a sort of spiritual Marshall Plan."

For our friends in India, attention is called to the fact that we have appointed the International Book House Ltd., Ash Lane, Bombay, as our Agent in India, to whom all Indian subscriptions should be sent.

Pending similar arrangements in other countries, prospective subscribers are invited to write directly to the Manas Publishing Company concerning their wish to receive the paper regularly. This will apply also to editors desiring to exchange with MANAS.

CHILDREN

. . . and Ourselves

Is it possible to regard children as able to become the sort of humans we ourselves wish that *we* were? Every "conscientious" parent feels a hope that his children will accomplish this not-too-difficult feat, yet nearly every parent expresses his concern as a worry instead of a hope. Parental "worries" are simply not good for a child. Of course, parents usually know this, in a sense, but there are powerful contrary psychological impulses difficult to overcome. Those who have become middle-aged, and are very conscious of "the mistakes I made," sometimes seem to believe that virtue and greatness would have come to them if they had avoided "certain experiences." They present children with a long catalogue of "things to be avoided" and undergo anxiety at the least suspicion that their children may be entering areas of danger which once engulfed them. Yet, one cannot encourage strength and virtue by telling others what not to do. Religions have tried this method since the first religion, to little avail. You teach virtue by encouraging virtue, not by teaching fear of the seven or ten great sins.

Virtue is first of all self-reliance and fearlessness. Perhaps we should give serious consideration to the view that our own vices and imperfections arise, not from the experiences we go through, but from the lack of moral faith with which we meet them. If a child is by any chance innately possessed of his own moral sense, the first belief he needs to hold consciously is that he has the equipment with which to meet the most difficult of personal temptations and social problems. To treat the child as if he has no independent moral stability is to assume that we know more about him than we actually do know. Children may have an innate moral sense which is developed rather than created by early environment. There is much, actually, that is mysterious about a child's inner self. Seldom do children accept naturally the conventional philosophical or religious conclusions of their elders.

Children, for instance, are sometimes unable to believe that they suddenly "began" at birth. Bertrand Russell, in *Education and the Good Life,* provides an illustration from his own family:

> I find my boy still hardly able to grasp that there was a time when he did not exist; if I talk to him about the building of the Pyramids or some such topic, he always wants to know what he was doing then, and is merely puzzled when he is told that he did not exist. Sooner or later he will want to know what "being born" means, and then we shall tell him.

Such incidents should give occasion for further thought, since they may be the child's only way of expressing the fact that he was born *with* a sense of continuity—and a "sense of continuity" and the moral sense may be said to be one and the same. Perhaps the growth of adaptability in body and brain in early years provides the vehicle for moral consciousness, and does not "create" it at all.

If this is a "theory," special argument for the view is not intended. Yet the point of view it suggests may be experimented with. The test which modern educators insist must be applied to any educational view is that of its consistent applicability. It is possible to essay such applications of the "innate moral sense" theory of man's nature without attempting a lengthy substantiation of the theory itself.

If a parent were to proceed from this point of view, his first assumption would need to be quite different from that suggested by any of the conventional attitudes, although a few philosophers, including Plato, recommended it a long time ago: The child would belong to the entire society of humankind and to itself, with parents conceived to be principally instructors and guardians during the earliest periods of youth. Parents would have no right to be indifferent to this "community responsibility," for it would not be their "own" to neglect. Nor would the children be their "own" to mold in their images. The parent would assume that the moral impulses of the child might possibly be more advanced and intelligent than his own. On such a view, it would become just as possible for the parent to be taught by the child as for the child to be taught by the parent.

We know little or nothing, today, of an educational viewpoint proceeding from the assumption that man is a spiritual being—a "soul" in an evolutionary process which he himself helps to determine. This point of departure would be a complete cleavage from the educational viewpoint with which we are most familiar, although that should be a recommendation rather than a discouragement.

For the most part, our schools condition children—teachers likewise—to accept the idea that forces too big for them will really determine their destiny. They are seldom conceived as "God's" forces, yet are almost invariably presented as the determinants of behavior. What religion once asserted as a need for conditioning children to accept "God's world" is now echoed in a new setting with new terminology by the majority of "scientific" educational theorists. On both views, man's only hope lies in keeping out of the way of something powerful which may destroy him utterly—either God or the Forces of Natural Selection. Since he was *created* by one or the other of these agencies, he may obviously be obliterated by them. If Environment is responsible for a man's character, he must also look to Environment to improve him, in a manner similar to the way in which he once looked to God. The only view of the human situation essentially different from the doctrines of either St. Augustine or John Dewey is that suggested by some new consideration of the idea of "soul." If there *is an* essential character or "soul" in each being, the problem of education would not be primarily one of conditioning the body and the psyche, but instead, that of discovering the highest qualities of "soul."

FRONTIERS

The "Mission" of Psychiatry

IT is customary to refer to Western civilization as "secular," meaning that it is a society which rejects any religious principle as the basis of its order and government. One might argue that Secularism, as a deliberate philosophy of government, is inspired by a love of freedom, and is, therefore, in a sense religious itself, but this would leave the term "secular" without any significance.

Another way to get at the meaning of Secularism would be to say that it represents an attitude toward life that has no core of general principles—which looks, not to basic human philosophy for progressive thinking, but to specialists of one kind or another. From this viewpoint, Western civilization has been secular for well over a thousand years.

During the Middle Ages, all progress—which in those days meant Salvation—was in the charge of the specialized institution known as The Church. Then, after the Copernican Revolution, a growing body of physical scientists began to regard themselves as pioneers for all mankind, and were so accepted by many others. Their contribution was to be a new theory of knowledge, based on a reading of the "Book of Nature." In the nineteenth century, the saviors were the economists, whose ideas were incorporated into the political programs of the revolutionary movement.

Priests of medieval religion claimed to be specialists in obtaining eternal bliss for the soul, while the physical scientists, specializing in matter and its motions, left soul out of their calculations and endeavored to develop a body of knowledge on purely physical foundations. The economists hoped to formulate a science of human behavior in connection with what biologists called "the struggle for existence." But today, we are told, we have come to the end of the theory of "economic man." Who, then, are the specialists who may be expected to attempt to take charge of progress in the future?

We have not far to look for the new specialists in whom a sense of "mission" is already becoming articulate. They are the psychiatrists, who believe—with considerable reason—that their investigations have produced facts amounting to practical "revelations" concerning the springs of human action. Like other men who think themselves in possession of facts of which the great majority are ignorant, modern psychiatrists speak and write with a weighty sense of responsibility for the general good.

One psychiatrist whose views have the endorsement of leaders in his profession is Dr. G. B. Chisolm, Director-General of the Medical Services of the Canadian Army during the war, and who is now Deputy Minister of Health in the Dominion's Department of National Health and Welfare. An advantage in Dr. Chisolm's psychological discussion of the modern world is the extreme candor of his diagnosis, which avoids the usual moralistic subterfuges and conciliations to convention. Briefly, Dr. Chisolm, speaking on behalf of modern psychiatry, is against "morality" itself. The reasons for this "campaign" are presented at length in *The Psychiatry of Enduring Peace and Social Progress,* published in 1946 by the William Alanson White Foundation.

Seeking the "basic psychological distortion" that is back of the uncontrollable tendency of modern nations to make war, Dr. Chisolm says:

> It must be a force which discourages the ability to see and acknowledge patent facts, which prevents rational use of intelligence, which teaches or encourages the ability to dissociate and to believe contrary to and in spite of clear evidence, which produces inferiority, guilt and fear which makes controlling other people's personal behavior emotionally necessary, which encourages prejudice and the inability to see, understand and sympathize with other people's points of view. Is there any force so potent and so persuasive that it can do all these things in all civilizations?

Dr. Chisolm answers his own momentous question:

> There is—just one. The lowest common denominator of all civilizations and the only psychological force capable of producing these perversions is *morality, the concept of right and wrong, the poison long ago described and warned against as "the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."* (Our italics.)

The objective of "practically all effective psycho-therapy," says Dr. Chisolm, is "the re-interpretation and eventually eradication of the concept of right and wrong." Psychiatrists, he adds, must take "original responsibility" for freeing the human race "from its crippling burden of good and evil." This critical passage he ends with the appealing question:

> Would it not be sensible to stop imposing our local prejudices and faiths on children and give them all sides of every question so that they may have the ability to size own decisions?

A survey of modern psychiatric literature makes it quite clear that psychiatrists are not wicked men with a satanic resolve to abolish all morality, even though it would be quite possible to maintain, from their own words, that this is their purpose. Actually, the psychiatric view of morality is the natural and logical consequence of the habit, in Western civilization, of restricting intelligence to specialized research, and referring all general questions and problems of life to inherited tradition for their answers. Moral problems are general problems—they are not the problems of specialists, and they do require intelligence, the intelligence of every man.

Today, the specialists in psychiatry are confronted with the unsolved general problems of our society. The failure to deal with moral questions intelligently is driving people crazy. Quite naturally, psychiatrists want to eliminate the *cause* of these confusions, which they see in morality itself. The psychiatrists are now at the same stage in their development that surgery went through a generation or so ago—if an organ does not work properly, *cut it out.*

Before condemning psychiatrists as amoral materialists and nothing more, the reader should review the case for amputation of the moral sense, as they present it. Their record of twisted-up lives based on false moralizing seems endless. The persuasions of the psychiatric diagnosis are powerful and seemingly complete.

But the other side of the picture—the sort of world the psychiatrists want to construct, in which men and women renounce the moral struggle entirely, and live as rationalized animals—does not come out so clearly in the psychiatric diagnosis. The fact is that modern psychiatry insists that men must choose between tortured consciences and uninhibited animalism. The general human intelligence, we believe, will reject both of these alternatives as constituting a false decision.

Psychiatrists, as specialists, are deeply involved in the psychology of mental disease. As specialists, they are entitled to some evidence that ideas of right and wrong are essential to the mental health of modern man—evidence showing that something worse than either psychoneurosis or even psychosis would result from trying to eliminate the moral sense entirely. The intelligence of the free, non-specialized man suggests that moral ideas are the necessary support of a natural and beneficent human life. As men, and not as specialists, the psychiatrists should look for evidence of this within themselves.